

Production has begun!

The stamp making process is underway at the AVA National Office.

NEC News

Important Deadlines - January 2018 National Executive Council Meeting

NEC Meeting Updates

The next NEC meeting will be held January 19 - 21, 2017 at La Quinta Inn & Suites, 7160 North Frontage Road, Orlando, Florida 32812. (407) 240-5000

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items

November 20, 2017 (60 days prior to meeting)

Agenda items from Clubs, NEC Officers and Regional Directors are due to the AVA President, please email to president@ava.org and copy henry@ava.org

[Click here for Agenda Items Form](#)

December 5, 2017 (45 days prior to meeting)

NEC meeting agenda is sent out to the Regional Directors.

December 20, 2017 (30 days prior to meeting)

All reports, with support documents, from Officers, Regional Directors, and Committee Chairs are due to the National Office. Email reports to henry@ava.org

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

December 29, 2017 (21 days prior to meeting)

NEC meeting packet with Agenda and all support documents is sent out to Officers and Regional Directors.

NEC Committee Updates

Special Programs —Bonnie Johnson, Chair

At each January NEC Meeting, new Special Programs are introduced for review and approval by the NEC to begin in the following year. In January 2018, the Special Programs will be introduced which, if approved, would begin on January 1, 2019.

Convention Co-Chair—Lea Darling

Results of the 2019 Convention Survey

Our sincere thanks to our US sister clubs who took the time to survey their members concerning the Full Registration Cost for the 2019 AVA Convention in Albany, NY.

We heard loud and clear that we are excited to be coming to Albany and the Northeastern states to experience first hand all the history and sights.

1. CONCERN: From various clubs: we are not interested in the awards or commemorative souvenir items.

RESPONSE: Make commemorative souvenir items and awards elective costs.

2. CONCERN: Is this a fund raiser for AVA?

RESPONSE: The convention is not a fundraiser. The main objective is to bring in enough money through registration, walks, raffles, merchandise, silent auction, and other activities to support convention expenses.

3. CONCERN: What is this donation to a not-for-profit charity?

RESPONSE: The 2019 Convention planning and executing club, will select the benefactor for the customary AVA nonprofit donation not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1000.00). This is a tradition that has been carried on for past conventions and required by AVA.

4.The BIG QUESTION: What do you think is a reasonable NY Convention Full Registration cost?

RESPONSE: Clubs noted a low of \$100.00 to a high of \$440.00. We will take this under advisement and go from there, but convention fees need to cover all anticipated expenses.

I think I've covered most of all your concerns and questions that were presented. Feel free to let me know if you have any other ideas.

Lea Darling, CoChair for 2019 AVA Convention
leadarling@verizon.net

Program—Debra Kruep, Chair



New Stamp Briefing

401K: Invest in Your Health

AVA's First Virtual Online Program will roll out January 2018. We know many of our walkers and friends are already walking virtually; wouldn't it be great to have them all convert from their current VOP and walk virtually with AVA?

401K: Invest In Your Health allows you access to an online Challenge, allowing you to post your Volkswalk kilometers or daily steps, view your progress, see others' progress and earn a special Tee Shirt upon completion of 401K or the equivalent in steps. Whether you wish to only post your Volkswalk kilometers or you are Gung Ho on capturing every step you take by entering manually or syncing your Fitbit, Garmin, Apple Watch, etc., Either method can be used... it is entirely up to you.

Registration cost is only \$18.00 and entitles you access to the program online or via app, and syncing your tracking device if desired. Registration begins 12/15/2017. Details will follow in the December Checkpoint.

We've had a lot of questions and everyone is getting excited. We thought it would be a great idea to share them with you! [Click here](#) for the FAQ sheet. If we haven't addressed your question please contact Jan at VOP@ava.org

AVA National Office Team

Awards and Membership Coordinator—Karen Winkle

To view the Monthly Comparison Chart for the Total Number of Awards processed [click here](#).

