



*Fun, Fitness, Friendship*

December 2018

[www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org)

# CHECKPOINT



*This publication of the Checkpoint is sponsored by*

 **ADVENTURESABROAD**

## Upcoming NEC Meeting Deadlines

### National Executive Council (NEC) Meeting Announcement

The next NEC meeting will be held January 11 – 13, 2019 at La Quinta Inn – Tucson Airport, 7001 South Tucson Blvd, Tucson, Arizona 85706. (520) 573-3333. For more information on the meeting contact Samanta at [samanta@ava.org](mailto:samanta@ava.org)

### Call to Clubs for Agenda Items

#### **December 12, 2018 (30 days prior to meeting)**

All reports, with support documents, from Officers, Regional Directors, and Committee Chairs are due to the National Office. Email reports to [henry@ava.org](mailto:henry@ava.org)

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

#### **December 21, 2018 (21 days prior to meeting)**

NEC meeting packet with Agenda and all support documents is sent out to Officers and Regional Directors.

## AVA Programs—Debra Kruep, Chair

### Virtual Online Program 2019



Our friends to north would enjoy that! This program will run from January 1 to December 31, 2019. Look for the Walkin' Canada logo on the AVA website after December 15. The program cost is \$22.00 and you will receive an AVA Walkin' Canada T-shirt upon completing the walk across Canada. Canada has been scaled to meet our walking challenge.

Come join the Virtual Online Challenges for 2019. Get ready to stay active and have fun while exploring the country known for its hockey, maple syrup, and polite people. While physically walking anywhere in the USA or in the world, you can also walk virtually through Canada, the world's second largest country. We have partnered with the Canadian Volkspport Association to bring you many of the permanent IVV trails in Canada. Many of the cities we visit will have one or more IVV trails and we will bring you fun facts and highlight interesting places to see. Who knows? Maybe you will be so enticed by the beauty; you will have to visit them in person!



*"Just read in The Wanderer about next year's VOP. I have had a lot of joy and challenge in keeping up with steps for the last two programs, and am looking forward to being in the next one.*

*Many thanks, and thank you for your work on this. Because of some health issues, I am still doing a lot of steps, but am limited in my event participation and really look forward to this opportunity."*

**Perry Rawson**



**Fun, Fitness, Friendship**

## Regional Team Challenge

In 2019 we bring you not one, but two challenges right out of the gate. 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 which will be awarded to the region who acquires the most steps by the conclusion of the AVA Albany convention and award dinner.

Could this be your region? What a terrific way to get some friendly banter about the sport we love! Once enrolled in Walkin' Canada, you will receive an invitation to join your regions team by your Regional Director or a designated representative.

Sounds like a good time, eh? Put on your hat and boots and let's walk!

**Walker Tracker participants who answer the Wellness Metrics questions related to "Mood, Sleep, Heart, and Weight" once a week for the duration of their challenge will receive a free special award upon completion of the program.**

### Nominations Committee—Tom Jackson, Chair

#### Candidates for AVA National Officer

At the AVA Convention in Albany, NY in June, we will be electing the AVA President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer for the term of office from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021. If you are interested in being a candidate for one of these positions, December 11 is the deadline for submitting your Letter of Intent.

The Letter of Intent is just an email message with office being sought, candidate's name, official mailing address, phone number, and email address. Electronic submission of the letter goes to the chair, Tom Jackson at [nominations@ava.org](mailto:nominations@ava.org).

A confirmation of receipt will be sent via email, as well as an attachment of Election Guidelines for Officer Candidates. Late submission of the Letter of Intent will cease further consideration for Step 2 in the nomination process.

For more information, please contact Tom Jackson at [nominations@ava.org](mailto:nominations@ava.org) or (717) 677-6511.

