



Tuesday morning walk the Sacramento Walking Sticks on a National Walking Week walk.



CHECKPOINT

WWW.AVA.ORG

AVA BOARD - CARL CORDES, VICE CHAIR

IVV CONGRESS OF DELEGATES 2024

The IVV Congress of Delegates met in Canberra, Australia March 20th. AVA was represented by four delegates; Leslie Stone, Delores Grenier, Fred Sheets and myself. Note our delegate expenses were not funded by the AVA. Delegates from 14 member countries and the Presidents from the three Continental Associations attended.

Horst Volkmer, IVV Honorary President, praised the IVV Strategy Plan for work that has been done and the next phase. He urged all delegates and countries to "Bring new life into IVV!" IVV President Giuseppe Colantonio (Italy) extended thanks to AVA and the volunteers for putting on an outstanding 18th Olympiad in San Antonio last year. And he complimented AVA for promoting the health and fitness emphasis of IVV.

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AVA Vice Chair Carl Cordes and IVV President Giuseppe Colantonio at Aussie Peace Walk closing ceremony

Outgoing IVV Vice President Graham Fawcett (Canada) noted many accomplishments of the IT Committee and Marketing Committee he chaired and as IVV webmaster. Work continues on QR codes and International IVV Rating system for walks. Long due facelift to the official IVV-web.org site and programming enhancements will be deployed soon. The IVV Facebook page was launched. The [IVV events](http://IVV-events) website is adding walks in non-IVV member countries.

Presidium officers elected for two-year term were Giuseppe Colantonio IVV President, Spike Elliot (UK) IVV Vice-President, Albert Huber (Germany) Treasurer and Emil Dannemark (Belgium) Secretary. Positions on IVV Arbitration, Audit, and Disciplinary Committees were elected. David Bonewitz was elected to chair the Disciplinary Committee. Delegates voted to accept application from Belgian Volkssport Federation to host the next IVV Congress of Delegates meeting in Butgenbach Belgium on June 9, 2026. IVV Luxembourg presented their bid to host the 2027 Olympiad in Coque Luxembourg June 14-19, 2027. The delegates approved the bid.



IVV Secretary Emil Dannemark (Belgium), IVV Vice President Skip Elliot (UK), IVV President Giuseppe Colantonio (Italy), IVV Treasurer Albert Huber (Germany)

Among motions approved was a revision of IVV Special Programs to eliminate T-shirt, cap and vest awards due to postage and increased prices. Effective April 1, 2024 IVV new World Cup, Europe Cup, and Pacific Cup special program books will be reduced to 20€ each including postage and award. Upon completion a patch and certificate will be awarded. Membership fee increases for National Member Associations approved as well as revision of fees charged to Direct Member Clubs.

IVV Honors bestowed by IVV President included 50 year certificate for IVV Belgium, 25 year certificate for IVV South Korea and IVV Pin of Honors for outgoing Presidium Vice President Graham Fawcett and Treasurer Walter Motz.

PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING NOTICE

The AVA National Board of Directors will meet Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. Central Time Zone. This will be a virtual meeting on the Office 365 Teams platform. To access the meeting [click here](#). If you have problems accessing the meeting, please contact Hector at 210-659-2112 or email him at hector@ava.org. The meeting link will also be posted on the AVA website with the agenda.

Meeting Deadlines:

April 19, 2024: Agenda items due to the Board Chair, Nancy Wittenberg, at chair@ava.org, please copy henry@ava.org

May 1, 2024: Officers, Board Members, and Committees written reports and all supplemental documents for the board meeting are due at AVA National Office. Email reports and all supporting documents to henry@ava.org

May 7, 2024: Meeting information package emailed to Board Members and Deputy Directors

May 14, 2024 – Board Meeting, 6:00pm Central

ADDITIONAL INSURED CERTIFICATES FOR CLUB EVENT

AVA clubs do not need to request additional insured certificates for club officers or clubs. Under the AVA's general liability policy, all clubs in good standing, and their officers, are covered automatically. Adding clubs and officers to an insurance request should be avoided since it requires additional manual effort by the insurance company which could result in an increase in next year's insurance premium.

Should you have questions contact henry@ava.org.