Books! Books! Books!

The IVV ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM is listed on the back of all Event books, and most of the Distance books. Item #3 states that a book must be purchased for each level. For an example, you cannot turn in one purple book with 25 stamps in it, and include insert cards with 25 stamps on them, and have two levels processed. You must purchase a new book and send it in with the insert cards, or you may send in \$6 with your submission and I will process the insert cards with a new book.

Below are the IVV levels of completion, and the books to be used.

10, 30, and 50 Events	Green Books
51-600 Events	Purple Books (25 stamps)
601-1500 Events	Rose Books (50 stamps)
1501 and higher Events	Gold Books (100 stamps)
500-8000km Distance	Blue Books
8001-22000km Distance	Orange Books
22001-25000km Distance	Yellow Book (1 time 3000km)
25001km and higher	Yellow Book in increment of 5000km
Bicycle	Brown Books
1000km	
2500km	
5000km	
7500km	
10000km	
15000km	Additional levels at 5000km



Perfection of the Stamp Process!

If you are doing more than 5 or so Bike Events a year, please use the Bike Book.

Because the distance of the events is much higher (20-100km), we cannot determine the popularity of Bike Events, and participants miss out on earning pins and patches.

Information and Technology Specialist—Hector Hernandez



The first stamp rolls off the production line!

UPDATES!

Its been a very busy ending and beginning of the month for me. We have corrected the server issue and are looking into more secure updates. I thank everyone for being patient with the process. On another note the stamp machine has been set up and we are ready to begin our production of the new stamps. Our IT Committee Chair came to help oversee the project. We began with a quick overview of

why and how we will move along the process. We are working to refine the process so it is not so time consuming . The Starting Point Books are in production and should be arriving soon.

Walks to Remember

The holidays are coming and so is the cold weather. Time to get out your jackets and go for a stroll. If you are in need of assistance marketing your December's walks and events, please email your walk or event information and details to hector@ava.org.

Starting Point Changes

Please remember to make all changes within your ESR and then send to Hector. The website will be updated weekly. Email changes to hector@ava.org.

Click here for this months [Starting Point Changes](#)

Communications—Samanta Sanchez

Shop Online and Support AVA

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 American Volkssport Association.



Sign up for Goodshop by going to https://www.goodsearch.com/login?return_path=%2Finvite-friends. Your user profile will help keep track of the amount you've raised. Select **American Volkssport Association-AVA** 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/ch/74-2164037> and 0.5% of your eligible amazonsmile purchase will be donated to AVA directly from Amazon! Simply sign in or create an account, select **American Volkssport Association Inc – Universal City** as your charity of choice and begin shopping. It's that simple!

End of Year Reports

It's that time of the year again. Annual Financial Reports, e-Postcard filings and Officer Updates (ESR update) are all due **November 15, 2017**. Please submit a copy of your filings to samanta@ava.org.

Save the Date!

We are growing with excitement for the Big Give 2018!! Next year, the day of giving will be taking place on Thursday, March 22nd. The Big Give will be held a few weeks earlier than prior years so please make sure to save the date. Won't be able to donate on March 22nd? No worries, early giving will start March 15 and run through March 21. Don't miss the opportunity to donate online at <https://www.thebiggivesa.org/> to your favorite walking club – America's Walking Club!



Accounting Specialist—Marian DeVaul

Event Participation Reports—[Note](#)

There has been a change made to the ESR system regarding the webpage display when clubs enter data for the Event Participation Reports. The Billable Amount will no longer be calculated or appear on the print out after the information is entered. This print out only confirms that the event's participation

has been processed and can be printed out for your records. The AVA will mail an invoice to the club based on this participation reporting. Many clubs are paying off the Confirmation Report rather than waiting for the Invoice resulting in double payment. Thank you for your cooperation.

An example of the new verbiage is as follows:

This is not an invoice.