### Training Development Committee—Ton Baltes, Chair

#### Convention Workshops

Pre-registration will soon open for the 21<sup>st</sup> biennial convention in Albany NY. In the pre-registration you will see information on the planned workshops beginning with exceptional history presentations organized by the dedicated volunteers from the Empire State Capital Volkssporters to compliment the convention theme—A Walk Through History. Your national board and AVA staff have been diligently working to line up timely and beneficial presentations to give you and your clubs tools to help us grow and operate more effectively. America Walks ([americawalks.org](http://americawalks.org)), a 20-year movement to get Americans on their feet and moving in safely engineered communities, will join us to educate on their mission and how they can partner with us to support our common goals. There will be some great discussions presented by our Info Technology Committee, Program Committee, and national staff on recently implemented improvements and projects that are moving forward. With the recent rollout of the GroupWorks communication platform for clubs and national leadership groups, we hope to also have a representative from GroupWorks at the convention to continue the education on their free tool. There will be much more to pique your interest. Whether you're attending the convention as a club representative or there as a supporting participant, I urge you to reward our presenters, who graciously donate their time and energy to develop these presentations, by taking in as many workshops as you can. Also, visit with our vendors, including the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation who will keynote our banquet, at their displays and deliver their information, along with the workshop lessons, back to all your club members. See you in Albany!

## Convention Co-Chair—Lea Darling

### 2019 Convention Update

Besides the great news of our convention speaker announcement being a member of the Crazy Horse Memorial sculpting Ziolkowski Family, we will have Graham Fawcett, IVV Vice President, attending!

We received a \$2,500.00 grant, written by Henry Rosales, from *The Michele L. Vennard Hospitality Grant Program of the Albany County Convention and Visitor's Bureau Fund, a fund of the Community foundation for the Greater Capital Region*. We are pursuing other grants and are hoping they too will have positive results.

The convention Red Lion Hotel is full, however, across the street at the Red Roof Inn, AVA has a second block of rooms. For those waiting to see the preregistration go live, preregistration will go live in December!

AVA has come up with many new topics for workshops to wet your inquisitive natures. History workshops will focus on areas where walks will take place. Besides the 3 convention walks and swim events, we will be offering 2 bike events. So, don't forget to pack those bikes, helmets and water bottles!

Many items on our "To Do List" are gelling and others are moving down the line towards completion. Our host of Committee Chairs have been meeting monthly from July 2017 and have really come together as a cohesive group working towards a common goal of putting on a First Class Convention for all volkssporters.

Happy Holidays Everyone.

## Convention Committee—Chris Yost, Volunteer Coordinator



### VOLUNTEERING AT THE AVA CONVENTION – WE WANT YOU!

From June 9-16, 2019 the Empire State Capital Volkssporters will be hosting the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial AVA Convention in the Great Northeast. The success of a convention is dependent upon many factors but one of them is **PEOPLE**, and more importantly, **VOLUNTEERS**. We are showcasing some great walks, workshops, entertainment, and vendors and to do them justice, we would like all hands on deck.

How can you volunteer? There are many places to help but here are a few to get you thinking. You can help setting up and taking down convention, Starting Point sign in and finish table, checkpoint, registration, parking attendant, transportation or information ambassador, meals, socials, charity events, selling merchandise, and as an event usher (such as a workshop).

Undecided and still want to help... sign up "Where I'm Needed" and a task will be assigned. To sign up simply go to [www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org), select "Conventions" and click on "2019 Biennial Convention" which will take you to the convention website. Select "Volunteer", complete the form with your information, the days and times you wish to volunteer, and the places you would like to help and then click "I VOLUNTEER". That's it!

Once all of the tasks have been identified and a final volunteer schedule is developed, you will be notified of your assignment. Don't let your favorite job get taken by someone else. Sign up to VOLUNTEER NOW! Thanks in advance for making the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Biennial Convention in Albany, New York a huge success.

## Convention Silent Auction Committee—Sue Grey, Co-Chair

### Albany/AVA Convention SILENT AUCTION information:

We are ready!! The website is ready for your silent auction donations. Here is how to use the website: go to <http://walkescv.org/ava2019convention/welcome.html>. Click on the blue silent auction button. A clear explanation on how to donate is at this site.