AVA ONLINE MONTHLY WEBINAR – APRIL 17, 2024 @ 7:00P.M. CENTRAL TIME

The next AVA online seminar will be Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 7:00pm Central. The registration link will be on the AVA website, or you can [click here](#) to pre-register for the event. If asked for a passcode the passcode is AVA.

Special Guest Host: Steve Sandridge, Rocky Mountain Region Board Member

March online webinar presenters include:

Grouper Updates (Formerly Element3 Health)

Presenters: Spencer Morgan, Founder & Chief Community Officer

Updates will be provided on all partnership programs with Grouper as well as information on how clubs and individual members can participate. Please bring all your questions to share!

The AVA Mobile Walk Application

Presenters: Jeff Giddings, Atlantic Region Board Member and Walk Application Committee Chair & Debbie Johnson, President, Broadminded Media, LLC

Learn more about plans to develop an AVA mobile walk application and share your input on the types of features you would like to have on the application.

GROUPER PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

Element3 Healthcare is now called Grouper. We currently have two programs with them.

Program 1. (Traditional Program)

Grouper currently refers new walkers to AVA YRE's & Seasonals (self-guided walks), Traditional Walks, Group Walks, and club socials, and Grouper participants should register the same way as any other walker. The only difference is they do not pay. Grouper referred walkers should check the box on the registration form or start cards that says E3H (AKA Grouper walker), and they must sign a waiver. If your registration log forms and/or start cards do not have an E3H box, just have them write E3H by their name. When contacted by these new walkers please educate them on how our walks work and be inviting. Remember, these new walkers do not pay any fees, they just sign in and they are potential new members!

Clubs get reimbursed \$1.00 from Grouper for all referred walkers who attend a YRE & Seasonal self-guided walk. The reimbursement will be issued via a credit on the December invoice. Grouper tracks these referrals and then sends a report to the AVA. There is nothing that a club needs to do or report to receive this reimbursement. However, in order for clubs to get reimbursed \$1.75 for all Grouper referred walkers who attend a Traditional Walk, Group Walk, or Cub Social, the club must report the participant has attended these events by logging into the Grouper portal and confirming their participation. Clubs will also receive reimbursement for these participants via a credit on the December invoice.

Note, for clubs to market Traditional and Group Walks and social events and receive the \$1.75 credit for referrals who attend these events, clubs must register and create an account on the Grouper platform. A club does not need to do this for YRE/Seasonal self-guided walks because this is managed directly by the National Office.

This is the same program we have had with Grouper (Element3 Health) for the past year.

[AVA Club Leader Interest Form \(google.com\)](#) (Club registration on Grouper platform)

Program 2. (New Program)

Grouper will pay the AVA Associate Membership and Club Membership Dues (for primary club only) for those who qualify through their insurance plans. Members must register on the Grouper portal to see if they qualify for this reimbursement from Grouper. Members who qualify will be asked to report activities monthly or quarterly. The membership dues reimbursements are sent directly to AVA members from Grouper. The AVA does not process any of this information and is not responsible for payments from Grouper. Also, AVA members who qualify for this reimbursement receive no additional benefits from the AVA and must still pay fees for all AVA events.

This is a new program with Grouper and more information can be found in the March Checkpoint by [Clicking here](#).

[Membership qualification form](#)

CLARIFICATION ON GROUPER MEMBERSHIP REIMBURSEMENT

It has come to our attention that AVA members who qualify to receive reimbursement from Grouper for their membership dues are being sent a congratulatory message that can be misinterpreted. While Grouper identifies these AVA Members as Groupers (or Grouper walkers) this has no relevance to the AVA. All AVA members are still required to pay walk fees for all events. Should you need further clarification contact henry@ava.org

CLARIFICATION & REPORTING PROCEDURES ON AVA POLICY FOR CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER

The AVA continues to work with the IT committee on a reporting process for children 12 and under. Once this has been completed, instructions on how to report these participants will be sent to all club officers. In the meantime, please continue to report children 12 and under as you have in the past. If you are no longer charging a fee for children 12 and under, simply do not report them. All minors 17 and under must have a minor waiver release form signed before participating in any AVA event.

