

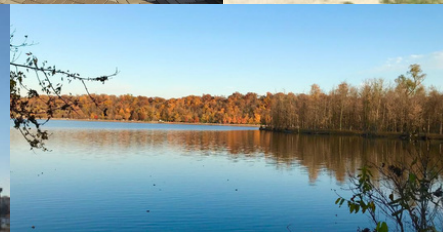
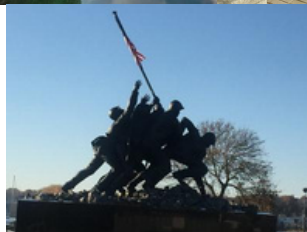


## CEO/PRESIDENT - HENRY ROSALES

### OPTOUTSIDE – THANKYOU !

Special thanks to the eleven clubs and many volunteers who opted to promote a healthy lifestyle the day after Thanksgiving by hosting a walking event! We appreciate your support of our mission.

Daffodil Valley Volkssport Association  
Washtenaw Wanderers  
Indy 'G' Walkers  
East Tennessee Wanderers  
Hoosier Hikers  
Cedar Milers  
Illinois Trekkers Volkssport Club  
Walk 'n Mass Volkssport Club  
Dairyland Walkers  
Saint Louis Walkers  
Randolph Roadrunners Volkssport Club



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National Office Holiday Hours and NEW HOLIDAY EMERGENCY NUMBER  
December 27-29, 8am-12noon

December 23, 24, 30 and 31, CLOSED

If you have a club emergency during the holiday break that needs assistance from the National Office while we are closed, you may call this number for assistance: (737) 808-3554

## A NEW ELEMENT3 HEALTH PROGRAM

The AVA is excited to share that we have a new partnership program with Element3 Health that is a win-win for you and AVA. During the pandemic, health plans realized that staying social and having fun is actually good for you! Element3 Health, which is the parent company of GroupWorks, is working with health plans like UnitedHealthcare to keep their members socially, physically, and mentally active in wellness clubs like ours.



Through our partnership with Element3, any walkers who are members of an eligible health plan, initially United Healthcare Medicare advantage and supplemental plans, can earn free walk vouchers for participation in club related walks and activities including for your activity in 2021 -- that includes Seasonal, Traditional, and self-guided Year-Round events and Club Activities!. There is no cost at all to you - in fact, if you are eligible, enroll in this new program, and report at least 10 walks and/or club activities per month during the year 2021 and you will receive a Free Annual AVA Associate Membership and you will also receive 24 Free Walk Vouchers for 2022 Year-Round, Seasonal, and Traditional events!

Here's how you can quickly and easily check to see if you're eligible:

1. Sign up at <http://e3hfun.com/ava> All you will need is your health plan ID card to determine if you are eligible. Element3 will send you a \$5 Starbucks card, whether you're eligible or not!
2. If you're eligible, then for every 5 walks and/or club activities you report per month you will be emailed 1 free walk voucher, limit of 2 walk vouchers per month. Report at least 120 previous activities in 2021 (a minimum of 10 per month) and receive a one-year AVA Associate Membership and 24 Free Walk Vouchers!
3. Please see the attached flyer ([Click for flyer](#)) for more information, and feel free to reach out to us at (club phone) or (club email), or Element3 Health at 833-906-1700 or [info@element3health.com](mailto:info@element3health.com) if you have any questions or we can help you with the sign up process.
4. We anticipate more health plans signing on to this program with Element3 in the future and we will notify you as they do.

Once members have enrolled and are eligible, they will receive email information on how to report walks and club activities for 2021 and 2022. All 2021 activities must be reported by December 31, 2021.

Instructions on how to redeem walk vouchers will be sent to all eligible participants via email in late December and published in the January Checkpoint.

## EVOLVING A PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB AND AMERICA WALKS BY PAT JEWETT AVA PUBLICITY COMMITTEE AND 2017 AMERICA WALKS COLLEGE GRADUATE

At the November monthly [webinar](#) we had a robust webinar with America's Walking Club and America Walks. We invited guest speakers who are involved in walking advocacy from [America Walks](#), [Walk Austin](#) and [Oregon Walks](#).

