



CHECKPOINT ✓

The official voice of the American Volkssport Association
America's premier noncompetitive sports organization

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NEC approved Bylaw Agenda Items for Membership Vote at 2015 Convention:

Article II & III Affiliating with Other Organizations: [Click here](#)

Article V Call for Voice Vote: [Click here](#)

Article VI – Clarify RD Election Procedures: [Click here](#)

Article VI – Deputy Regional Directors: [Click here](#)

Article XIII Two Thirds Vote to change Bylaws: [Click here](#)

Article XV Definition of Mail: [Click here](#)

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items: [Click here for Agenda Items Form](#)

Please complete as soon as possible.

April 17: Clubs email Agenda Items to Regional Directors.

May 4: Agenda Items from Regional Directors due to AVA National Headquarters.

May 18: Final list of official Agenda Items sent to AVA Clubs.

**AVA NEC Officer's Reports and Committee Reports: [Click here for Officer Report Form](#)
[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)**

May 19: Officer's and Committee Reports due at AVA National Headquarters, will also appear in Biennial Report.

May 28: Meeting data information package emailed to NEC members.

Credentialing:

The 2015 Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation Forms have been mailed out to every person listed in the data base as the official POC for every club and state association. Please read this form carefully. **If you have not received this form please contact Headquarters.**

Some things to keep in mind:

1. Clubs must be in good standing to vote by May 4th which is 45 days prior to be the first membership meeting. In Good Standing means that all reports received on time including participation reports, stamps that should be returned are returned on time, and no past due amounts on club accounts owed to AVA.
2. Section D. Certification is where the club officer signs not Section E. Verification. Verification is for the Executive Director's signature.
3. A person running for a National officer or Regional Director cannot be a delegate, alternate or carry proxies.

4. The form consists of a white, yellow, and pink self-carbon form. All three must be returned to the AVA with a post mark date no later than May 19, 2015 to the address on the form. If the deadline is missed, the three copies need to be brought to the credentialing booth at the convention by the delegate, alternate, or proxy. However, the club must be in good standing May 4, 2015.
5. This credentialing process is required for all voting whether at the convention or by paper ballot.

Voting Privileges: Each National Officer, Regional Director, State Organization and Regular Member club in good standing forty-five (45) days (May 4, 2015) before the opening general session is entitled to one vote in each election and on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The Executive Director shall have no vote.

Delegates: A delegate normally represents each State Organization and Regular Member Club at the General Sessions. Each State Organization and Regular Member Club designates its delegate by completing AVA Form 500, Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation, and ensures the designated delegate registers for the Biennial Convention. The AVA National Headquarters will mail the AVA Form 500 to State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs.

Alternates: State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may designate an alternate to the Delegate by completing AVA Form 500 and ensuring the designated alternate registers for the Biennial Convention.

Proxies: State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may vote by proxy by designating a proxy on AVA Form 500. A proxy can only be given to a person certified as a delegate for the Biennial Convention. **Candidates for AVA National Office or candidates for Regional Director may not carry proxies.**

Responsibilities: Delegates, alternates and proxies will present their copy of AVA Form 500 to the Credentials Committee at the convention, attend the convention participate in all general sessions and attend workshops. A club may transfer voting privileges to an alternate only in an emergency. The club should advise the delegate, alternate or proxy on voting positions for elections and other business upon which the membership might vote. Delegates should report back to the club they represent on the general sessions and workshops. **Delegates, Alternates, or Proxies must be at least registered for the Convention under the Delegate registration, cost \$185.**

A Message from Mr. Bob Wright – AVA/NEC Liaison to IVV Americas:

What Joining IVV-Americas Would Mean for the AVA

It's almost time to vote on the AVA joining IVV-Americas. As your AVA liaison/representative to IVV-Americas since September 2012 (and a volunteer working with the AVA in various capacities since the late 1970s) I will help you put the background in context. We'll look at IVV-Americas' purpose, its progress toward achieving that purpose, funding, and governance, and then briefly consider what I assess to be potential benefits and risks for the AVA of joining. (To review AVA president Michele's "Issues" article, look in the March issue of Checkpoint or the April/May issue of The American Wanderer.)

Purpose of IVV-Americas

The bylaws list nine specific purposes; the IVV-Americas president Myron indicated the confederation's specific mission, part of the first purpose, is "to promote volkssport where it

doesn't exist." Elsewhere the purpose refers to helping member associations, such as the AVA were it to become a member. These are the most important for this discussion.