Please be sure to let us know if an item will be sent or brought with you to the convention.

We welcome all donations to help AVA and our Northeast 2019 Convention. We recommend items special to your area, state, or club. A few ideas: a basket of goodies, handcrafted items, art, volkswalking memorabilia, walking apparel, cheese boards & cheese, books, and wine. Health and beauty products, shampoos, conditioners and lotions contribute nicely to a basket meant to pamper it's lucky winner! T-shirts, hats and other sports memorabilia also make great contributions. Small, lightweight items thoughtfully packaged for easy mailing are best; but anything that you can contribute will be appreciated.

Success depends entirely on the generous donations we receive. Thank you in advance for supporting our Albany 2019 Convention.

AVA is a 501(c)3 organization, making your donation tax deductible. Simply complete the donation registration form on the convention website to tell us about the donation you plan to send. Information from this form will be used to regenerate a receipt when your tax deductible donation is received.

## AVA Programs—Debra Kruep, Chair *Cont'd*

# #OptOutside

Thank you to the 43 clubs who joined the AVA #OptOutside campaign by submitting their #OptOutside information to AVA and allowing additional publicity through the AVA website, Facebook and Twitter. If you have not sent your participation number in please email [programs@ava.org](mailto:programs@ava.org) and let us know how many walkers enjoyed the day and if your club had any newcomers.

## Youth

Congratulations to the Mon Valley Trailblazers on hosting The Moon Pie and Star Party Walk on November 3, 2018. This was the first time the club invited scouts to join their IIV traditional event. Forty seven scouting walkers joined the six volksmarchers. This was the largest turnout at an event for the new Pennsylvania club! Walk Together patches were earned by all scouts. The Trailblazers collaborated with the Amateur Astronomers of Pittsburg and the Mingo Creek Park Observatory. Scouts were treated to Moon Pies and telescope viewings after the Walk. Special thanks to Mon Valley Trailblazers president Lori Lamberski.

Congratulations to Gateway Milers for hosting the very first AVA ACE-Y event, The Mastodon Ice Age Hike November 10, 2018. The Club advertised their event by attending the local Girl Scout Roundup with a cookie decorating activity, scouts decorated cookies to look like the Walk Together Patch while Gateway Miler members passed out flyers to leaders and adults. The Mastodon Ice Age hike attracted 156 pre-registered scouting walkers. The walkers were treated to a 2.2 wooded limestone trail with Ice Age Mastodon trivia, admission to the park museum, a trail mix station and hot chocolate, no IVV stamp but a lot of fun! Goody bags were given to all the Gateway Miler members who walked with the scouts and their families, promoting fun, fitness and friendship. Walk Together patches were earned by all scouts.



Southeastern Missouri Council scouts making Walk Together cookie patches! - Debra Kruep

## AVA National Office Team

## Awards & Membership—Karen Winkle

Now that you can scan your Event and Distance books in for validation, please make sure that all of the information is visible. The length of the Rose Book is 12 inches, and paper is 11 inches. The Orange book does not pick up the 4<sup>th</sup> page on the scan. You can “shrink to fit page”, or no more than three pages per scan. Books will still be processed in the order I receive them.

Stamps and Books

Thank you to everyone in the office who gave a hand in mailing out Starting Point books and stamps. Clubs should be receiving them in their mailboxes pretty soon. All clubs received extra handles for the 2019 events. Please use and keep all handles sent to you. You do not need to return old handles to the office.

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](mailto:hector@ava.org).

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

[Photo Release Form](#)      [Categories/Guidelines](#)      [Official Entry Form](#)

Starting Point Changes

Starting Point changes on the AVA website are only for events published in the Starting Point. 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](mailto:hector@ava.org).

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

Driving to the Convention? Need to stop and stretch your legs along the drive, why not take a walk. Click on image to see brochure of walks along the way.



