

**AVA: America's Walking Club  
2023 Special Membership Meeting  
La Quinta Hotel  
San Antonio, Texas  
February 24, 2023**

**Call to Order:** Chair Nancy Wittenberg called to order the 2023 Special Membership Meeting of AVA: America's Walking Club at 1:30pm CST, February 24, 2023. The total present was 175, including officers, members, and guests.

**Opening Ceremony:** Pledge of Allegiance

**Welcome and Introductions:** Chair Wittenberg introduced the AVA Board of Directors and noted that since this meeting was modified, there would be no delegates or voting. Agenda is at Attachment 1.

**Message from the IVV President:** IVV President Dr. Giuseppe Colantonio stated the IVV Presidium applauds the success of the 18th Olympiad in San Antonio, Texas, the first such event in the Americas and Oceania.

**Welcome – IVV Americas and Ocean President:** Diana Marshall, IVV Americas and Oceania President, first thanked the volunteers who made the 18th Olympiad a success, adding that the bar is set high for future events. She continued, noting that the IVV Americas and Oceania, formed a number of years ago, is pleased the US has joined the organization and hopes there will be an Americaspiad in the future.

The IVV Americas and Oceania organization sponsors a program called Walk IVV-Americas requiring 20 events to be completed in the Americas and/or Oceania.

Next year Australia will host the IVV Congress of Delegates. The Rotorua Walking Festival will be in mid-March, followed the next week by the Aussie Peace Walk in Canberra. There are also permanent trails available.

**Special Address – Mr. Horst Volkmer, IVV-Honorary President:**

Mr. Volkmer noted that the IVV was founded in 1968 in Germany. By 1976, there were already 12 nation associations, including the AVA. Now events take place in

55 countries worldwide, and many international friendships have developed. The first Olympiad was in 1989 and has continued every two years except for the interruption by the Covid pandemic. Mr. Volkmer presented a special beer stein to AVA President and CEO Henry Rosales.

**Thanks to Event Committees:** Chair Wittenberg invited all members of the Olympiad and Texas Trail Roundup committees to select a hat as thanks for all the work they have done. There were more than 100 volunteers on committees.

**Announcement of the Big Give Regional Winner and Presentation of the Hiking Stick Award:** The winner was Northwest Region. Northwest Deputy Regional Director Ed Hainline accepted on behalf of the region.

**In Memoriam (Necrology) Presentation:** Names of those in the AVA community who passed away between the 2021 Convention and the present were read in a moving presentation. The list is at Attachment 2.

**Presentation of the President's Awards:** As the name of the head of the AVA Board of Directors has changed from "President" to "Chair," Nancy Wittenberg honored past AVA Presidents Heinz Johnson, Shirley Lindberg, Dennis Michele, and David Bonewitz with the final President's Awards. Each honoree delivered inspiring remarks.

**Board Chair's Closing Remarks:**

Chair Wittenberg announced that the Regular Membership Meeting as required by the bylaws will take place via Zoom on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Preliminary information is in The American Wanderer (TAW), and additional details will be in future Checkpoints.

Chair Wittenberg invited the following comments:

- Dolores Grenier invited all to the US FreedomWalk Festival (USFWF), October 20-22, in Arlington, Virginia. Chair Wittenberg plans to have a Board of Directors meeting in Arlington prior to the USFWF.
- Tim Miner introduced the Rochambeau Special Program. We have evolved special programs to include a sponsor or partner in a beneficial relationship. In 2022, the Virginia Volkssport Association developed a mission statement based on the AVA mission statement but added the idea

of creating the infrastructure to promote future walks. As the 250th anniversary of 1776, the National Park Service (NPS) asked that we help create a program celebrating the “first international walk” as the Comte de Rochambeau joined General George Washington and 10,000 soldiers on a march through what would be nine states and the District of Columbia. Several years ago, that trail became a memorial driving trail. The NPS asked if we could bring a more recreational purpose. Thus, the Rochambeau special program involves walking in each state and DC that follows the Rochambeau Trail. The culmination will be in Yorktown, Virginia, the end of the trail. The NPS is allowing use for the first time of the “pregnant arrowhead” design, which will be a neck medal award.

- Mike Green, AVA IT Committee, thanked Chris Zegelin for developing the new Electronic Sanctioning Request (ESR) process. Mike noted that there is a very important last step that needs to occur to make events public online: the POC must PUBLISH the event.

