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## AVA Candidates OFFICER

AVA President



Nancy Wittenberg

AVA Vice President



Susan Medlin

AVA Secretary



Cecilia Miner

AVA Treasurer



Ed McCabe

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### AVA NOMINATING COMMITTEE - TOM JACKSON, CHAIRMAN

We have one candidate for each of the AVA National Officer positions for the term of office from July 3, 2021, to June 30, 2023. Elections will be held at the Meeting at the AVA Convention in Madison, Wisconsin.

The candidates are:

AVA President: Nancy Wittenberg from Puyallup, Washington  
 AVA Vice President: Susan Medlin from San Antonio, Texas  
 AVA Secretary: Cecilia Miner from Woodbridge, Virginia  
 AVA Treasurer: Ed McCabe from Dripping Springs, Texas

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE - HENRY ROSALES

## THE AVA IS MOVING IN DECEMBER!

The AVA Board of Directors has agreed and supports the decision to relocate the National Office to a new site that better reflects who we are and what we do. Our current lease expires December 31st and unfortunately, we were unable to come to a satisfactory agreement on a new lease with the Landlord.

We believe this move is in the best interest of the AVA and those we serve. Our new locations will include office space in a highly visible walking community and storage/stamp production space in a nonprofit community center that is operated by a CEO who is also a Volkssporter and has offered us access to resources in the center that will benefit the AVA and our clubs. *We cannot wait to have you visit our new home!*

***Due to the relocation, the National Office will be closed from December 17-27.***

This may seem like many days, however, keep in mind we have two holidays and a Friday closure during this time frame therefore it is five working days. We are closing the office so we can effectively relocate and be ready to function at 100% January 1, 2021. Employees will be checking emails periodically and answering the phone if possible. **On December 17 and 18 we will move the server therefore, on these two days clubs will not have access to the ESR and Website.** This means for a couple of days during the closure we will have zero phone and internet service and zero ability to print emergency stamps or perform the day to day operational functions of the office. We understand there is always the potential for an emergency. In this situation we ask you to contact your Regional Director first and if you still need assistance you can call **510-206-4159** during the closure only. Please leave a message at this number if no one answers and we will get back to you right away.



Please advise your club members of this closure and thank you for your patience while we relocate.

***PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY MAIL TO THIS ADDRESS UNTIL AFTER JANUARY 1, 2021.***

## ELEMENT3 HEALTH, INC. PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Over the past few months, you have gotten to know Element3 Health, which has been partnering with us to offer free virtual clubs during the pandemic. Many of our AVA walking clubs have already joined the Element3 Health network to boost attendance at events and help raise much needed funding for our clubs.

Building upon this partnership, I am excited to announce the AVA has signed a Memorandum of Agreement to expand our engagement with Element3 Health by allowing them to market all AVA Seasonal, Year Round (YRE), and Traditional events to their Element3 Health members.

Nearly 8 million people in the Element3 Health network will have the opportunity to participate in our Year-Round and Seasonal self-guided events which gives each club a great opportunity for increasing event participation and additional revenue.

There will be no cost or additional administrative burden to our clubs when an Element3 Health member participates. When an Element3 Health (E3H) member attends a YRE/Seasonal event they will sign the registration log and identify themselves as an E3H member, then take a map and go walk. E3H will be responsible to make sure their members have signed an electronic waiver before they are advised where to find the walk box. The waivers will be sent electronically to the National Office where they will be archived so clubs do not need to worry about this. E3H will reimburse clubs \$1.00 for every YRE/Seasonal event each of their members attends. E3H will track the number of participants and send a report with the reimbursements to the AVA. The AVA will credit club accounts at the end of each quarter.

When an E3H member attends a traditional or group walk the E3H member will identify themselves as an E3H member (they will most likely have an identification card or number) and should be allowed to participate without paying the \$3.00 registration fee upfront because they are an E3H sponsored walkers. E3H will track the number of participants and send a report with the reimbursements to the AVA. The AVA will credit club accounts at the end of each quarter.

