

CHECKPOINT ✓

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Fun, Fitness, and Friendship!

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Virtual Online Programs—Jan Van Vlack



It's Time to Walk the Appalachian Trail!

Would you like to get credit for all your steps... whether you do a Volkswalk, a walk in your neighborhood or park, or in the Mall, etc.? All Steps count in this fun and Challenging Virtual Online Program. The purpose is to get people to walk more, "visit" places they haven't been, and have a fun way to track their progress on a Virtual Map.

Once you pay for the program at http://cb.ava.org/Appalachian_Trail.php, you will receive instructions on how to create your account on Walker Tracker (the application we use to track everyone's steps and progress) so you can track your steps. This can be done on Walker Tracker's Website or Walker Tracker's Smartphone app, and either manually or by syncing a device.

Last year, we virtually walked across Canada. In 2020, we will be virtually walking The Appalachian Trail! The steps for these routes have been adjusted so that you will need to walk an average of 5,500 steps a day. We kept it low so more walkers could finish, and allow for sickness, vacations, etc. It is a fun way to "walk" places we have not been, seeing pictures and gathering information. You can befriend people so you can easily encourage their progress and make fun teams if you would like. This is different than our regular Special Programs where you "collect" items on the actual Volkswalks you complete.

Beginning January 1, 2020, you will see your progress on a chart, along with others' progress. There will be a Pacer Rabbit that will show you where you should be to complete the Challenge by 12/31/20. If you need help, email Jan at vop@ava.org.

We also have a Regional Traveling Team Trophy Challenge for AVA Regions. This is based on an aggregated average, so the size of the Team doesn't matter. The 2020 version starts 1/1/20, and at the end of the Challenge, the trophy will be taken away from the 2019 Winner (Rocky Mountain) and be awarded to the 2020 Winner, the Region with the highest aggregated average.

Join today!

I am excited to have finished my first Special Program, the National Park Centennial. Drove from Iowa to Segment 4 of the Ice Age Trail in Wisconsin for my last walk.—Diana Whited, Iowa's Walking Club



Accounting Specialist—Marian DeVaul**4th Quarter Participation Reports Due**

It's time to submit your 4th Quarter Participation numbers as they will be considered late on February 1st. Although you have until January 30th to file your reports, it is always much appreciated when you file as soon as possible.

Clubs now have the option to print invoices online utilizing the New One-Page Participation Data Entry Report Form

The new one-page participation data entry form has been deployed. Once the participation data has been confirmed/submitted, an "Invoice Download" button will appear. The user needs to click on this button to get (download) their AVA Invoice as a pdf file. This file should be printed, and the top portion of the first page sent via US Mail to AVA along with the club payment (check). The AVA National Office will no longer be sending out quarterly invoices, unless explicitly requested to do so by the club.

For the 4th Quarter only, clubs requesting the AVA to mail a copy of their invoice will not be assessed a processing fee. However, beginning for the 1st Quarter, April 1, a \$5.00 Shipping and Handling fee will be charged for this service.

Note: Just in case you missed the detailed instructions on how to complete the **NEW 4th Quarter Participation Reports** in the December 2019 Checkpoint, I am providing them in the link below. Please call with any questions or concerns and we will gladly help you.

[Click here for detailed instructions.](#)

Starting Point Books 2020

As of mid-December 2019, all pre-ordered **2020 Starting Point Books** have been mailed out. If you haven't received your Starting Point book please email Marian at marian@ava.org

We will place an order for additional 2020 Starting Point Books on Friday, January 31st. If you missed the chance to order one, you will have one last opportunity. Please call Marian@ava.org and place your prepaid order for a **2020 Starting Point book**. We will *not* order any extra books.

Note: There will be an increase in price depending on how many are ordered. We will contact you with the price before placing the order.

Communications— Samanta Sanchez**2020 Insurance Certificate**

The General Certificate of Liability Insurance for 2020 is now available for clubs through our AVA website. [Click here](#) to download and print a copy of the certificate. If you are in need of a Certificate of Insurance for an Additional Insured, please submit your request through your club's ESR. [Click here](#) for step by step instructions on how to submit your insurance request online. Please email Samanta at samanta@ava.org for any questions or concerns.



Jan and Dave on the Appalachian Trail.—Photo submitted by Tom Jackson

#BigGive2020

2020 brings new excitement for the Big Give. As we get close to the day, we will publish Big Give updates in the Checkpoint and social media. Stay tuned for announcements on Big Give prizes, target times to donate and new AVA giveaways. This year, a special prize will be awarded to the region with most donors. More details to come.

Don't forget to mark your calendars and join us Thursday, March 26th for a day of giving. Early giving will start March 19th and run through March 25th. You may also mail in your donations anytime through April 30th to the American Volkssport Association: 1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148. Thank you for your support!



Calling All Our Walking Friends

The Big Give is just a few months away. Our goal for 2020 is to raise \$80,000! This year we are asking you to ask your friends to contribute on behalf of the organization through the Big Give's Peer to Peer Program. Last year, majority of our new donors were gained from participating Peer 2 Peer campaigns. These small fundraising campaigns are a great way to introduce our organization and mission to new individuals.