Progress on Achieving Its Purpose and Plans for the Future

After more than 3 years, evenly divided between formation and being in existence, there still is nothing known about programs, projects, and achievements beyond what is in IVV-Americas president Myron's report to the 2014 IVV Congress—references to an IVV-Americas Cup special event program and IVV-Americapiad in 2016 or 2018 in the works.

Some plans are in the works that may be released at the IVV-Americas General Assembly June 27, 2015.

Budget

The IVV gave IVV-Americas a €7000 (\$8700) grant to get started and promised other grants for new programs. A few hundred dollars of the grant has been spent to date because the IVV pays for the IVV-Americas president to attend IVV United Presidium meetings and others have picked IVV-Americas travel to the IVV Congress.

IVV-Americas annual dues are \$100 per member association. Dues for other membership categories have yet to be set (those programs are not finalized yet either). Other revenue would come from sponsorships, partnerships, and an unspecified fee to sponsor IVV-Americapiads.

IVV-Americas reportedly will unveil its first budget at the General Assembly on June 27.

Governance

An organizing committee comprised of a chair (now IVV-Americas president Myron) and members from the Brazilian and Canadian associations prepared the initial IVV-Americas Bylaws.

The bylaws version adopted on September 15, 2013 (at <http://www.ivv-americas.org/files.php>) are modeled on the Industry Canada Bylaws Builder on-line tool for not-for-profit corporations; it offers suggested choices for text and space for entering your own text—the committee took advantage of that flexibility. This version was prepared without any AVA involvement

The IVV-Americas Governing Council is finalizing a package of bylaws amendments that could be approved by April 3, 2015.

Potential Benefits of Joining

I assess IVV-Americas has something to offer immediately and considerable future potential. Part of the benefit is giving back regionally to the IVV movement we enjoy so others in the Americas may come to enjoy it as much as we do.

IVV-Americas has a vote on the IVV United Presidium, the body that leads the IVV and coordinates its functions, promotes exchanges between continental confederations, and develops volkssports worldwide. That would give the AVA an additional way to be heard; the primary is the IVV Congress of Delegates, the IVV's supreme executive, where the AVA already speaks and votes for itself (IVV-Americas has an advisory function there).

In return the AVA would lend its name and provide resources (i.e., people and dues) to help promote volkssporting throughout IVV-Americas' geographic area. IVV-Americas could draw on our experiences in the States, and the AVA could draw on the experiences and fresh ideas of our Brazilian and Canadian counterparts to help grow volkssporting in the States.

The AVA, with its relatively large knowledgeable cadre of volkssporters, could team with Brazilian and Canadian association counterparts to collaborate on achieving IVV-Americas' principal purpose. The resulting enlarged pool of volunteers could accomplish more than what has been possible to date to promote volkssporting in the Americas.

The AVA could bid to host an IVV-Americapiad that would attract volkssporters from around the world. IVV-Americas only receives the sponsor fee; all other income and expenses are the national association's responsibility. Done right it could be lucrative.

IVV-Americas' geographic area is vast—Central and South America, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific. That area could generate considerable volkssport-tourism business for AVA events in time.

Potential Risks of Joining

I assess the risks to the AVA as immediate and could become considerable in the future. IVV-Americas has caused or exacerbated some with its own information voids. A common thread throughout is the uncertain return on investment for the AVA.

The AVA doesn't have many resources to spare for IVV-Americas with a tight budget and declining revenues, memberships, and event participation. Our new ED is charged with helping the AVA define its pathway for growth; syphoning resources off for IVV-Americas before the AVA sets its priorities would be counterproductive. Individual Americans can and will continue to help; the question is could the AVA afford to officially commit to contributing resources without hurting its own efforts before it has its own plan.

AVA efforts to promote volkssports in the States haven't fared well. (Nor has IVV-Americas demonstrated a capability yet.) Membership in the AVA and CVF has fallen so how valuable is that experience going to be in promoting volkssporting in different cultures?

With the limited resources available to IVV-Americas likely to focus on where volkssporting doesn't exist, what does that portend for support to existing members? If the AVA is counting on support, we might be out of luck. Until we see the confederation's plans after the vote we won't know for sure one way or the other.

AVA conventions have shown we know how to put on successful, and unsuccessful, multi-day walking events for 500-600 volkssporters. Olympiads are larger in a more condensed time period. Could the AVA's current planning model (let clubs that step forward handle most of the planning) work, or would we need to contract out the work to professionals (and could we still get an adequate return)? Do we have the financial reserves to absorb a major loss? The IVV-Americas fee may be prohibitively high as well. For the moment it's unclear if this would be a benefit or not.

