



VOLUME 29, NUMBER 3



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

March 2020

www.ava.org

CHECKPOINT



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Fun, Fitness, and Friendship!

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Big Give 2020 News

WALK LONG, STAY STRONG!

2020 is year six of the Big Give! Last year, our generous donors raised \$81,665.70! 409 individuals came together to support our cause. This year, our goal is to surpass \$80,000 once again. Why donate to the Big Give? Our walking programs 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.


Walking is known to be the most popular form of exercise in the United States. The average American takes about 5,117 steps per day, yet we are the nation that walks the least from any industrialized nation. Lack of physical activity is the second leading cause of preventable death in the country. Only about half of adults get enough aerobic exercise to gain significant health benefits.

We are more than a walking organization; we are a walking organization dedicated to help our communities live a longer, healthier life. In fact, walking can add almost two years to your life! Many of our members walk not only for the health benefits, but for the friendships and memories created on the trails. Whether you walk for Fun, Fitness or Friendship, our mission is important, but we can't continue it without your support. Please consider making a contribution, big or small, to the Big Give 2020 to help us continue to bring our fitness programs to current and future generations. Walk long, stay strong with America's Walking Club.

Checking the maps on the trail.



How You Can Help Us Leverage Additional Prize Money with Your Donation



TIMES TO DONATE ONLINE


Pacific Time Zone - March 25th, 2020 10pm-4am

Mountain Time Zone - March 25th, 2020 11pm-5am

Central Time Zone - March 26th, 2020 12am-6am

Eastern Time Zone - March 26th, 2020 1am-7am

Match Minutes - 9:01-9:02am CST & 9:01-9:02pm CST



1. On March 26th, you will have 24 hours (one day!) to give to your favorite walking club.

The day of giving will begin at 12:00am on March 26, 2020 and close at 12 midnight. Invite family, friends, co-workers and everyone you know to go online to the Big Give website and donate to America’s Walking Club. The minimum online contribution per Big Give guidelines is \$10.00. Early online giving will start March 19th and run through March 25th for those who are not able to donate on March 26th. All early gifts will count towards our total amount raised and end-of-day prizes. [Click here](#) to donate online to your favorite walking club – us!

2. Contribute During a Specific Time (Day-Part Prize)

The Big Give will once again be awarding Day-Part Prizes. \$1,000 prizes will be awarded to organizations with the most unique donors during specific time frames and under each of the four different budget categories. We are asking our donors to please make your online contributions during the time frame listed below based on your time zone. The goal here is to get as many unique donors as possible during this time to win \$1,000! A unique donor contribution is a donation that come from a distinct individual – all different names, different email addresses, and different credit card numbers (last 4-digits).

End-of-Day Prizes

Category	Budget	1st	2nd	3rd
Extra Small	\$0 to \$49,999	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000
Small	\$50,000 to \$249,999	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000
Medium	\$250,00 to \$999,999	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000
Large	\$1,000,000 +	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$1,000

3. End-of-Day Prizes

For this category, prizes are awarded to nonprofits based on the size of their budgets. AVA’s budget falls under the Medium Size Big Give category. The nonprofit with the most money raised online during March 19 – March 26 will have the opportunity to win 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.

4. Match Minutes

This year, the Big Give will match every gift received online up to \$100 until their \$10,000 pool runs out for each designated minute. There will be two match minutes this year, one at 9:01am-9:02am CST and the other at 9:01pm-9:02pm CST. Each match minute will have a \$10,000 match pool. Match minute dollars are distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

How You Can Participate

1. Share our [Big Give Flyer](#) with clubs, family, and friends.
2. Mail donation checks to the AVA National Office before April 30, 2020.
3. Make an early online contribution anytime from March 19 to March 25, 2020.
4. Make an online contribution the day of March 26, 2020 to help us leverage additional cash prizes.
5. Donors can now make bank to bank transfer donations. Minimum donation amount for a bank transfer is \$100. *Fee for bank transfer donations is \$3.00 per transaction. Fee for all other online donations is 6.2% + \$0.30.
6. Fundraise on behalf of the AVA by creating a Peer to Peer page.
7. Individuals or clubs can hold a walk-a-thon to raise a few extra dollars for the AVA.