Event Category: STD Event Type: YRSW

For this YRE/SE walk, the billable amount is determined by the formula: $\$1.25 \times (\text{Award} + \text{Credit} + \text{Non-IVV} - \text{Coupons}) + \5.00

#OptOutside – November 24, 2017

After all the turkey and trimmings what better than a relaxing AVA walk the day after Thanksgiving. Thanks to the support of our participating clubs we currently have 52 walking events scheduled for November 24th. This is over a 50% increase in the number of events hosted by clubs. To see if there is a walk in your area [click here](#).

Special thanks to Missy McBride, Debbie Kruep and the AVA Programs committee for the many volunteer hours they contributed to the success of the #OptOutside initiative.

[Click here for list of participating clubs](#) and [here for map of participating regions](#).

Checkpoint vs TAW



Occasionally the same article will appear in the Checkpoint and the TAW under the *Headquarters News Notes* section of the TAW. The purpose of doing this is because the TAW targets AVA members and the Checkpoint targets AVA Club Officers. The intent is to reach a greater audience. Such is the case with the information below.

What Have We Accomplished?

By Henry Rosales, AVA Executive Director

On behalf of the team at the AVA National office, I extend greetings of peace and happiness to all! I hope the new year brings in good health and many new friendships during this special time of the year. The new year signals the completion of my third year with this great organization! Three years ago, I spoke about the creation of a roadmap to guide us into the future, a strategic plan. Thanks to the support of the Strategic Planning Committee and the AVA leadership, this plan has been completed and is in the implementation phase.

What follows is a listing of *new initiatives* that have either been completed or are in progress in accordance with our strategic plan. The work is categorized under the four Key Focus Areas of the plan. I have also specified if the work has been completed, is in progress or is an ongoing effort. This listing is not inclusive of all the work of all committees, only those I am aware of at this time. It is important to point out that new Chairs have been appointed to all AVA committees and all committees are working on either existing or new initiatives which are aligned with the strategic plan. Please refer to the AVA website to review committees and the strategic plan.

Special thanks to all volunteers, committee members, and the National Executive Council for their leadership and efforts in support of these initiatives. Without our strong network of volunteers none of this work could be accomplished!

Key Focus Area 1: Mission Impact

To improve the quality and value of member benefits and programs

Appointment of a Membership Committee Chair and creation of Committee (Completed)

Appointment of a Club Development and Support Committee Chair and creation of committee (Completed)

Expansion of National trails and distances (In Progress)

Development and expansion of the Online Start Box (Ongoing)

Creation of features for an AVA walking application (Completed)

Restructuring of the AVA convention application to support clubs (Completed)

Implementation of a 401K *Invest In Your Health* online program (In Progress)

- Creation and implementation of “AVA Community Events” programs (In Progress)
- Application to host the IVV Congress in 2020 (In Progress)
- Creation of IVV Olympiad Committee and completion of application to host the 2021 Olympiad (In Progress)
- Creation of new stamp handles and stamps for all AVA events (In Progress)
- Planning for the 2019 convention (In Progress)
- Partnership with Red Roof hotels to provide discounts for AVA Members (In Progress)
- Upgraded Electronic Sanctioning System for AVA events (In Progress)

Key Focus Area 2: Financial Stability

To diversify and develop sustainable funding sources

- Appointment of a Fund Development Committee Chair and creation Committee (Completed)
- Implementation of an Individual Donor Campaign, The Big Give (Ongoing)
- Diversified unrestricted and restricted donations -\$225,299 raised over the past 3 years (Ongoing)
- Diversified sponsorship and advertisement revenues-\$11,650 raised over the past 3 years (Ongoing)
- Grant Solicitations for diversified funding -22 completed over the past 3 years (Ongoing)
- Partnership with Red Roof Hotels to generate unrestricted revenues (In Progress)
- Analysis of AVA financial systems (Ongoing)
- Procurement and implementation of a donor management system (In Progress)
- Establishment of national partnerships with America Walks, REI (OptOutside), Navigators USA, and Girl-Trek (Ongoing)