In addition, E3H has offered to pay any additional map printing costs that clubs might incur as a result of their members learning about and attending club YRE, Seasonal, and Traditional events as well as an additional 1.75 for all club social events an E3H participant attends provided they are entered in the E3H system.

It is important to emphasize, E3H participants are not free walkers. They are sponsored by Element3 Health. All Clubs need to do is enter the number of E3H participants in their online participation reports for YRE/Seasonal and Traditional events under the Free/E3H category. Clubs will also continue to report free walkers under this same category (Free/E3H). We understand the current fee for YRE/Seasonals is \$1.75, however these are new referrals, individuals who would not have attend your walks had they not been referred by E3H. This fee will be reviewed in May 2021 and renegotiated with E3H as necessary. The immediate goal is to generate more participation and revenues for clubs. Long term we would hope some of these participants become volunteers and club members.

Joining the Element3 Health network is not required for clubs to benefit from this program. However, we highly encourage clubs to join the Element3 Health network so clubs can maximize the benefits of this program. If you would like to learn more about this program and how your club can get involved join us for an informational webinar Thursday, December 10, 2020. Element3 Health will be going over new and exciting program updates and will be answering any questions you may have on this new initiative. This is a great opportunity to grow your club membership and increase your revenue. Don't miss out!

Event: Element3 Health Program Update Webinar

When: Thursday, December 10, 5:00 p.m. Central Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://element3health.zoom.us/j/97389532404>

Meeting ID: 973 8953 2404

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,97389532404# US (Tacoma)

+13462487799,,97389532404# US (Houston)

Find your local number: <https://element3health.zoom.us/u/aeBNLRxqao>

*"I want to take a moment to thank each of you for sharing your passion for walking and the great outdoors with people – particularly seniors – who have been in great need of the activities and events the AVA provides. Connecting people to walks and events has brought people joy during this difficult year, and I thank you for the role you've played and continue to play in spreading the love of Volkssports."*

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

## **APPROVAL OF THE RESTATED AND AMENDED AVA BYLAWS AND CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION (ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION)**

Drafts of the Restated and Amended AVA Bylaws, Certificate of Formation and a Summary of major changes was sent to all club Officers/POC's for review and input in October. A webinar with members of the AVA's Governance Committee and Board Members was also hosted November 18, 2020. The purpose of the webinar was to give clubs the opportunity to speak directly with Board Members on the recommended changes. Clubs will now be asked to vote on the changes sometime in March 2020. Details about voting and a final draft of the two documents will be sent to club officers via email and will also be posted in the January Checkpoint.



If you have not already, we ask you to get involved in the governance of our organization by sharing your input with your regional Board Member (Regional Director) before December 12, 2020. At the Electronic Board Meeting on December 15, 2020, the Board will be asked to recommend approval of the final draft of the Amended Bylaws that will then be sent to the clubs.

Thanks to those clubs and individuals who have already provided feedback on the current draft bylaws. We have tried to clean up all the various formatting and typographical problems that were identified. In addition, given the feedback on the section dealing with future changes to the bylaws and the fact that this process was included as a recommended best practice, not one forced by Texas law, it is expected that the Governance Committee will recommend to the board that the change process be returned to the current way we do business.

## COMMUNICATIONS - SAMANTA SANCHEZ



### HOLIDAY SHOPPING WITH A CAUSE

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. Sign up for Goodshop by going to [https://www.goodshop.com/register?return\\_path=%2F%20login%3Freturn\\_path%3D%2Finvite-friends](https://www.goodshop.com/register?return_path=%2F%20login%3Freturn_path%3D%2Finvite-friends). Your user profile will help keep track of the amount you've raised. Select AVA: America's Walking Club 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.