#### **Audience Comments:**

- Jerry Wilson (Convention Committee Chair and Olympiad Committee Member) announced that on Sunday, the ballroom would open at 2:30, and the IML closing ceremony would be 3:00
- Chris Zegelin (Member of IT and Olympiad Committees) broached the subject of electronic books. Chris has been working on how stamps would work with an electronic format. He will publish a position paper in the next TAW on electronic books. He asked everyone to read the paper and provide feedback.
- Ellen Ott (Member of Olympiad and TTR Committees) thanked Susan Medlin for work on trails.
- Susan Capp introduced the Lighthouses II special program. She noted her club’s walk in Havre de Grace, Maryland, has qualifiers for Lighthouses, Rochambeau, Par for the Course, and Walking with Americas Veterans special programs.
- Henry Rosales (AVA President and CEO) expressed gratitude to all those who made the Olympiad possible. In turn, AVA Finance Chair Ed McCabe thanked Henry for all his hard work.
- Susan Pinneke (North Central Regional Director and Olympiad Volunteer Coordinator) thanked the close to 200 volunteers who made the show run smoothly.

**Conclusion:** Chair Wittenberg concluded the meeting with the announcement that election of AVA officers would take place in the June meeting. Because there is only one candidate per office, the vote will be by acclamation. Candidates:

- Chair, Nancy Wittenberg
- Vice Chair, John McClellan
- Board Secretary, Leslie Murphey Stone
- Finance Chair, Ed McCabe.

**Adjournment:** 2:38pm CST

Respectfully submitted,

Cecilia Miner  
AVA Board Secretary



## **SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AGENDA**

Friday, February 24, 1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

La Quinta San Antonio Riverwalk Hotel Ballroom  
305 Blum  
San Antonio, Tx 78205  
(210) 228-9816

1. Call to Order – Chair, Nancy Wittenberg
2. Presentation of the Flag
3. Welcome and Introductions – Chair, Nancy Wittenberg
4. Reading of the Message from IVV Vice President, Mr. Graham Fawcett
5. Welcome -- IVV Americas and Oceania President, Diana Marshall
6. Special Address – Mr. Horst Volkmer, IVV-Honorary President
7. Review of Agenda and Meeting Procedures
8. Announcement of the Big Give Regional Winner and Presentation of the Hiking Stick Award
9. In Memoriam Video Presentation
10. Presentation of President's Awards
11. Board Chair's Closing Remarks
12. Audience Comments
13. Adjournment

## Necrology List for 2021-2023

*It's easy to walk into someone's life, but it's hard when they walk out.*

George Agars	Emelia Goyette	Ron Nelson
Robert Armey	Jane Graham	John Nelson
Patricia Arnett	Edward "Ned" Gray	RoseAnn Nichols
Michael Balough	Bob Habeman	Virginia Nicholson
Maria Baxter	Jon Hanlan	Walt Ottoson
Ron (Rolland) Berard	Chuck Head	Renee Palmer
Jeff Blossey	Marie Herring	Dena Parks
Bill Brabant	Ursula Hess	Jane Pattison
Maria Brasher	Grace Holloway	Joy Peach
Rosemary Brennan	Jean Jackman	Dannie Peters
Audrey Brown	Ken Jackson	Charlotte Phillips
Dorothy Brown	Harvey Johns	Harry Poarch
Rich Bumgardner	Cathy Johnson	Carol Puglisi
Ruth Cade	Wally Johnson	Kristin Raasch
Karen West Campbell	Sandy Johnson	Esther Rhodes
Jane Cauchon	Elaine Johnson	Helga Robinette
Ronda Chandler	Preston Laurence Johnson	Liz Rose
Taylor Chandler	Frances Johnson	Homer " Dan" Roy
Leon Childers	Robert Jukelis	Duane Russell
Deb Choiniere	Susan Kenyon	Renate Sabulsky
Bonnie Christensen	Ross Kiddie	Beatrice Schaefer
Louise Clouser	Barbara Kimball	Bonnie Lou (Dawson)Schaefer
Marla Cluts	Marie King	Virginia Mae Schreiber
Les Clutter	Mary Kinkaid	Doc Shipman
Mary Cook	Noreen Kirk	Bob Shockey
Carol Cross	Connie Koerin	George Snyder
Sue Day	Norman Labbe	Margaret Spurgeon
Dick DeMass	Robert Lang	Katherine Svoboda
Stanislawa (Stacy) Doyle	Darwin Lay	Doris Telles
Jimmie Eisen	Charles Chuck Lipson	Jean E. Thomas
Thomas Elms	Sandra Lynch	David Toth
Paul Ernst	Yvonne G Martin	Jeanne Twedt
Jack Fernandes	Barb McClain	Earl VonHolt
Faye Foote	Ken Miles	Nancy Wallace
Dena Forster	Ken Miller	Antonia Walsh
Lila Frisch	Shirley Milliken	Herb Webber
Bill Gazzerro	Dave Muzzy	Lois Will
Sandy Gordon	Mildred Myers-Smith	Ken Wilson
		Robert Wright

As of February 2023

Attachment 2