5. Calling All Fundraiser Champions!

Join us and become a fundraiser champion for our cause during the Big Give 2020. 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. One Peer to Peer campaign can bring up to four new donors! We are the champions for our cause, let's keep our mission going.

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 the [Crash Course on Peer-to-Peer handout](#). If you need further assistance, please send an email to emily@ava.org (note on subject line: Peer-to-Peer Help) or call the [Peer-to-Peer Hotline at \(210\) 659-2112](#).

How Else Can You Support During the Big Give?

1. 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!

2. Hold a Walk-A-Thon!

Big Give Committee Member – Bob Hall

Give a Woof! Bob Hall's Walk-A-Thon for America's Walking Club

Come and join me and Panda (my Giant Schnauzer) in a walk-a-thon to raise a few extra dollars for our favorite walking club

AVA! We plan to crisscross Vancouver, WA and Portland, OR the week before Big Give (Mar 18-25), going from peak to peak and butte to butte. Total distance is 200 km. You can support us virtually by pledging any amount per km and donating on Mar 26th at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/vshakqa> (it's a shortcut to my Big Give Peer-to-Peer page.) If you live in the area, we welcome the company on any stretch of the walk you care to join. If you'd like to create your own walk-a-thon, I would be glad to share the template with you.

Contact me at bobhallfamily@aol.com or call me at 360-369-8296 for further details [click here](#) for pledge sheet [click here](#).



Raising Funds for Your Committee?

Once again, #BigGive2020 donors will be able to earmark their donations to the AVA committee of their choice. However, this year, committee chairs will need to create a Peer-to-Peer page to raise funds for their committees. The purpose behind this initiative is to attract new donors. In previous years, donation levels were set up at amounts of \$125 each and were set up to earmark donations for committees. We found that many of our new donors were discouraged by the large amount and the restriction of their donation. By redirecting committee donations to you Peer 2 Peer pages, you have the opportunity to personalize your page and share it with as many people as you want. You will be able to share with others why you're fundraising for your committee, set your own goal, easily share your fundraiser page link and be able to personally thank your supporters! It is great way to share with others why AVA and its mission is important to you. Donors are also able to earmark their donation by leaving a comment when making an online contribution.

Are You Up for the Regional Challenge?

To add a little fun to our annual fundraiser, the region with the most amount raised during the Big Give will win a prize. The *Walking Stick of Kindness* will be awarded to the winning region and it will be passed down from winner to winner each year. Is your region up for the challenge?



Give Big, Win Big!

For the past three years, our Big Give donors have been eligible to win AVA prizes. This year is no exception and donors have a higher chance to win! AVA members who donate during the Big Give are eligible for the following prizes:

- For every 25 clubs that donate, one free traditional sanctioned event will be raffled
- For every 50 unique donors, a 2021 Starting Point Book or AVA T-shirt will be raffled
- One club and one individual will be the lucky grand prize winners of an all paid 2021 Convention Registration

► • **Individuals who donate \$50 or more during our target hours (12am-6am CST) will receive a free AVA T-shirt IF, the AVA wins this prize** ◀◀◀◀◀

#BigGive2020 Pep Rally

Live in the San Antonio area? Come join us at the #BigGive2020 Pep Rally! We will be joining other participating nonprofits to celebrate the Big Give. Bring your AVA pride and gear! There will be live music and media. Join us Wednesday, March 25th at 11:30am CST at the Hemisfair Park located in Downtown San Antonio.

Facebook Live

On March 28, join us Live on [Facebook](#). We will be livestreaming our Big Give Celebration .



View our Big Give videos on our [YouTube channel](#).

\$20,375 Already Raised in Matching Funds!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CURRENT BIG GIVE MATCHING DONORS

David Bonewitz, AVA President
Nancy Wittenberg, AVA Vice President
AVA Board Members & Deputies
Tater Tours, Mary Ptacek



Finance Director—Erin Grosso

Element3 Health, Inc. Referral Program

The goal of the AVA's partnership with Element3 Health, Inc. is to improve and maintain the overall health of E3H participants through AVA's activities. Element3 Health, Inc. provides a unique matching service focused on engaging older adults in their passions to increase social, mental and physical activity for healthy living.