Shop at [https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/homepage/ref=smi\\_chpf\\_redirect?ie=UTF8&ein=74-2164037&ref=smi\\_ext\\_ch\\_74-2164037\\_cl%20and%200.5](https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/homepage/ref=smi_chpf_redirect?ie=UTF8&ein=74-2164037&ref=smi_ext_ch_74-2164037_cl%20and%200.5) and 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase will be donated to the AVA directly from Amazon! Simply sign in or create an account, select American Volkssport Association Headquarters - Universal City as your charity of choice and begin shopping. It's that simple!

### A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

We can't thank you all enough for the amount of love and support you have shown the AVA even in these difficult times. Just last month, we continued to receive additional Big Give donations. Thanks to your generosity and support, our Big Give 2020 campaign raised a total of \$104,196.02! This year's campaign has been the most successful fundraiser to date. 583 individuals came together to support our mission, 161 of them were first time Big Give donors! Of those 583 donors, 101 clubs raised \$18,012.92 and 482 individuals raised \$86,183.10. We couldn't have done it without you. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU! We also want to give a special thanks to all our Peer-to-Peer fundraisers. Together, our Peer-to-Peer fundraisers raised \$9,886.05 and introduced the AVA to 40 new donors. The work they do to raise funds for the AVA is so important and it is a big contributor to the success of the Big Give. Thank you all for your support.



Congratulations to our first ever Regional Challenge Winner, the Southwest Region. The Southwest Region raised the most amount of funds during this year's campaign. Congratulations!



## CONGRATULATIONS GRAND PRIZE WINNERS!

Helen Garamone & Nebraska Wander Freunde Trailblazers say cheese! You were the lucky grand prize winners of a free 2021 Convention Registration. Your contributions to this year's Big Give made you eligible to participate in our AVA Giveaway!

## ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

### STARTING POINT BOOKS:

If you have pre-ordered a 2021 Starting Point book, we should be receiving and shipping them out by the end of December or the first week in January. The delay in printing this year is due to COVID event cancellations. Thank you for your patience.

### OFFICE RELOCATION:

Our plan is to be in our new office space January 1, 2021. Please note the following important dates:

1. We will be moving the office the week of December 17 – December 27
2. Internet services will be down December 17 & 18
3. Do not send mail from December 10, 2020 to January 10, 2021
4. We will be unable to process books and merchandise orders once the move begins

We will get our new address out to the AVA clubs and members as quickly as possible. The new location will also be posted on the AVA website. Thank you for your cooperation.

## 2021 BIENNIAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPENING SOON!

We are putting the final touches on the convention online registration system. As soon as we finish, we will open online registration. To register go to the AVA website. We are excited to report the convention center we will be utilizing for our meetings and events has been accredited by the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC). This means the facility has implemented the most stringent protocols for cleaning, disinfection and infectious disease prevention and demonstrates the center has strict safety protocols in place and is prepared to operate safely for all our conventioners. Special thanks to Jeffrey Giddings for all the work he put into the online registration system! See you in Madison!

## 2021 CENTURION PROGRAM BEGINS JANUARY 1, 2021 BOOKS ON SALE NOW!

### CHANGE OF CLUB ADDRESS INFORMATION:

If your club has a change of address, POC or club officers, please make sure that in addition to updating that information in the ESR, that you email these same changes to Marian. She will need to update any necessary information into our accounting program. [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org)

## EVENT STAMPS:

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. Please note the new fee schedule that went into effect October 1, 2020.

- 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 more quickly (Emergency Stamps) will cost \$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.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST - HECTOR HERNANDEZ

### SCAMMERS

As a reminder cyber scammers are very smart and are trying new sophisticated ways to steal your information and money! Please be aware of who your emails are coming from and what they are asking for. These scam emails like to use names and emails addresses that look familiar so please look out for misspellings or added numbers and NEVER respond to an email from the AVA that requests additional information or money or requires you to click additional links. The AVA will never request your information because we already have it on file. We do not have a info@ava.org email account.

