



CHECKPOINT

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

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October 2015

The Next NEC meeting is January

The next NEC meeting will be held January 22 – 24, 2016. Location is to be determined.

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

Please complete as soon as possible.

November 23: Clubs e-mail Agenda Items to RD's.

December 8: Agenda Items from RD's due at AVA National Headquarters.

December 22: Final list of Agenda Items sent to AVA Clubs.

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

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

Please complete as soon as possible.

December 22: Officer's & Committee Reports due at AVA National Headquarters.

Due to Holidays packets will be mailed December 31: Meeting data information package e-mailed to NEC members.

Upcoming Deadlines:

2016 Starting Point Book ([click here for fillable pre-order form](#))

Pre-Order deadline has been extended to **no later than midnight, October 16** (Deadline necessary for Publisher). Pre-order forms will also be in the Oct/Nov TAW.

Invoice and Statement Addresses:

For clubs to receive invoices and statements the financial address must be updated no later than the 25th day of the Month in club maintenance to ensure the correct information is pulled for the addressee.

Individuals for membership who need to update their address contact karen@ava.org.

Special Programs 2017 – Special Programs Committee Chair Bonnie Johnson:

At each January NEC Meeting, new Special Programs are introduced for review and approval by the NEC to begin in the following year. In January 2016, the Special Programs will be introduced which, if approved, would start up on January 1, 2017.

Any club considering a new Special Program must have all the documentation sent to your Regional Director and to the Special Program Committee Chair, Bonnie Johnson by **November 1, 2015**. The documents must include a colored copy of the patch and its dimensions, a mock up booklet with your particular Special Program rules and qualifiers. An expense report with a minimum order of 100 patches, postage and printing for a cost estimation to support your program must also be attached.

Send the documentation for your proposed Special Program to Bonnie Johnson, Special Program Committee Chair, 25 – 66th Way NE, Fridley, MN 55432 or send as a pdf file to bonjohn@comcast.net

Special Programs 2015:

All Programs which began in 2015 please check to see if you have paid the fee of \$300 for each of your programs. If not, please do so. Send payment to Candace Purcell at National Headquarters.

Updating Special Programs:

AVA HQs and the Regional Directors have heard your concerns regarding the large and increasing number of Special Programs. AVA President Dennis Michele tasked Bonnie Johnson, Special Programs Chairperson and Susan Medlin, SWRD and National Special Programs Chairperson, to come up with recommendations to address this issue for the January 2016 NEC meeting. Recommendations will include establishing an overall limit on the number of current Special Programs, a plan to transition from the current number of Special Programs to that desired number, establishing evaluation standards for Special Programs beginning in 2018, and updating the Special Programs policy to ensure that the guidance is clear and that the Special Programs enhance the walker's experience, rather than being viewed as a burden. Policy changes will be coordinated with the Governance and Policy Subcommittee of the Strategic Planning Committee. If you have any comments and/or recommendations regarding AVA Special Programs please contact your Regional Director or send them directly to Susan Medlin at sueammed@aol.com and please copy your Regional Director.

AVA is Celebrating 40 Years! - Susan Medlin, Chair, AVA 40th Anniversary:

Come to Fredericksburg, Texas on June 10 -12, 2016 and join in the celebration of the AVA's 40th Anniversary. The very first walking event was held in Fredericksburg on June 12- 13, 1976. Next summer we will celebrate this historic event with multiple walks, a bike event, and a swim. You'll enjoy the scenic countryside, the Wine Road 290 (featuring 15 wineries just minutes apart), a world-class WWII Museum and our many fine restaurants. Join us on the Saturday morning Founders Day Walk. We also offer 6 Year Round Walks, with new routes updated in 2014, and 2 County walks (Mason & Llano) that you can enjoy.