Promoting volkssporting in new countries in the Americas will require promotion, and money, for years. The IVV-Americas budget may give us a hint where the needed money will come from. When the initial grant is gone that could drive a dues increase, and with the AVA several times larger than the Brazilian and Canadian associations combined, the AVA could be asked to carry a larger proportional financial burden (and the way governance is currently structured the AVA would be powerless to fend off such a solution). The budget also would provide insight into the confederation's priorities, programs, and projects..

Only after years of effort might promotion lead to volkssport-tourism to the AVA. (It's more likely to work in reverse, shifting AVA volkssporter participation abroad.) Luring volkssporters from Europe and Asia holds more promise, but those areas have their own continental Olympiads already and host IVV Olympiads in alternating years that will make for stiff competition once the novelty of Olympiads in the Americas wears off. We've already seen this with the IVV-IML walk in Arlington, Virginia for example.

IVV-Americas governance—its bylaws—is built on a Canadian model, in the end without AVA involvement. That was their prerogative, but resulted in issues that cause concern for an American non-profit corporation the AVA attorney's February 2015 analysis revealed; these loose ends need to be resolved as part of the membership process. Furthermore, my analysis identified additional differences compared to Robert's Rules, American practice, etc. that the

AVA needs to determine if it finds acceptable or not; any it takes issue with would need to be raised with IVV-Americas and resolved. Until critical governance issues are resolved to everyone's satisfaction the AVA's 501(C)(3) status remains at risk, jeopardizing our tax-exempt status and ability to accept tax-deductible contributions.

Conclusion

The attention-catching part of the question is joining IVV-Americas, but all aspects are equally important to consider.

This is not the 2013 vote revisited. The IVV-Americas Bylaws in place are quite different aside from purpose and governance structure; they have been completely reformatted and quite a few details changed significantly from the initial version we saw before Orlando. The adopted version has never had a comprehensive NEC review.

The benefits of joining have changed little, but analyses of the ultimately adopted bylaws identified new changes that potentially could cause the AVA IRC Section 501(C)(3) issues and that raise what we might consider unhealthy governance issues that bear further analysis.

We still don't know what IVV-Americas plans are, how it intends to achieve its purpose, and where the money to do everything will come from over time.

Finally, how would joining fit into the AVA's immediate and long-term plans? This is a long-term commitment not to be entered into lightly.

If you still have specific questions, please email them, together with your club/state organization name, to me at rwright2@jhu.edu (no phone calls—I have several trips coming up). I can't promise private replies; I intend to reply to you and simultaneously post it without attribution to the AVA Facebook Public Group to give the information broad dissemination.

Yours in volkssports,
Bob Wright
AVA Representative to IVV-Americas
April 2, 2015

Biennial Publicity Contest:

Reminder that the deadline for submitting entries to AVA Headquarters for the 2015 AVA Publicity Contest is **April 10, 2015**. For complete information on contest guidelines, rules, and to print out an official entry form ([click here](#)). Participation in the nationwide contest is open to AVA members, clubs and state organizations. All entries must have been created or occurred during the time period from May 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014

Convention Registration Form:



Whether you want to register online using pay pal or mail in your registration click on this link ([click here](#)) and fill out the form completely. If online print the form out before submitting, if mailing into HQ and include with your payment. **You must submit the form online after you print for system to record your registration. This must be done for credit cards or check payment. When registering by mail in payment, do NOT include payment for other merchandise such as books, membership, etc. Please send in a separate payment for merchandise, billing, late fees and other payments.** This form will be available in the convention section of the AVA website, under the blog area and on our official Facebook page. This site has been tested, but if you have any problems email avawebmaster@ava.org. The form cannot be edited online, delete incorrect form and then reenter.

HQ Awards Processing-Karen Winkle

The Chart for [AVA Processing](#) is included as an attachment.

HQ Events Coordinator-Marie Bebley

[Items Due Report](#) and [Past Due Stamp](#)

World Walk Day-Henry Rosales, AVA Executive Director

The AVA National Headquarters will be hosting its 2nd annual World Walk Day Volksmarch in partnership with The Randolph Roadrunners, The Texas Wanderers, The Lone Star Walkers, and the Selma Pathfinders. The event will be held May 9, 2015 from 8am-12noon at the AVA National Headquarters, 1001 Pat Booker Rd, Universal City, Texas 78148. Come walk with us and visit our National Museum!