### STAMPS AND HANDLES

Stamps and handles for 2021 YRE's and Seasonal events will be mailed by the first week of December. Extra handles are on backorder at this time. If you need an extra handle in addition to the one handle that comes with a new sanctioned event, please email Hector at hector@ava.org with the name of your club and the number of extra handles you want. Please remember, free handles go out for new Year Round and Seasonal events. Extra handles cost \$9. If you have further questions email hector@ava.org.

Please check all upcoming events and let me know if you are missing any stamps besides the January and 2021 stamps. Since we are moving, the stamp machine will be down so if stamps are needed I will need to produce them as soon as possible.

### Example of Scammer's email:

Dear Member,

One of our members is in dire need of the entire American Volkssport Association help and it will really be appreciated if we all can support her. Kindly see her fundraising campaign below, thank you for your time and support.

Mary would like you to support  
**Anderson Recovery Journey**  
by making a donation and helping  
spread the word.

Anderson is a 4 year old boy who has been diagnosed with Fanconi anemia; a very rare and dangerous type of anemia. This causes him to have physical abnormalities, shortness of breath and nose bleeding.

Anderson has to be transferred to the OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Oregon. It's going to be a long, painful and expensive process. He will need to undergo a bone marrow transplant as soon as possible and if he doesn't get the procedure done, we will lose him. The entire process will cost \$52,000 and we have been able to raise \$21,000.

We are asking for your financial support as both me and my husband are self-employed, leaving us with poor insurance coverage. We are knocking on your generous heart to support us financially in this journey, no amount is too small and any amount given will truly make a huge impact.

[Make A Donation](#)

#### What is GoFundMe?

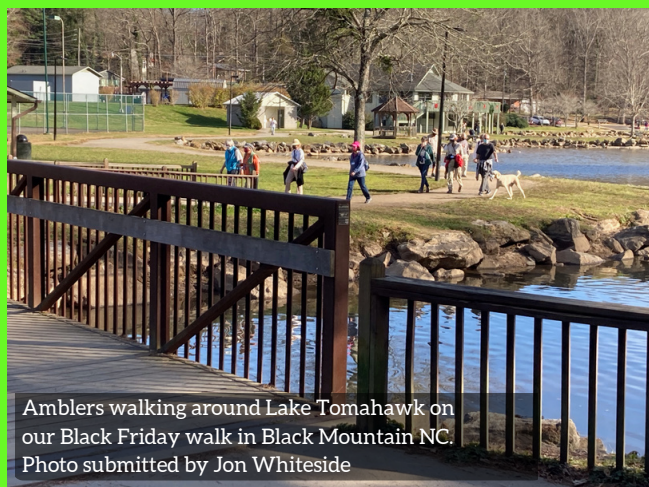
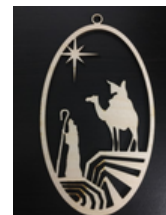
GoFundMe is a personal fundraising website that has helped thousands of people raise millions of dollars for the things that matter to them most.

## ORNAMENTS

Two years ago, I began making ornaments for the clubs. This year, I'd like to add additional ornaments and also the ability to customize. If you click on the pdf, you will see the different ornaments that can be cut. I can add your Club Name & Year or maybe even your logo depending on the quality of the image. If you'd like to order a customized ornament, please email [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org) for pricing. Also, please have a look at our updated bell ornament with the new AVA logo.

[Click here](#) to see club merchandise pdf.

[Click here](#) to view larger ornaments



Amblers walking around Lake Tomahawk on our Black Friday walk in Black Mountain NC. Photo submitted by Jon Whiteside



Volkssporters and other walkers climb the ridge along the walk trail. Photo submitted by Marting Callahan

## SUPPORT OUR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

### NATIONAL EVENTS

US FreedomWalk Festival (USFWF) 15-17 October 2021. It's a go! A Guided Walk will be held for all AVA walkers. Click on image to go to the official website.



### 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](mailto:hector@ava.org). Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.



**AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB**  
ESTABLISHED 1976

*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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