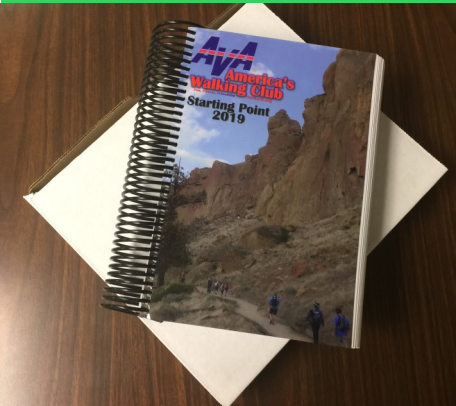
Walks to Remember

The year is almost over. Old walks will end and new walks will begin. What’s a walk that will end or begin for you? Share it with your friends, share it with AVA. If you are in need of assistance marketing December/January walks and events please email your walk or event information to [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).



2019 Starting Point books are still on sale! Get them while they last. You can use the pre-order form to order your very own copy.

Click here for [order form](#).



## Together We Walk for Health, Together We Make a Difference

The Big Give 2018 was a huge success! We led the way to \$70k and together we raised \$74,936! This upcoming year, the Big Give will be held on March 28, 2019. We are just a few months away! We hope that with your contributions, 2019 will be as successful as previous years. When you donate to the Big Give you don't just donate to our organization, you donate to a cause. Our cause is to help bring Fun, Fitness, and Friendship to all. Our physical fitness events help relieve stress, serve as a preventative measure for heart disease and cancer, help improve memory in those who suffer from Alzheimer's, help lower the risk of obesity and provide a support group for those battling depression. Our commitment to continue to bring health and wellness to our communities is our priority, but we need your help. Consider making a contribution, big or small, to the Big Give 2019 to help us continue our mission. Together we walk for health, together we make a difference. Let's make the Big Give 2019 another BIG success!



Donations can be made online on March 28, 2019 through [www.biggivesa.org](http://www.biggivesa.org). If you are not able to donate online on March 28, you may donate online starting March 21. You may also donate to our campaign by sending a check to the AVA National Office through May 31. Big Give updates will be announced in the TAW, Checkpoint, website, and social media.

## 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.

### 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

## Accounting Specialist— Marian DeVaul

In an attempt to streamline processes, reduce expenses, become eco-friendly and more efficient, we are asking AVA club Treasurers to send an email letting us know if you would like to begin receiving your invoices and statements via email. The obvious advantage to emailing invoices and statements is the money saved on paper,

## Shop Online and Support AVA!

With the Holidays right around the corner make sure you get the best deals by shopping with Goodshop and AmazonSmile. When you're shopping with Goodshop or AmazonSmile, you're not only saving money for yourself, but you are also raising crucial funds for the AVA.



Shop at <https://smile.amazon.com> and 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase will be donated to AVA directly from Amazon! Simply sign in or create an account, select **American Volkssport Association Inc – Universal City** as your charity of choice and begin shopping. Remember, always start at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. It's that simple!



Sign up for Goodshop by going to [https://www.goodsearch.com/login?return\\_path=%2Finvite-friends](https://www.goodsearch.com/login?return_path=%2Finvite-friends). Your user profile will help keep track of the amount you've raised. Select **American Volkssport Association-AVA** from the participating organizations and begin shopping. At no cost to you, a portion of all eligible purchases will go to your chosen cause. 100% of the donation amount displayed on merchant's Goodshop page will go to the charity or school of your choice.



print, envelopes, postage and employee costs. Further, an email eliminates the lost mail issue, provides an opportunity to store electronic files versus paper, and provides a timelier receipt of the invoice. Your cooperation and support in this effort is very much appreciated. Please address your emails to: Marian DeVaul at [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org).