Our guests were Ian Thomas State and Local Program Director from America Walks; Heyden Black Walker an urban planner with Black & Vernooy from Walk Austin; and Izzy Armenta Transportation Justice & Communications Manager from Oregon Walks.

America Walks was a sponsor of the Madison Convention and Ian held a workshop at the convention taking folks on a walk audit through downtown Madison. There was a lively discussion about crosswalks, sidewalk widths and furnishings on sidewalks, how attractive and walkable the sidewalks were. Things like artwork, benches, tree canopy, wayfinding. Was walking a comfortable experience or was it noisy and crowded with vehicles? Were the speed limits appropriate for the street design?

Henry and Ian have been talking for a few years about how to grow and evolve a partnership with America Walks. America Walks is about walkable cities and active transportation. America's Walking Club are the folks who are actually feet on the ground walking all over the US in cities, trails, and natural areas.

A way to ease into partnering is at the local level. We have clubs in almost all fifty states. America Walks has a list of organizations across the US who participate in advocacy efforts to create more walkable cities and trails and to make our roads safer for all users. The idea is to match AVA clubs with some of these organizations and perhaps try to involve them with walking and perhaps involve folks in the AVA clubs with some advocacy. That advocacy can be as simple as helping complete a [walk audit](#).

Think about how excited we are to discover a new trail or a new crosswalk that makes one of our walks a safer walk. Perhaps there is a new crosswalk signal for walkers. Maybe a new sidewalk was added to a roadway that opened up a new place to walk.

This happens because people who walk and bike are speaking up at the neighborhood, city, county, state and national levels to create safer places to walk and bike. As walkers we directly benefit from these efforts.

Many younger people are concerned about walking and biking safety for themselves and their children. These same young people want to give their time and money to support these efforts. If our walking clubs show some interest in becoming involved in some advocacy there might be an opportunity to attract new walkers to our AVA Nation.

Perhaps you are already doing some advocacy. Donating to support parks or trails. Perhaps you adopt a road and clean up litter. Maybe you have gone to a City Council meeting to speak up about an issue.

I live in Portland Or and I reached out to the Executive Director at Oregon Walks to see how our Portland area clubs can work together. As President of the Rogue Valley Walkers in Medford OR I found Walk Bike Roseburg in Southern OR. I have reached out to this club to introduce myself. I was told they have a stronger biking community and were excited to know that our club existed.

There is a new Infrastructure bill that was passed. 110 billion dollars for roads. This will provide many opportunities for our voices to be heard about how this money is spent to create roads that are safer for walking and biking.

We are all walking advocates as we create walks that are safe for other walkers to enjoy. We believe in walking and how important it is to our overall health and fitness.

If your club is interested in exploring ways to partner with an America Walks advocacy group in your area send an email to [henry@ava.org](mailto:henry@ava.org) with "America Walks Partnership" on the subject line. Include the name of the club, club number, a Point of Contact (POC), and an email address. We will then follow up by connecting you with an America Walks group in your area that is mutually interested so the two can meet and explore how you might be able to work in partnership.



If your club would like to be listed on America Walks Website as a supporter of safer walking communities go to:  
<https://americawalks.org/local-walking-organizations/>

Related Information:

America Walks <https://americawalks.org/about-us/>

Walk Austin <http://www.walkaustintx.org/>

Oregon Walks <https://oregonwalks.org/>

AVA November Webinar <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ed6fMiFZRp0>

## AVA PRIVACY POLICY AND COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

Protecting the information of our members is a priority at the AVA. Please note we do not save any credit card information when merchandise is purchased. We also do not collect the following personal information. Clubs should not be collecting this information either.

**DO NOT COLLECT:**  
**Date of Birth**  
**Social Security Number**  
**Driver's License Number**

If your club has collected this information, destroy it immediately and do not collect it anymore.