Roles, Responsibilities & Processes

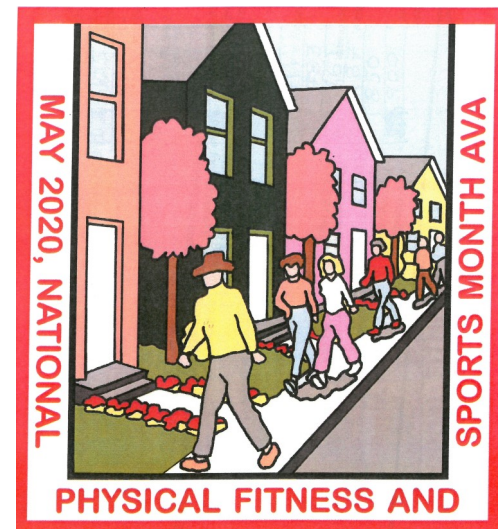
- **Element3 Health (E3H)** will orient AVA clubs and leaders to the E3H Program and partnership, including New Member On-boarding Experience
 - E3H will match AVA clubs to E3H participants
 - E3H will send AVA a list of their participants on a monthly basis
 - E3H will introduce their participants to AVA club leaders via email as part of E3H's referral process
- **AVA National office** will establish E3H participants as AVA members, by:
 - Adding the member to applicable email distribution lists
 - Creating E3H member profile in AVA's database that establishes them as a member
 - Sending E3H member a Welcome email and / or New Member Welcome Packet, including membership card and vouchers for 20 AVA walks
 - Support E3H in a monthly member activity data reconciliation effort
- **Local Clubs** will provide an intentional and welcoming New Member experience, including an introductory in-person meeting with Club Leader / POC
 - Maintain a dedicated Leader who manages group communication and calendar of organized club activities
 - On a monthly basis, provide E3H with E3H member activity for organized Club activities
 - Work with E3H to generate partnership awareness through press announcement(s), social media posts, promotional / marketing videos, etc.

How does a club enroll & get referrals in the Element3 Health, Inc. Program?

1. AVA club will identify a club leader ~ this person will be the POC for the E3H program & the E3H referrals
2. AVA club will join the Element3 Health Network
 - a. Go to: www.element3health.com
 - b. Click on: For Clubs
 - c. Click on: Join the Network
 - d. Fill out brief questionnaire and Submit
 - e. Copy and paste this link into your browser to go to questionnaire page. <https://element3health.com/join-our-network/>
3. Notify Erin Grosso (Finance Director at National Office) that your club has joined the Element3 Network. Please provide the name and email address for POC. erin@ava.org
4. Erin will contact you and mail Element3 New Walker Packets (at no charge to the Sponsor Club) that will include:
 - a. AVA brochures: New Walker Information & Come Walk With US!
 - b. 1 – IVV Event Record Book stamped Element3 Health
 - c. 20 – AVA Walk Vouchers
 - d. An AVA Element3 Health Membership Form
5. Once an AVA Club has joined the E3 Health Network, E3H will begin to match their participants with AVA clubs.
6. When Element3 identifies a match to your club, an email will be sent to the Club's E3H Leader letting them know that they will sending a referral to them.
7. Within 24 hours, a second email will be sent to the Club Leader introducing the E3H referral and asking the Club Leader to reach out and invite the referral to attend a meeting/walk/coffee.
8. At the first meeting/walk with the E3H referral the Club leader will give the referral the Element3 New Walker Packet, explain the IVV book, the vouchers and have them complete the membership form. The Club Leader needs to email/mail the form to the AVA – Attn: Erin Grosso.
9. The AVA will mail/email the E3H referral a membership card and an electronic copy of the TAW.

How do the Element3 Health Walk Vouchers work?

1. AVA will pay the Sponsor Club \$10 (2 payments of \$5 toward club membership dues). 1st payment will come after the E3H participant completes their first club-related activity (this can be the in-person meeting with the Club Leader). The 2nd payment will come at the end of the E3H participant's 2nd quarter of membership.
2. E3H member will receive 20 prepaid vouchers that can be used for any AVA sanctioned walks. These vouchers are provided in each E3H New Walker Packet by the Sponsor Club's Leader. The AVA asks all Clubs to honor these vouchers even if they are not currently participating in this program.