National Patch Contest:

AVA HQ is sponsoring a national contest to design the 40th Anniversary Patch. Send your 4" x 4" or 5" x 3" patch to sueammed@aol.com as a PDF. Original drawings can be mailed to Susan Medlin, 12527 Fern Creek, San Antonio, TX 78253. All entries must include the AVA/IVV symbol, our slogan "Celebrating 40 Years" and the words "American Volkssport Association". The deadline for patch submissions is December 1, 2015. The winning entry will be announced on January 8, 2016. The winner will receive \$100!

HQ Awards and Membership Coordinator – Karen Winkle:

Please make sure that the correct address is on your Event and Distance books, as well as on Membership renewals, so that Karen can verify the database listing.

Please keep in mind information that will be printed in TAW is sent in almost 2 months before the issue is sent out.

To view the Monthly Comparison Chart for new walkers completing their first 10 Events [click here](#), and to see the Monthly Comparison Chart for the Total Number of Awards processed [click here](#). The charts are also included as attachments.

Girl Scout 2015-2016 Patches and Order Form: ([click here for fillable order form](#))

To order the 2015-2016 Girl Scout patch simply complete the form and return to Karen Winkle at the AVA headquarters. You may fill out and submit the form by email to Karen@ava.org or print the form and submit by mailing it to The American Volkssport Association, 1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148.

National Volkssport Month – October 2015:

Patches for National Volkssport Month are now sold out. You may still order previous years patches as "B" awards.

HQ Events Coordinator – Marie Bebley:

Annual Financial Reports, e-postcards, and Officer Updates deadline is **November 15, 2015**.

- Please see attached list of clubs still missing 2nd Quarterly Reports ([click here](#)). All late reports are subject to \$10/report Late Fee.

AVA Executive Director's Updates:

The AVA Individual Stakeholder Online Survey is Ready!

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has completed the **Individual Stakeholder** online survey. The SPC is asking that anyone and everyone who has ever participated in an AVA event complete this survey. This survey is for **all individuals** to complete and not only AVA members.

Please take a few minutes and give the Strategic Planning Committee input on how you see the future of AVA and what things we need to change or add to keep AVA moving forward by clicking on this link and taking the short survey! ([click here](#)). Feel free to forward this survey to all your friends and anyone who cares about the future of Volkssporting in America.

You can find the full link to the survey here: (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AVA-Walker-Survey>)

It is preferred that you take this survey if at all possible online to avoid having to re-enter your answers into the survey program. However, if that is not possible the survey will be also distributed via email to everyone in the AVA database and it will also be posted on Facebook. A hard copy of the survey will also be posted very soon on the AVA website as a PDF so that it can be printed and completed with a pen or pencil and returned via mail to the AVA, attention Susan Ives, 1001 Pat Booker Rd, Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148. If you would like a hard copy of the survey mailed to you please send a request to Jessica at avawebmaster@ava.org with a name and address where we can mail you the survey with a return address. **Please complete and return all surveys by October 24, 2015.**

There will be a subsequent survey called the **Club Membership Survey** that will go out next week for the AVA state association and club officers to complete. This survey will address AVA challenges from a club and state association perspective and it will be emailed to state association and club officers so please make sure your email address is up to date on our database.

Special thanks to the SPC Membership sub-committee for all their time and effort in creating this survey!

Step It Up! The United States Surgeon General's "Call to Action" on Walking in America:

United States Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murthy, launched *Step it Up!*, the Call to Action on Walking and Walkable Communities on September 9th, 2015 in Washington, DC. The release calls on Americans to make walking a part of their daily activity and to take steps to make every community in America a great place to walk. To read more, [click here](#).

Your AVA HQs has prepared a generic Press Release on this topic that RDs and Clubs can complete and then use to announce the Surgeon General's Call locally to spur interest in existing AVA programs and events. To download the template of this press release [click here](#).

Also in support of this effort, the *America Walks* organization has announced that they will award micro-grants to groups proposing projects which:

1. Focus on strengthening or elevating community-walking programs, and
2. Fortifying the policies, systems and environments that create walkable places.

These one-time awards will fund 10-15 community groups up to \$2500.00 for activities designed to increase local walking programming and stimulate community demand for infrastructure improvements that provide accessible, safe walkable places for the entire community.