Any other personally identifiable information you collect on club members must be kept in a secure place and cannot be shared without approval of the individual whose information you want to share.

The AVA will never solicit personal or credit card information via an email or social media. For more information on the AVA's Privacy Policy, information we do collect, and Opting Out of sharing your information please [click here](#).

# Mark Your Calendars!

## THE BIG GIVE 2022

6 PM Thursday, September 22 through  
6 PM Friday, September 23



## YOU ARE THE HEART AND SOLE OF AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

This year's annual fundraiser was another one for the books. Donations for the Big Give 2021 continued to trickle in all last month, bringing our total amount raised to \$96,548.55! Thank you for your support, your generosity, your kindness, and your love for the AVA. People like you are an inspiration to us all. Thank you for leaving your footprint and changing lives!

## AND THE 2021 REGIONAL CHALLENGE WINNER IS...

The Southwest Region is crowned the 2021 Regional Challenge winner for the second time in a row. Congratulations for raising the most amount of funds during this year's annual fundraising campaign, the Big Give 2021. The winning region raised a total of \$20,619.61. Congratulations!

## AVA VIRTUAL ONLINE PROGRAMS (VOP) RETIRED IN 2022

During the November board meeting, the AVA Board of Directors approved the sunsetting of our virtual online programs. Closing of this program was recommended by the National Office because projected participation numbers did not increase substantially over 5 years to offset the cost of the administering the program and the online platform. The National Office will be researching new and better online platforms so we can reinstate online programs in the near future.

## ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

### STARTING POINT BOOKS:

If you have pre-ordered a 2022 Starting Point book, we received the books and they were shipped out on December 6. If you did not pre-order a book, we still have books available for sale at a cost of \$25.00 plus shipping and handling. For purchase, please e-mail [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org), or call 210-659-2112.

### MERCHANDISE PRICE INCREASE:

Due to an increase in manufacturing prices, we will be raising the price on the following items in 2022:

- October and May Patches will increase to \$5.00 for clubs and \$7.00 to individuals
- New Walker Packets will increase to \$10.00
- 2023 Starting Point books will also have a price increase depending on increase in print and publishing prices.

## IT SPECIALIST - HECTOR HERNANDEZ

### ORNAMENTS

We are still making customizable ornaments and AVA ornaments. If you click on the link below you will open a pdf and see the different ornaments that can be cut. I can add your Club Name & Year or maybe even your logo depending on the quality of the image. If you'd like to order an ornament, please email [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org) for pricing. Also, please click on the image of the ornament to enlarge and have a look at our new AVA ornament.



[Click here to view large ornaments.](#)





## STAMPS AND BOOKS

The 2022 stamps have been mailed out and are on their way. Please be on the look out for your stamp package. Starting Point Books will be mailed out starting December 6, 2021. If you have further questions email [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).



## CLUB BANNER UPDATE

Banners are still being printed but should be here soon. There was a mishap in the printing process so they needed to be reprinted. This caused for another delay but they should be ready soon. Once I have received the banners and they have been inspected, they will be shipped out. As the poles are from a different vendor, they will be mailed in a separate shipment.

## HOLIDAY SHOPPING WITH A CAUSE

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 the AVA. Sign up for Goodshop by going to [https://www.goodshop.com/register?return\\_path=%2F+login%3Freturn\\_path%3D%2F+invite-friends](https://www.goodshop.com/register?return_path=%2F+login%3Freturn_path%3D%2F+invite-friends). Your user profile will help keep track of the amount you've raised. Select AVA: America's Walking Club 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 the merchant's Goodshop page will go to the charity or school of your choice.

Shop at AmazonSmile [https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/homepage/ref=smi\\_chpf\\_redirect?ie=UTF8&ein=74-2164037&ref\\_=smi\\_ext\\_ch\\_74-2164037\\_cl+and+0.5](https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/homepage/ref=smi_chpf_redirect?ie=UTF8&ein=74-2164037&ref_=smi_ext_ch_74-2164037_cl+and+0.5) and 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase will be donated to the AVA directly from Amazon! Simply sign in or create an account, select American Volkssport Association Headquarters – San Antonio as your charity of choice and begin shopping. It's that simple!

## PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - PAT JEWETT

### OLYMPIAD TALES FROM OLYMPIAD WALKERS - EDITED BY PAT JEWETT

Scary and exciting is how Brian described his first Olympiad event. He was going to China for the first time and he didn't have a chaperone to help him interpret and speak Chinese. They also attended an IML event which was held two weeks before the Olympiad. This was their first IML event held in the mountains outside of Beijing. Brian said "It was fun but the mountains were challenging".

Then they traveled to Thailand for some relaxation. Of course, for walkers like us, that meant walking around Bangkok for four days.





After Thailand they returned to Beijing and met with their Chinese host. They were taken to their hotel and had dinner and attended a ceremony. There are always ceremonies at Olympiad events.

They met other team members that made up 'Team America' as they were called. Brian said it felt like they were in the Olympics.

There was an opening ceremony and they met many walkers from other countries. The walks began the next day. Buses met walkers at the different hotels and the buses traveled back and forth every 30 minutes to and from the event center.



Certificates were received for every walk event they did. If they walked 20km a day they qualified for IML credit. Brian said they received IML credit for the entire IML event.

There was a closing ceremony at the end of the event that included shows as well as the announcement for the next Olympiad.

Submitted by Brian Fisher and edited by Pat Jewett

## NORTHWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR - SHARON MOATS

### NW REGIONAL NEWS:

2022 Is a great to time to head to the West. We have many multi-day events for everyone! We have walks, hikes and swims and best of all, socializing with others who enjoy AVA and all the great opportunities.

April 22-24, 2022

Wild and Woodsy in Olympia, Washington

Features walks and hikes in the Olympia, WA area.

Hosted by Capitol Volkssport Club

Full information, brochure, walk descriptions and registration here:

[https://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/cvc\\_specialevents/wild&woody\\_wa\\_2022.html](https://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/cvc_specialevents/wild&woody_wa_2022.html)



June 16-19, 2022

NW Regional Conference in Ashland Oregon

This incredible multi-day event has been rescheduled several times but we finally get to have it! Big shout out to OTSVA (Oregon State Association) and Tom and Louise Baltes for their commitment to make this happen!

Full information, brochure, walk, bike and swim descriptions and registration here:

<https://www.walking4fun.org/nw-region-conf-2022.html>

September 29-Oct 2, 2022

Return to Winthrop and Walking the National Cascade Scenic on your drive.

This multi-day event is returning to the big red Barn in Winthrop. New walks and hikes and some old favorites with a fresh look, and of course the Bike through the valleys.

Information will be complete after the first of the year, but it is wise to grab a reservation for a local hotel or VRBO. There are no large hotels in this area so no reserved spaces.

Info for lodging in the Methow Valley:

<https://www.methowreservations.com/>

Hosted by Interlaken Trailblazers Volkssport Club:

<http://www.interlakentrailblazers.org/>



## PROGRAMS COMMITTEE CHAIR - TIM MINER

### MONTHLY WEBINARS

Join us for this months Monthly Webinar

December 2021

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: Dec 15, 2021 08:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEldOCvqj4sGtSNTmQ-odwv5Bqtr5K0CnKR>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.





## SUPPORT OUR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

### NATIONAL EVENTS



Click image to go to official website.



Mid-America Regional Conference

**MAC2022**

June 17 - 19, 2022

Dayton, Ohio

Click image to see brochure.

### INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Click on image to go to the official website.



Pentiction, British Columbia, Canada May 27-29, 2022

We hope you will "Come Walk with Us, Visit with Us, Eat with Us and Enjoy a Fantastic Weekend of Fun, Fitness and Friendship"

Register now and see you soon.

### 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](mailto:hector@ava.org). Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.



**AMERICA'S  
WALKING CLUB**  
ESTABLISHED 1974

*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.*



1008 S Alamo St · San Antonio, TX 78210, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 [Message US](#).