Key Focus Area 3: Internal Operations

To increase National public awareness of the new AVA brand

- AVA database upgrade (In Progress)
- New AVA website (In Progress)
- Appointment of a Publicity Committee Chair and creation of committee (Completed)
- Request for Qualifications to hire a Public Relations firm (In Progress)
- Procurement and implementation of Quickbooks Premier (In Progress)
- Procurement and installation of 7 computers for the National office (Completed)
- Procurement of a stamp machine (Completed)
- Procurement of Office 365 to support communications and planning (Completed)
- Procurement of a performance management system to track Strategic Plan progress (Completed)
- Promotion of club events on social media and the AVA website (Ongoing)

Key Focus Area 4: Governance and Leadership

To develop the capacity of the board, employees, and volunteer leaders

- Development of Committee Charters for all AVA committees (In Progress)
- Hiring and orientation of 5 new employees to carry out the Mission of the AVA (Completed)
- Creation of an AVA privacy policy (Completed)
- Revision of all employee job descriptions to align with strategic plan goals (Completed)
- Training and orientation of all Regional and Deputy Directors (Completed)
- Participant form for Minors attending AVA events (Completed)
- Board and employee training on Office 365 and OnStrategy (Completed)
- Training and cross training of employees in old and new systems (Ongoing)

It is very important to know that all this work is not being done in a vacuum. It takes collaboration and coordination of time and effort from committee chairs, committee members, volunteers, AVA employees, and the National Executive Council to implement these new initiatives. The team at the National office appreciates the commitment and support of everyone.

Two out of the past three years the AVA has run an operational deficit and most likely this year will be the same. This can be attributed to several factors, the primary one being a decline in participation and sanction fee revenues which everyone already knows. However, if we want the organization to grow we must first invest money, time and resources to build the capacity and infrastructure hence, the need to upgrade systems, develop new programs and train volunteers and employees. All of this requires funding the organization must spend up front even at a time when revenues are decreasing, otherwise there will be no growth or hope for the future. My projection is that this downward trend will bottom out this year and beginning next fiscal year we should begin to see things turn around as a result of the strategic plan implementation efforts.

During this special time we have much to celebrate! Over the past three years we have gained 14 new clubs! Last year we had 132 more sanctioned events than the previous year! With new initiatives and partnerships I am hopeful we can also increase our participation and membership numbers! Most important, we have our friendships to be thankful for. Happy Holidays!

Support Our National and International Friends!

National



[Go to webpage](http://texastrailroundup.org)

If you are doing any Holiday traveling you might want to take advantage of the Red Roof Inn discount for AVA national and club members and support the AVA!



The AVA will receive 5% of all room revenues when you book at a Red Roof Inn using the Volume Plus Number (623002)! Red Roof Inn's great rates and quality rooms means that you won't be breaking the bank to afford a comfortable room. Through the American Volkssport Association, Red Roof Inn is also offering additional value. When you book your reservation using Volume Plus Number 623002, *you'll save 15% off Red Roof Inn's Best Available rate.* Red Roof Inn's Volume Plus Number works just like an online coupon code. Use this link — https://www.redroof.com/deals/partner/American_Volkssport_Association and Red Roof Inn's online discount code will automatically be filled in for you! Or go to www.RedRoof.com to make a reservation. All you have to do to receive a discount at participating inns is enter Volume Plus Number 623002 in the VP+ / ID # slot. You can also make a reservation with an inn directly by calling 1-800-RED-ROOF (800-733-7663). You are required to provide the Volume Plus Number 623002 to the reservationist when you make your reservation, BEFORE arriving at any Red Roof Inn property.

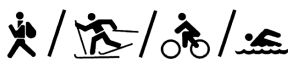
Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send us an email to the attention of Samanta requesting that you be put on our distribution list for the Checkpoint. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.

Send your request to Samanta at samanta@ava.org.



Fun, Fitness, Friendship



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.