[AVA minor Waiver form](#)

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - DIANE HOWELL EVANS, CHAIR

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events are designed to promote walking and to motivate new walkers and the “OG’s” of our walking community to get out there and see the USA! Do you have an idea for a Special Program for 2025? Are you and/or a fellow club member willing to manage this special program? If yes, please share your idea with your club officers and membership at your next meeting. If the club likes your idea and agrees to host the special program, please contact the Special Programs Committee for further information on submitting a proposal at Programs@ava.org. The Committee is looking forward to suggestions and proposals for future Special Programs from our walking community.



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

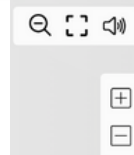
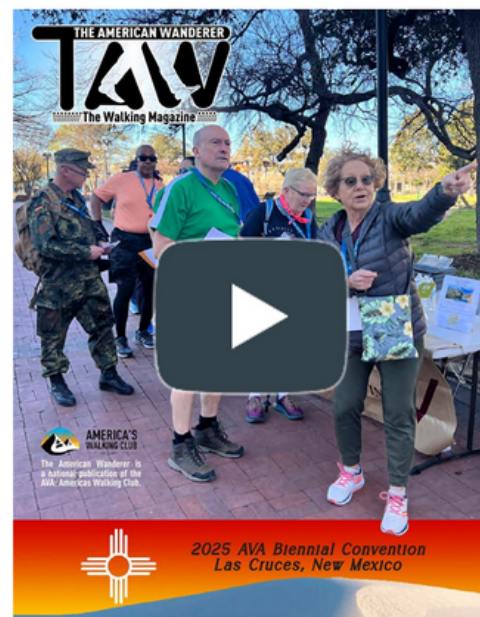
UPDATES

The TAW e-magazine was emailed to everyone in our email database on April 1. This is free to everyone, so please share with your club members, friends, and others asking what we do. This is one of our marketing tools, to spread information about our wonderful sport. If someone would like to sign up for the newsletter, they [can sign up here](#). Also, we appreciate your thoughts to make it better. Please send comments to publicity@ava.org.

The next TAW will be out in June; therefore, the deadline is April 25. We are going back to the original schedule of June, September, December, and March. Please send stories and photos to taw@ava.org.

Congratulations to Glen and Doris Conyers for the [article in the Prospect-News](#) in Missouri, on their club, Dogwood Trailblazers. If you have had any media about your club or volkswalking, please [email me](#).

Pro Tip: If you zoom in by clicking the magnifying glass you will see boxes with a plus and minus in the right corner. You can use these to continue to zoom in on the magazine if needed.



AVA ELEVATOR SPEECH

Just in case you get caught up in an elevator and are asked “What is the AVA or American Volkssport Association?”, you may use the description below. It is always nice to share a story or one of your fond memories about Volkssporting! Special thanks to the AVA’s Publicity Committee for drafting this.

AVA is America’s Walking Club, which is the largest organized walking organization in the United States.

We are dedicated to promoting health and wellness by providing fun-filled, well-planned, and informative walks. These walks are non-competitive, which allows participants to walk at their own pace. We also support hikes, bike rides, swimming, and in some regions, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

We have more than 180 clubs across the United States, with more than 2,500 events each year. Visit our website at ava.org to locate a club and walks near you.

ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

STARTING POINT BOOKS

We have a limited number of 2024 Starting Point books available for sale at a cost of \$15.00, plus shipping and handling. Don't miss the opportunity to buy this year's book! For purchase, please e-mail marian@ava.org, or call 210-659-2112.

This bound 7 ½” x 9” publication is a collection of sanctioned walking, bicycling, swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and boating activities. It is your comprehensive guide to 1,966 self-guided events throughout the United States. The book includes directions to the event, trail ratings, hours of operation and whether an award is offered. [Click here for Order Form](#).

MAY NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS PATCH

We are currently taking orders for the 2024 May National Physical Fitness Patches.

Clubs hosting events during the month of May can order patches by filling out and returning the form to AVA national headquarters no later than April 15, 2024. Supplies are limited, so orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Clubs may place reorders until supply is exhausted. Don't miss the chance to offer this collectible patch to walk participants. The cost is \$5.00 per patch, which does not include shipping/handling or the 20% club discount. Mail form to AVA, 1008 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210, or fax form to 210-659-1212.



Click image for order form

You may also place your order by emailing this form to marian@ava.org.

FINANCIALS

If your club is on a calendar year, Annual Financials Reports, e-Postcard filings, and Officer Updates (ESR update) are due by May 15, 2024. Please submit a copy of your filings to marian@ava.org.