## AVA's Executive Director's Update—Henry Rosales

### ***2019 Event Calendars Are Here! Get one before they are all gone!***



- This is a large calendar (size 11x17) with plenty of room to make notes!
- Holidays, AVA deadlines and weekend walking events are listed in this calendar.
- National events are highlighted in this calendar.
- The price is only \$13.50 plus shipping!

Be the first to order your calendar by calling Marian at 210-659-2112 or email her at [marin@ava.org](mailto:marin@ava.org). Limited supply is available.

Special Thanks To Our Calendar Sponsors:

**Adventures Abroad**  
**Andy Bacon**  
**Capitol Volkssport Club**  
**Chris Mellen**

**Susan Medlin**  
**Suzi Glass**  
**Walking Adventures Int'l**

## **A New Club Communications Tool**



GroupWorks is a free club management platform that simplifies member communications, handles event scheduling, connects clubs to potential sponsors and frees up quality time for group leaders and members to do more of what they love, walking!

In an effort to grow AVA and streamline communication for all members we have decided to explore GroupWorks club 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
- Collect payments
- 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 Clubs on trips and events

Complimentary for ALL AVA Clubs to implement and use!

The first step in the rollout process is our newly created **AVA Club Officers** group, which will provide you all with a forum to communicate as a group.

Shortly, you will receive 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 Club Leaders" in the upper left of the screen.

As well, we have asked GroupWorks to create chapter groups for ALL individual clubs, 220 in total, so that you have the ability to use this tool for your group with minimal difficulty. Over the coming days, a GroupWorks associate will be adding you to your respective club so that you can experience the leader tools and functionality.

GroupWorks is now hosting online demonstration webinars to help you get started should you like further assistance in adding your members and getting it all set up. Email notifications will be sent with dates, times, and login information for the webinars. The information will also be posted on the AVA website.

Be advised GroupWorks does not sell, rent or share member names, email addresses, physical addresses, phone numbers or other personal information to or with advertisers or marketers or sellers of advertising or marketing services, unless you give them permission or as otherwise provided in Disclosure of Your Information section of the Privacy Policy.

Additionally, they have implemented measures designed to secure your personal information from accidental loss and from unauthorized access, use, alteration, and disclosure. However, the safety and security of your information also depends on you. Where they have given you (or where you have chosen) a password for access to certain parts of their Website, you are responsible for keeping this password confidential. We ask you not to share your password with anyone.

This is only a summary of the key points about their data privacy and security. Their Privacy Policy provides the complete details about why they collect your information and how they use and protect it. Click here for the privacy policy.

[app.groupworks.com/#/docs/privacy\\_policy](http://app.groupworks.com/#/docs/privacy_policy)

Regarding the requirement to enter address and date of birth as part of the account setup process, please note that city and year of birth are the only required fields. They collect this data in order to improve the offerings of content to our members based on their personal location. In addition, we are interested to have a general idea of the age trends on this platform, as this data has implications in terms of the types of features and usability we support. Again, they do not sell, rent or share ANY personal data with third parties. They require this information to verify that all members of the platform are real people, and not fake accounts or “bots”.

Lastly, please note that participation in GroupWorks is voluntary. **Any member who does not wish to participate can easily remove his or herself from the platform by clicking the Unsubscribe button at the bottom of any email coming out of GroupWorks.**

**Audit Update**—Last year’s audit (F/Y 2017-2018) has been completed by Armstrong, Vaughan and Associates. It will be posted on the AVA website in January after it has been approved by the National Executive Council. The cost of the audit was \$10,000.

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HOLIDAYS  
FROM  
AVA  
NATIONAL  
OFFICE!**

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## Support Our National and International Friends

### National



### When You Stay at the Red Roof You Save and the AVA Gains!

The AVA will receive 5% of all room revenues when you book at a Red Roof Inn using the Volume Plus Number (623002)! Red Roof' Inn's great rates and quality rooms means that you won't be breaking the bank to afford a comfortable room. For more information [click here](#).



### 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](mailto: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.



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