Grant applications are due by 5:00pm EDT on October 15, 2015. To learn more [click here](#).

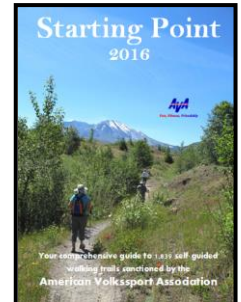
Get involved by becoming a partner on walking projects in your community. Pass out information about walking and its benefits at your events. To your communities offer your walks as safe places—another important goal of the campaign.

Read the report and check out the accompanying resources by [clicking here](#) and [here](#).

Tell us how you are getting involved beyond your walks so we can print it and inspire the rest of us!

CONGRATULATIONS! - Starting Point Cover Photos Contest Winners:

Congratulations to Jan Weeks, a member of the Asheville Amblers, Southeast Region, whose photo was selected for the front cover. Several Volkssporters are shown walking along the Mount St. Helens – Hummocks Trail located in southwestern Washington State. The back cover photo submitted by Sherry Sayers, President of the Woodlawn Wanderers, Rocky Mountain Region, captures a group starting out on their walking adventure at the Clear Spring Ranch walk in Fountain, Colorado.



A big AVA thank you goes out to the following individuals who submitted other photos for consideration: Diana Mighells, Dogwood Trailblazers; Robert McDaniel, The Upstate Pathfinders; Norma Wessel, Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association; Gayle Hendricks, Liberty Bell Wanderers; Frank Sayers, Rocky Mountain Regional Director; Dennis Proeneke, Colorado Springs and Linda Thompson, Peninsula Pathfinders.

And certainly last but not least, hats off to our contest judges AVA President Dennis Michele, John McClellan and Martha Korff. Their affiliations are the Asheville Amblers, Happy Wanderers, Southeast Region and Oregon Trails State Association, respectively.

There's still time to order your 2016 edition of the AVA *Starting Point*. October 16 is the final day for purchase of the hard copy guide to AVA sanctioned walking trails throughout America.

Orders are being accepted electronically at [AVA.org/administrative/clubs_only/ava club forms](http://AVA.org/administrative/clubs_only/ava_club_forms), or by email theresa@ava.org or telephonically 210-659-2112. The guide costs \$25 plus shipping charges. Remember, October 16, 2015 is the purchase deadline.



Strategic Planning Committee Members:

CHAIR: David Bonewitz serd4ava@gmail.com
VICE-CHAIR: Nancy Wittenberg newittenberg@gmail.com

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Atlantic: Helen Garamone hkgaramone@hotmail.com
Mid-America: Debra Kruep debmarkkruep@yahoo.com
North Central: Jeanne Miller jeanneno@gmail.com
Northeast: Doug Reynolds dougreynolds@juno.com
Northwest: Maryann Brown maryannbrown_1999@yahoo.com
Alternate: Ric Catron sempervirens@mindspring.com

Pacific: Kathy Bundy bunznkatz7@gmail.com
Rocky Mountain: Lynette Reagan lynwalks@hotmail.com
South Central: Ken Miles attymileskg@gmail.com
Alternate: Teresa Arnold arnoldtea@hotmail.com
Southeast: Marie Weber marie@netweber.org

Alternate: Loren Little lorenlittle@bellsouth.net
Southwest: Susan Ives suives@texas.net

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Wayne Holloway walkfriend@wildblue.net
Bob Wright rcwright_va@comcast.net
Chris Mellen walkpapuu@verizon.net
Stephanie Sinclair
Susan Medlin sueammed@aol.com



AVA Staff Support

Henry Rosales execdir@ava.org
Candace Purcell candy@ava.org

EX OFFICIO MEMBER: Dennis Michele president@ava.org

CONSULTANT/FACILITATOR: Bobbi Bilnoski bobbi@bilnoski.onmicrosoft.com



The American Volkssport Association
1001 Pat Booker Road · Suite 101 · Universal City, TX 78148
Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 · Email avahq@ava.org

Website ava.org

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