Join us and become a fundraiser for your favorite walking organization during our annual Big Give campaign. Just visit our profile on the [Big Give website](#), click on the Fundraise button, create an account, log in, and personalize your profile. Donors will be able to make contributions starting the 19th of March. Donations received through your personal campaign will count towards AVA's overall amount raised, so spread the word! If you need assistance creating or personalizing your page, please refer to this step by step handout by [clicking here](#) or send an email to emily@ava.org. Note on subject line Peer to Peer Help.

Make the Ask, Double Your Impact!

Employers want to give to causes you care about the most. Many companies will match employee donations dollar-for-dollar through their Employer Matching Gifts program. Matching programs double the value of an employee's gift to the AVA. This year make the ask to your employer to match your Big Give contribution and double your impact!

Executive Director's Update—Henry Rosales

Questions and Answers on the new logo

Q. Will the host city receive a new AVA banner or two for the 2021 Biennial Convention?

A. All clubs will receive a free new AVA banner once they have been designed and printed.

Q. Will Local Clubs be receiving new AVA bumper stickers to replace those sent out a couple of years ago to appear on walk boxes?

A. Yes, all clubs will receive new stickers for walk boxes by the end of December.

Q. Similar goes for the trail marking ribbons and trail marking arrows that have the old AVA logo? Will clubs be able to order a new version? And will the convention host club get a supply to put our new foot forward in July 2020, and in 2021?

A. Clubs will receive stickers they can put on trail marking arrows and small banners to cover the old logo. The AVA will not order trail marking materials until we have exhausted **most** of the current stock. We encourage clubs to continue using the old trail marking materials until further notice. Yes, the goal is to have all new branding materials implemented by the 2021 convention.

Q. Will the current AVA logo be gone forever?

A. Unfortunately, yes unless at some point in the future the AVA goes retro.

Q. Will our official name be changed from "The American Volkssport Association" to "America's Walking Club"?

A. Currently there are no plans to change our official name "American Volkssport Association". Our Doing Business As (DBA) name is America's Walking Club. It is important clubs continue to use our official name on all **legal documents and contracts**. The DBA can be used on brochures, flyers, marketing materials and social media outlets.

Q. Do we need to include the IVV logo also along with this new logo?

Look at our new website Landing Page ([click here](#))

Thank you all for your comments and input on our new Landing Page. Keep in mind this is a work in progress and an ongoing effort as we transition information from the old site to the new one. Additional pages/tabs will be created within the next few months and eventually all the old will be replaced with new exciting information and features! Clubs can access all existing club information from the legacy website by clicking on the Clubs Only tab.

Please email website comments to Hector@ava.org.

Element3 Health, Walking Referral Program Update

The AVA continues to discuss with Element3 Health details on the participant referral program referenced below in the December Checkpoint. The regions Element3 Health would like to target first include the Pacific, Rocky Mountain, and South Central Regions.

Once details on how this referral program will work have been finalized, they will be circulated to the Regional Directors and clubs in these regions. Clubs who are interested in participating will need to respond to their Regional Director before implementation can begin.

There may also be an opportunity for individuals to travel to areas where we do not have an existing club to set up a “walking group”. These details are in a preliminary stage and will be announced once completed. Please contact your Regional Director for updates.

Once this program moves into implementation it will be on a fast track. Clubs who are interested in participating in this referral program should be thinking about ways to engage new members who may not be as interested in walking as Volkssporters. Ways to engage these members could include inviting them to club meetings, walks, and special events.

October 2019 Checkpoint

During the next few weeks the AVA National office and members of the Club Development and Support and Membership committees will be meeting with David Norris, Chairman and CEO at Element3 Health, and Spencer Morgan, Founder and Chief Community Officer at Element3 Health. This is the company that created the health referral platform GroupWorks, which we currently use.

The purpose of the meetings is to determine how we can work together on two mutual interests; Walking Participation and Club Growth. Mr. Norris would like to get his customers walking and joining clubs because as we well know, once someone joins a club the chances of them walking regularly become greater!

Mr. Norris wants to help our clubs grow by referring people who are interested in walking to our clubs. His company receives referrals from businesses and insurance companies who incentivize their employees and customers to stay healthy by participating in a variety of outdoors physical fitness activities. Walking is one of the top ten activities on their list. Mr. Norris is seeking us out to take the lead in supporting his referred customers to walking activities. He realizes we are not the only walking organization in the country, however, because of our ongoing relationship with GroupWorks and our track record in planning walks, he is willing to explore how we can work exclusively to engage his referred clients in walking activities across the country.

One of the biggest challenges the AVA faces is club capacity. With many of our members aging out we lack enough volunteers and club members to support all the work that goes behind planning a good event. If we are successful in working with Mr. Norris this could mean more participants, more club members and possibly reimbursement of club membership dues to participating clubs! We will also have to be creative in figuring out how to engage referred participants in areas where we have no clubs. The excitement here is we could start “walking groups” that would eventually lead to club formation in new areas!