If your club is hosting a traditional event or a group walk of a YRE in celebration of World Walking Day on May 8th or between the weekends on either side of May 8th. Don't forget to preorder your WWD Certificates and special slug. The due date for all World Walk Day 2015 certificate preorders is **April 17, 2015** and must be **received by Midnight**.

[\(click here for certificate preorder form\)](#). T-shirts are now available for purchase through **Café Press** at [\(click here for direct link to our store\)](#). Be sure to send those special World Walk Day pictures and info to SERD4AVA@gmail.com with your subject "World Walking Day."

National Events Information-David Bonewitz, Southeast Regional Director

There are two long standing opportunities for national events. These events are in May (National Physical Fitness and Sports Month) and October (National Volkssport Month). There is a bit more flexibility with these events as clubs do not have to hold a Traditional Event on a particular day in either month. In both cases, clubs can order special patches from AVA Headquarters to use as A-Awards for their Traditional Event held that respective month, current year patches cannot be used as "B" awards, previous year patches can be used as "B" awards. [\(Click here for May physical fitness and sports month patch order form\)](#). **Please check cafépress for National Physical Fitness and Sports Month t-shirts, which are now on the store.** Watch for more information. As with the other national events, clubs are invited to send a photo of their event along with information about the event to SERD4AVA@gmail.com using the subject "Fitness Month" and "Volkssport Month."

Another opportunity for a national event is National Trails Day held on the first Saturday in June. This year National Trails Day will be on June 6th. This idea for a national event first came to our attention with a Facebook posting by Missy McBride who counted 12 clubs with Traditional Events on June 6th. More may have been added as her posting began to generate interest. Once again, if your club holds an event on National Trails Day, be sure to capture the excitement with a photo and send it to SERD4AVA@gmail.com along with information about your walk using the subject "National Trails Day."

If you have other ideas for a national event that might be used to generate more interest, excitement, and fun, please send the idea to SERD4AVA@gmail.com.

Finally, watch for more information on the next really big national event—AVA's 40th Anniversary in 2016. We have plenty of lead-time to make this the next "Time to Walk."

Guided Bike Events-Tom Jackson, Atlantic Regional Director

The NEC approved a two-year test of having "Guided Bike" events with the goal of increasing bike participation. A club can now sanction traditional "Guided Bike" events and will receive an IVV stamp that they may use for the rest of the year at multiple bike events. There is a \$30 fee charged after sanctioning the first event; there is no sanctioning fee for subsequent events.

The events must be off-road (rail trails, canal towpaths, and/or bike trails). There should be a person in front who knows the route and a second person performing duties as the rear sweep. The two should be in communication with each other.

The events must be sanctioned at least two months in advance with at least the date and general place identified. The specific time and place must be provided at least a month in advance. The club must publicize the events as they would any other traditional event. "Guided bike" events should not be held on trails that are already used for a traditional or year round/seasonal bike event without the concurrence of the club that sanctioned the event.

There will be a limited test of this concept in 2015. Please contact your Regional Director if your club is interested in participating. For more information, contact Tom Jackson at thomasjackson@embarqmail.com.

Extended Distance Bike Events-Tom Jackson, Atlantic Regional Director

The NEC has approved a two year test of Extended Distance Bike Events. The sponsoring club just needs to sanction the entire distance of a rail trail, canal towpath, or bike path; identify a start point and provide directions for at least a 25K and 13K route; and provide the website that provides directions to the other trail heads. Participants may take IVV credit for the distance actually biked and must pay the \$3 fee for IVV event credit for each day they ride.

The trail must be completed and off-road. If parts of the trail are under construction and it is possible to do at least a 25K ride on a completed section, it qualifies. If the trail was constructed with a short section of the trail on-road, it qualifies. If multiple trails converge at a single point (i.e. the train station in Xenia, OH), they may be sanctioned as one event. If a bike event is in an area where there is a network of connecting trails giving the possibility of a loop ride(s), the event qualifies. For more information, contact Tom Jackson, thomasjackson@embarqmail.com

Support Volkssporting in America by Supporting Tom's 2015 Bike Across the USA:

Support our fellow Volkssporters, Tom and Louise Baltes, as Tom treks 4000 miles across America to raise funds to fight arthritis and promote Volkssporting!

On August 16, 2015, Tom is starting a 4,265 mile bike ride across America to raise funds for Volkssporting and the fight against arthritis. His ride is in honor of his two siblings with Rheumatoid Arthritis, and the nearly 50 million Americans with diagnosed arthritic conditions; Tom is one of them. Tom is also hoping to spread the word that Volkssporting offers walking, biking, and swimming, which are all great activities for those who suffer arthritis.