May 15th, 2024 – The following items are due:

- E-post card must be filed with the IRS and a copy provided to AVA HQ.
- Club's Annual Financial Report is due to the AVA HQ.
- Update of Officers Information in the ESR must be completed by each club.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns, I am certainly available and eager to help in any way possible.

Note: Financials for clubs with a fiscal year ending 6-30-24 are not due until November 15, 2024.

IT SPECIALIST- HECTOR HERNANDEZ



NATIONAL WALKING WEEK

Thank you to everyone who participated in our National Walking Week events. Please submit any pictures you'd like us to feature in the Checkpoint or TAW.



Thank you Margie MacLeish, Vice President of the First State Webfooters for the two photos of our Couch to 5k community service event walk in Dover, Delaware, April 2, 2024. Where Mayor Robin Christensen presented Karen Kaufman, President of the First State Webfooters, with a proclamation for National Walk Week.

Thank you Tammi Kerch, member of the Sacramento Walking Sticks for the photos of the recent Knight's Ferry walk on March 23, 24 as well as a handful of walks that occurred during National Walk Week.



IT COMMITTEE- MIKE GREEN, CHAIR

NEW ON MY.AVA.ORG

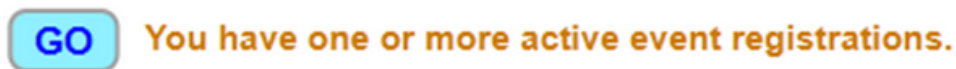
There are three new features on my.ava.org.

1. A new Tutorial on how to use the Online Start Box that includes an introduction, pre-requisites, a step-by-step guide, and helpful hints. Here is a direct link to this new tutorial:

https://my.ava.org/find-a-tutorial.php?OSB_register_complete

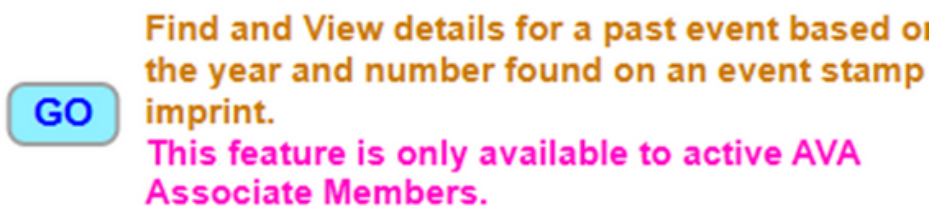
that can be also be found via the my.ava.org Find a... page by clicking on the Tutorial Tab then the "+" next to "USER FEATURES" then clicking on either the READ or LINK next to "Online Start Box - Register, Download Directions and Complete Online".

2. A new GO button that appears when a user has one or more active OSB event registrations (image shown below):



Clicking on the GO button takes the user directly to their "My Registrations" page where their active registrations are listed, then clicking the "Go to the finish table" button for a registration displays the associated event completion form to complete and submit for AVA credit and insert card creation.

3. A new feature only available to active AVA Associate Members via their "My Awards" page (accessible by first logging in to their my.ava.org account then clicking on the My Awards tab). A GO button (image shown below) only appears at the end of the "CURRENT MEMBERSHIP STATUS" section when the previous criteria have been met:



Clicking on the GO button displays a webpage where the user may enter/find the year and stamp number from a stamp imprint for a Year Round, Seasonal, or Traditional event; then view the event sanctioning details for a past event. This feature is meant to help users determine past event info for old stamp imprints that were based on stamps composed only out of stamp slugs with no event city, state, or name information.

At this time, the range of event years supported for Year Round or Seasonal event searches is 2023 - 2005; while the supported range for Traditional events is 2023 - 2018.

These ranges will be increased as more event and stamp data from earlier years is reformatted and imported (by AVA IT Committee volunteers) into the current event database.

SUPPORT OUR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS



The King's Town Trekkers Volkssport Club
CVF Festival
Come join us May 24-26, 2024
Kingston Ontario Canada welcomes you for a great weekend of fun, friendship and food, oops I mean fitness.
Registration, hotel info and the schedule will be on the website:
www.walks.ca

Click images to go to official website.

NATIONAL EVENTS



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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