If your club is interested in participating in this referral system/Element3 Health Program, please contact your Regional Director. Full participation details will follow in the November Checkpoint. The main club requirement is the willingness of the club to Accept, Welcome, and Engage referrals in your walking events and club membership. Let’s “AWE” them together!

I look forward to a Great New Year for the AVA!

IT Committee—Mike Green, Ph.D., Board Liason

The New One Page Participation Entry Scheme

The new One-Page YRE/SE Participation Report is now available for club use in entering their 2019 Q4 participation data. There is a link, "Features of the Data Entry Scheme" under the "YRE/SE Participation Report" button on the club's ESR Navigation Page. Clicking on this link displays a pdf containing further details on this new web interface.

A number of clubs have already successfully entered their participation data using the new One-Page interface and have downloaded their 2019 Q4 YRE/SE Participation Invoice.

Some initial feedback indicated some confusion as to the operation of the single page entry scheme where it was assumed that a club had enter, save, and confirm ALL of their data in one sitting or session. This is incorrect. There is no need to enter all participation data in one sitting/session. There is a save button for each event. Any saved data for individual events is preserved between login sessions. In other words, the club can enter and save the data for a couple of events then close their browser, then later log back into the AVA ESR system and pickup where they left off with the previously saved data in place.

It is entirely possible for two people with the club's ESR credentials to enter data on the same form at the same time. To avoid confusion, they should be working on different events. If they are working at the exact same time and on the same event, then the last person to save the event's data will override the first. (This was also true of the old participation data entry scheme.)

Programs & Special Programs Committee—Tim Miner, Chair

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB LEADS THE WAY FOR "NATIONAL WALKING WEEK"

On January 5th, 2020, the Board of Directors voted to make a bold statement to the world and declared that the first seven days of April will be called "National Walking Week." This activity will coincide with "National Walking Day" as sponsored by the American Heart Association for the last twelve years and takes place on the first Wednesday of April. This year, National Walking Day occurs on Wednesday, April 1, and National Walking Week includes the days of the first through the seventh. The creation of National Walking Week allows the focus to be on all the reasons we walk in AVA and in the country, and it will give greater flexibility for everyone to be included in activities since there will always be weekend days to participate. The actual wording of the declaration is [linked here](#).

The first National Walking Week gives AVA and its member clubs and individuals the ability to do several things. First, it will create a "critical mass" of activity leading to visibility and publicity for our work in the areas of fitness, fellowship and fun. Second, it gives the AVA and its clubs the ability to create alliances and coalitions to promote walking together for all the reasons mentioned in the declaration. Partnerships will be the key to AVA exposure and growth in the future.



National Walking Week 20/20: Focused On Walking

Every club is encouraged to hold a walking activity sometime during the first seven days in April. Traditional events are great. Coming together to do a year-round in a group walk is great. Please look at the benefits of owning and using a "Traveling Guided Walk" stamp. This stamp allows the club to hold multiple events during the seven days that are not already sanctioned. It gives greater flexibility to reach out to new communities and activities that would be ripe to co-host a walking event with you.

Because this week is the AVA's opportunity to show the benefits of walking to a wide range of activities and causes, there will be "neutral" sites created on the internet and in social media to allow collaborations. These links will be on the AVA's new website and shared throughout the internet world and in our traditional media. During the seven days, please ask yourself the question, "How does my walking benefit my community?" Go out and tell the story!

Walk with Pride

The board and the national program committee hopes that every member will use the national focus on walking during the seven-day period to really “strut.” We have a lot to be proud of for our walking. But when you walk, does the rest of the world see what you are doing? There is a reason that athletic teams wear uniforms. It builds unity and showcases the accomplishment. Do you wear things that say, “I’m doing something special?” For over a dozen years, walkers from around the world have come to the U.S. FreedomWalk Festival in Virginia and carried their “home flag” as a proud traveling-walker. At least during National Walking Week, please “walk to see and to be seen.”



For more information or help planning and collaborating with your home community activities for National Walking Week 20/20, please contact the chair of the national program, Tim Miner, at timothy.miner@walkvirginia.org.

Peggy Watts, GDMVA, Iowa's Walking Club

2020 Centennial Celebration of the Iowa State Park System

Hosted by the Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association, Iowa's Walking Club, and the Nebraska Trailblazers.

For the 2020 centennial celebration of the Iowa State Park system, GDMVA, Iowa's Walking Club and the Nebraska Trailblazers are organizing self-guided walks in 20 parks across the state. The “Walk 20 Parks in 2020” project has set a goal of attracting 3,000 people to walk between May 1st and October 15th, 2020. We want to entice both residents and visitors from out of state to experience the beauty that Iowa and our state parks offer. For more information [click here](#).

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



Click on image for more information

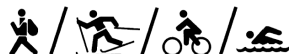


Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

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.



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