You can follow Tom's preparations and journey at www.tombikeride.wordpress.com and please consider donating to Volkssporting and the Arthritis Foundation through links in his web page. Tom and his wife Louise will join us at the National Convention this June in Salem, Oregon to talk about their adventure. Please share this information with family and friends who might be able to assist with the fundraising effort and/or are interested in tracking Tom's adventure.

For more information visit Tom's ride across America's northern tier route from Seaside OR to Maine at: www.tombikeride.wordpress.com.

A Message from Henry Rosales, Executive Director, AVA

Dear Volkssporting Community and Friends of the AVA,

On May 5th, 2015, the American Volkssport Association will join San Antonio and surrounding counties in a 24 hour giving campaign called The Big Give S.A. which is part of the national day of giving called Give Local America.

The **Big Give S.A.** is a 24-hour day of giving that will take place from midnight to midnight on May 5, 2015. The purpose of this community-wide giving challenge is to increase public awareness of the impact local nonprofits make in addressing our community's social challenges, bring nonprofits and donors together, expand the idea of online giving, connect people to the causes that move them the most and, of course, make giving FUN. By turning giving into a shared region-wide experience, we can significantly impact the future of South Central Texas and make a huge collective difference. Last year's event raised over \$2,000,000 for 467 participating agencies!



The minimum donation amount is \$10.00. I recommend the AVA goal should be to raise \$30,000 for the AVA in 24 hours! *Every dollar that is given will be matched (up to \$30,000) by an anonymous donor who is also a lifetime volkssporter!* This means if we reach our goal of securing \$30,000 in donations we will leverage an additional \$30,000 for a total of \$60,000! There is also an opportunity for AVA to get extra cash prizes for our participation from the organizing groups.

How the Big Give works:

On May 5th beginning at 1:00a.m. through 12 midnight friends, families, club members, NEC members, etc. are encouraged to go online at <https://thebiggivesa.org/#npo/american-volkssport-association> and click the donate button to make an online contribution. The funds are collected by a 3rd party processor and after fees are deducted (the total fee is 7.48%.-credit card fees are 2.49%, the event management fee is 2% and the Kimbia processing fee is 2.99%) the remainder is disbursed by the San Antonio Area Foundation to AVA no later than June 30, 2015. There are no fees assessed for the match, those funds will come directly to the AVA based on the total amount raised within the 24 hour window of opportunity.

Everyone who makes an online donation will immediately receive an email receipt from the San Antonio Area Foundation confirming the gift. If a donor would prefer not to make a donation online checks can be mailed to the AVA Headquarters prior to midnight on May 5th. Please put "The Big Give" in the memo line. AVA will also send out a thank you card to all donors. All donations are tax deductible.

What will my donation be used for?

Your donation will help support the sustainability of existing programs and services to clubs as well as the planning, development and implementation of quality educational fitness programs and other non-competitive sports activities that reflect the needs of the communities our clubs serve. This is the mission of the AVA. I ask for your individual support to invest in our future and help us take the AVA to a new level of success! *Remember each dollar donated will leverage an additional dollar thanks to the generosity of our anonymous donor.*

Everyone can participate by making a contribution and/or sending information on the Big Give to family members, friends and associates. I will be sending additional information in the next couple of weeks that you can simply forward to everyone. To learn more please go to: <https://thebiggivesa.org/#home>



The American Volkssport Association

The Sport of the People

Fun, Fitness, Friendship

 AmericanVolkssportAssociation  blog.ava.org

The purpose of the American Volkssport Association is to promote the public health, physical fitness and well-being of the people from all backgrounds, ages, and abilities through participation in noncompetitive, family orientated, lifetime sports like walking, biking, swimming and cross-country skiing.

Your donation will support the continued successful implementation of youth, adult and senior quality educational fitness programs and other non-competitive sports activities that reflect the needs of the communities we serve. Share the spirit of walking with us! Meet friends, walk scenic trails and improve your physical and mental health with a natural, accessible, and low-stress activity. **Each dollar you give will be matched by an anonymous donor who is also a lifetime volkssporter!**



**SAVE THE DATE
MAY 5, 2015**

TO DONATE 

THE BIG GIVE S.A.
05.05.2015
TRANSFORMING SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS ONE GIFT AT A TIME

[\(click here for an interactive flyer version\)](#)

The American Volkssport Association

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