Please see the attached design of the May 2020 National Physical Fitness patch. AVA asks that clubs and individuals please pre-order to make sure you get a patch. Individual price is \$5. For club pricing, contact [Marian](#) or click on image for pdf.

3. E3H members will present one of these prepaid vouchers at the Start Box or Start table when participating in an AVA sanctioned walk.
4. The ESR Quarterly Participation Form will now include an “E3H” Option for reporting these participants/E3H Vouchers.
5. Club Officers will report these walkers as E3H on the Quarterly Participation Report and mail the vouchers to the National Office.
6. Clubs will be paid or credited \$1 for each E3H voucher redeemed and submitted.
7. All Club payments will be paid or credited at the end of each quarter after participations reports have been filed.

Note – This is a new program and process for all of us and we made need to work out a few kinks. Please be patient as we get this program going and contact me with any questions or concerns. erin@ava.org or (210) 659-2112. Thank you, Erin Grosso

Executive Director’s Update—Henry Rosales

Element3 Health Referral Program - Conference Call For Participating & Interested AVA Clubs

The AVA National Office and Element3 Health, Inc. will begin hosting a series of conference calls for clubs interested in participating in the Element3 Health Referral Program. The purpose of the calls will be to update participating clubs on how this program works and answer any questions. We decided to do conference calls so everyone can participate without having to deal with a computer. Unfortunately we can only take up to 20 calls per conference call. The conference call system will allow up to 20 callers to connect and after that you may not be able to get through unless you dialed the wrong number or someone hung up. If you cannot get in after trying a couple of times please call back at the next scheduled conference call. If additional calls are needed they will be scheduled and notice will be sent to Regional Directors and Club POC’s.

Conference Call Information, Times and Dates:

Wednesday (3/11/20) 11am CT

Thursday (3/12/20) 4pm CT

Monday (3/16/20) 5pm CT

Call in number, no password needed:

833-214-3983

Presenters:

Henry Rosales, Executive Director, AVA

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

Erin Grosso, Finance Director, AVA

The Publicity Committee Seeks Your Input on the TAW!

As part of the AVA rebranding and marketing campaign the Publicity Committee is reviewing our National Publication, The American Wanderer (TAW). Your input is much appreciated to help us better understand how we should proceed with this national publication.

To share your input please complete the following short survey.

[Click here for survey.](#)



National WALKING Week! April 1st – 7th, 2020

Clubs are encouraged to download the National Walking Week Declaration and use it as a template to approach local community officials and ask them to declare the first seven days in April as National Walking Week!

Congratulations to Arlington (Virginia) and the US FreedomWalk Festival for having the local board of supervisors affirm the first seven days of April as National Walking Week in their jurisdiction. [Click here to view Declaration.](#)

[Click here to download](#) the National Walking Week Declaration template.

[Click here to download](#) the National Walking Press Release template

To submit event information [click here](#).

The declaration of "National Walking Week" is an opportunity to celebrate walking, our primary and most historic activity as a national organization, for all the many reasons we take to the trail. The dates of the first to seventh of April come from the "historic" declaration of the first Wednesday in April as "National Walking Day" by the American Heart Association in 2007. That organization abandoned that focus on walking in 2019, and in a letter this year to the AVA Executive Director, wished us well as we pursued this important emphasis beyond the health reasons of the original "Day." The January 2020 proclamation by the AVA board expands the day to include seven and the

weekend when many of our recreational events take place. The proclamation also mentions reasons for walking like mental health, cultural and natural tourism; all the many health benefits including heart, joints and movement, age-prevention, and diabetes; relationship-building (fellowship) and community-building and infrastructures; spiritual connections to the world around us; and, family bonding over many generations.

But National Walking Week goes beyond just doing traditional or year-round trails, it is our time to connect beyond the traditional audience of the AVA and its clubs. Invite your local government, county leaders, or state to not only pass a resolution supporting walking in their jurisdictions, but actually use that proclamation to join you on the trail and get some "public exposure" through the press. It is also wonderful time to introduce yourself to your local tourism board and get their backing and publicity for your activities. Have a luncheon and honor your volunteers and start-point locations.

Speaking of starting point locations, there is a new poster that you can download and display in all your locations that announces the vendor's support of National Walking Week. It helps announce that a walk starts at that location. Please use it.

Congratulations to the US FreedomWalk Festival Club which just received its proclamation of support for Walking Week in Arlington, Virginia. Let's see more proclamations in the coming weeks.

Special Programs for 2021

As we turn the first quarter of 2020, walkers are asking about the programs on tap to begin in 2021...

Please consider National Walking Week, a very special "Special Program" that goes beyond just "collecting stamps." While many activities are planned this year, there is a real potential for more in 2021. Every club needs to focus on this time to help get the recognition for what we do and, most importantly, what we contribute to our communities. Why does your club make life better in your local town, city, county or state?

For more traditional "scavenger hunt" activities you can expect an announcement at the end of March with several focus ideas. Beginning in 2021, all special programs will have an alliance with another organization related to the theme. This gives the AVA a chance to expand its market of walking products and to build local relationships between clubs and local chapters.



Click image to use this flyer at your starting point locations (traditional and YRE) to show their support of National Walking Week.

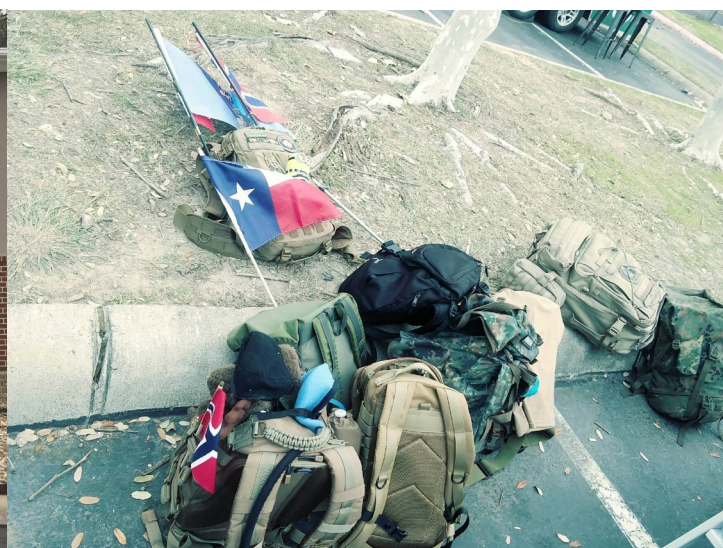


Iowa is Pasture Perfect

Howdy partners!! Suzybelle here. I am so udderly excited about our state park centennial program for this summer. I just can't wait to see all my old buddies again and make some new ones. I hope you are making plans to come for a visit this summer. There is so much to do in the Iowa state parks, you can't help but have fun!! The 20 parks we've picked pasture perfect!! If you like to camp, we've got you covered. Most of the parks in the program have camping facilities, that vary from primitive to full hook-ups, a few parks have hike-in camping available. If you don't have your own camping supplies, but would love a night in the outdoors, several parks have cabins available. One park, McIntosh Woods, even has a couple of yurts for rent. YURTS, how cool is that!!! Of course, the cabins, yurts & campsites are very popular; make your reservations soon. Reservations can be made through iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com. You will also find maps, photos, park descriptions and lists of amenities there or at www.iowadnr.gov/parks.

In addition to the great walks and fun camping options, many of the parks offer water activities for you to enjoy. Most of the parks boast lakes with beach areas and fishing, both relaxing activities after a long walk. Give in to your sense of adventure, grab a friend or loved one (or a couple), your camera and come explore our parks. Start your adventure with a hike along a trail with a breathtaking view, learn about native species, relax with a water activity, maybe roast a marshmallow or hot dog. Watch The American Wanderer and The Checkpoint for more information on the Walk 20 Parks in 2020 program. The fun starts May 1st and goes until October 15th. I just can't wait to see you!! Please come!!

For additional information visit the Iowa's Walking Club website, lowaswalkingclub.org or the Nebraska Trailblazers website, netrailblazers.club. Questions – walk20in20@gmail.com.



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



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.

Reminder: The National Office is closed at 1:30pm every first Friday of the month for employee development.



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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