



# CHECKPOINT

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HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS

## LESLIE STONE - AVA BOARD SECRETARY

### CALL TO CONVENTION

To All National Officers, Regional Directors, State Organizations, AVA Member Clubs:  
I hereby notify all AVA National Officers, Regional Directors, State Organizations, and AVA Member Clubs of the 2025 American Volkssport Association 23rd Biennial Convention and invite you to participate. The AVA will hold the convention at the Las Cruces Convention Center, 680 E University Ave, Las Cruces, NM 88001, from Tuesday, April 29 through Friday, May 2, 2025, to elect officers, to receive reports of officers and committees, and to conduct other business that may arise.

**Voting Privileges:** Each National Officer, Regional Director, State Organization, and Regular Member Club in good standing forty-five days (March 15, 2025) before the opening general session, is entitled to one vote in each election and on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The CEO shall have no vote.

**Delegates:** A delegate normally represents each State Organization and Regular Member Club at the General Sessions. Each State Organization and Regular Member Club designates its delegate by completing AVA Form 500, Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation, and ensures the designated delegate registers for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention. The AVA National Headquarters will mail AVA Form 500 to National Officers, State Organizations, and Regular Member Clubs.

**Alternates:** State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may designate an alternate by completing AVA Form 500 and ensuring the designated alternate registers for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention.

**Proxies:** State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may vote by proxy by designating a proxy on AVA Form 500. A proxy can only be given to a person certified as a delegate for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention. Candidates for AVA National Office or candidates for Regional Director may not carry proxies.

**Responsibilities:** Delegates, alternates, and proxies will present their copy of AVA Form 500 to the Credential Committee at the convention, attend the convention, participate in all general sessions, and attend workshops. A club may transfer voting privileges to an alternate only in an emergency. The club should advise the delegate, alternate or proxy on voting positions for elections and other business upon which the membership might vote. Delegates should report back to the club they represent on the general sessions and workshops.

### ARTICLE 14 MEETINGS

**14.01. Regular Membership Meetings.** A regular membership meeting of the Corporation shall be held in April, May or June of every odd-numbered year unless otherwise ordered by the Board of Directors. The meeting shall be to elect National Officers, receive reports of National Officers and committees and for such other business as may be identified in the notice of the meeting.

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**14.02. Special Membership Meetings.** A special membership meeting may be called by the CEO or by the Board of Directors, and must be called upon the written request of at least forty regular member clubs, at least twenty of which are not from the same Region and at least one-half of the Regions must be represented. The purpose of the special membership meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least sixty days notice shall be given.

**14.03. Meeting by Electronic Means.** The Board of Directors and any committee of the Corporation, may hold a meeting by telephone conference call or any other electronic means, if: (a) each person entitled to participate in the meeting consents to the meeting being held by means of that system; and (b) the system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which each person participating in the meeting can communicate concurrently with each other participant. The notice of a meeting by electronic means must state the fact that the meeting will be held by electronic means as well as all other matters required to be included in the notice. Participation of a person in a meeting by electronic means constitutes the presence of that person at the meeting.

**14.04. Voting Rights.** Each elected National Officer, Regional Director, and Member that is in good standing forty-five days before the opening of the membership meeting will be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The CEO shall have no vote.

**14.05. Voting by Mail.** A Member is entitled to vote by mail, electronically, or email on any matter that may be voted on by the membership. For this Section, the transmission of votes by fax or email shall be considered mail.

**14.06. Voting by Proxy.** A Member entitled to vote may vote by proxy executed in writing by the Member. No proxy shall be valid after the close of the session for which it is issued. No candidate for National Office or Regional Director may carry proxies.

**ARTICLE 16 AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

**16.01 Amendments.** These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the AVA by a majority vote of the eligible delegates represented in person or by proxy, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted to the Board of Directors and submitted, in writing, to all Members at least sixty days prior to the regular or special membership meeting at which vote shall be taken. BYLAWS OF AMERICAN VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION, INC. - Page 28 Posting Date 5/3/21

**16.02 Waiver of Notice.** The requirement for sixty days notice to all Members of the AVA can be waived by two-thirds vote of the eligible voters represented in person or by proxy at a regular or special membership meeting of the AVA.  
**16.03 Waiver Process.** If Section

**16.02** of this Article is used in a regular or special membership meeting of the AVA so as to waive the requirements of Section 16.01 of this Article, then any such amendment must be submitted to the Board Secretary in writing.

**PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES**

**THE VALUE OF PARTNERSHIPS**

The AVA National Office in partnership with local club members and Family Service, a nonprofit organization that provides services to underserved communities, hosted a community fundraising walk this past October. Although the net profit was only \$417.00, the non-monetary benefits were phenomenal! Over 125 adults and 95 children under the age of 12 attended! Most of the participants were first time walkers from the surrounding community and four participants were former Volkssporters who were excited about reconnecting with the AVA! The children were sponsored by a local donor who paid for their \$20 registration fee and Family Service provided volunteers, water, tables, and chairs. Natural Grocers provided free snacks and fruit. Sometimes non-monetary benefits can be equally valuable as net profits by helping to build a stronger foundation for future support and success.





Speaking of future success, the Texas Volkssport Association has agreed to promote this event by putting it on their 2025 calendar of events. Local clubs and Family Service have already committed to partnering with the AVA to make this an even bigger event next year! Special thanks to Mike and Kathy Schwencke, Pat Gunter, the Texas Volkssport Association, Family Service, Natural Grocers, and all our volunteers

**ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL INDIVIDUAL DONOR CAMPAIGN IN 2024, THANKS TO YOU!  
BIG GIVE TOTAL = \$96,109.00**

Congratulations to all who supported our annual individual donor campaign, The Big Give. The final donor report for the Big Give will be completed in December and published in the January Checkpoint. Results for all prize winners will be announced during our December 18 online seminar at 7pm Central. You do not want to miss this one! We will have a representative from Fleet Feet share tips on how to buy the perfect walking shoe! To sign up for the online seminar go to [ava.org](http://ava.org) and register.

Thank you to all our donors, we appreciate you!

Happy Holidays!

**NATIONAL OFFICE MOVED**

The National Office has moved to a new building in the same vicinity. The move will save the AVA approximately \$10,000 per year on rent and allow us to stay in an area where we are supported by the local community and the King William Association.

The new address is:

**1032 South Alamo Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78210**

Be sure to send all mail to this new address.

The National Office will be closed for the holidays from December 23 – December 27, 2024. However, someone will be on call to manage any emergencies on non-holidays. Please advise clubs to make sure they have received event stamps before December 17th for events that occur during the last two weeks in December and first week of January. If they have not received these stamps or need help with sanctioning, please contact Hector at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).

**LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP SUNSETTING MARCH 31, 2025**

Many years ago, AVA Lifetime Membership was one of the best deals in town for members and the AVA. However, due to lack of interest, sustainability, and restructuring of our membership programs, the Lifetime Membership program will sunset March 31, 2025.

All Lifetime Members and those who sign up before March 31, 2025, will retain their current Lifetime Membership benefits in perpetuity. There is still time to sign up for a Lifetime Membership to take advantage of the convention discount. For more information, please contact Marian at [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org)



**AVA ONLINE MONTHLY WEBINARS – DECEMBER 18, 2024 @ 7:00P.M. CENTRAL TIME**

The next AVA online seminar will be Wednesday, December 18, 2024, at 7:00pm Central. To participate please pre-register on the AVA website or [click here](#) to pre-register for the webinar. If asked for a passcode, the passcode is AVA.

**Special Guest Host:** Susan Pinneke, North Central Region, AVA Board Member

**Guest Speakers Include:**

**Julian Estrada  
Fleet Feet**

Learn about the free benefits Fleet Feet offers and the importance on what to look for when trying to select the walking shoe that is best for your feet!

**AVA's Inaugural Fundraising Cruise**

Presented by: Rob McDaniel, AVA Lifetime Member, New Vista Enterprises, LLC

Learn more about the AVA's Inaugural Fundraising Cruise aboard the Norwegian Escape, sailing from New Orleans to the Western Caribbean from November 15–22, 2025.

This unique event includes pre-cruise walks and activities celebrating veterans, making it a meaningful and memorable experience.

Do not miss this chance to learn more about this inspiring journey and how you can be part of it!

**BIG GIVE - SAMANTA SANCHEZ**

**IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING**

The spirit of giving is vibrant this season, as evidenced by the remarkable success of our Big Give 2024 campaign, which has seen a steady influx of donations in recent weeks. We are thrilled to announce that, thanks to your remarkable kindness, we have raised an impressive total of \$96,109.00. This season reminds us that the true essence of generosity lies not just in the material gifts we exchange, but in the love and compassion we offer to one another. We sincerely appreciate your belief in our mission and your invaluable support in making a positive impact. We could not achieve this without donors like you. We hope this holiday season brings you joy, warmth, and cherished moments with loved ones. Wishing you a wonderful time filled with happiness and good cheer.

Thank you!

Stay tuned for more Big Give updates.





**AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB**

**AVA**

JOIN: AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB  
**VETERANS DAY**

INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING CRUISE - EASTERN CARIBBEANS  
FROM NEW ORLEANS - NORWEGIAN EPIC

EVERYONE'S WALKS

CRUISE WALKS

**PRE-CRUISE WALKS**

**CRUISE WALKS**

**NEW ORLEANS**  
GARDEN DISTRICT  
NOV 13, 2025  
FRENCH QUARTERS DISTRICT  
NOV 14, 2025  
MEET & GREET  
NOV 14, 2025

**CRUISE WALKS**

NEW ORLEANS  
COZUMEL, MEXICO  
DAY AT SEA - FUN WALK  
ROATAN, HONDURAS  
HARVEST CAYE, BELIZE  
COSTA MAYA, MEXICO  
DAY AT SEA - FUN WALK



**Eastern Caribbeans**  
November 15-22, 2025  
contact Rob McDaniel  
(864)365-6330  
rob@newvistaenterprise.com

**\*\*Prices based on Double-Occupancy**  
Club Balcony \$2694.05  
Balcony \$2478.10  
Interior Cabin \$950.00  
Deposit \$125 pp - NLT Jan 20, 2025





**CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR**

**WHY YOU SHOULD COME TO CONVENTION!**

All walkers that enjoy walks, seeing new sights and having different experiences should come to convention. The AVA Convention is held every other year and is designed to spotlight the best of the area of the country we are visiting. Don't think only local club delegates should attend this national event. Our Trailmaster, Helen Hull for 2025, has designed some great one-of-kind walks. Come to Las Cruces in 2025 and experience these walks. A one-of-a-kind Traditional Walk will take AVA walkers across the border to Juarez Mexico. This group walk starts in El Paso, Texas where a bus will drop walkers off and pick them up to return to Las Cruces. An alternative to crossing into Mexico will be a walk centered around the El Paso Rose Garden. Walks on other days will show you the "Real New Mexico", buses will take walkers to locations within about an hour from Las Cruces.

National Office staff and your AVA Convention Committee have planned some fun social events. Much like regional conventions/roundups, only on a grander scale, walkers get together with other walkers from their past and make new walker-friends from all over the country.

Yes, there are two afternoon sessions for delegates, but there are other things to do during those few hours, such as local walks, a swim and cycle (bike) event, museums, shopping and exploring the local food fare. Attendees have the choice to sit-in and observe the two General Sessions, roughly 150 minute sessions for delegates, and also the opportunity to sit in on an AVA Board Meeting to see some of the inner workings of AVA. This is a perfect opportunity to meet existing AVA Board Members and Officers, and incoming Members and Officers. Let's all converge on Las Cruces New Mexico in Spring 2025.

**WEST TEXAS WALKERS - SUSAN NOONAN, PRESIDENT**

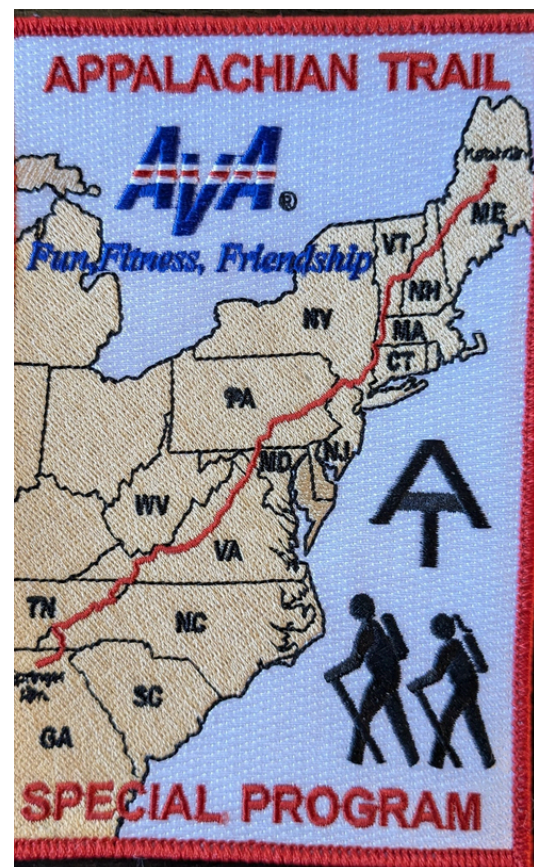
**APPALACHIAN TRAIL (AT) SPECIAL PROGRAM UPDATE**

Despite the extensive damage from Hurricane Helene, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy hopes to have the AT trails in Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina open by the start of the Spring 2025 season. Be sure to check the Appalachian Trail Conservancy website for the latest trail conditions.

The new point of contact for the Appalachian Trail Special Program is Susan Noonan, [susan.noonan@gmail.com](mailto:susan.noonan@gmail.com). Susan is a colleague of Susan Medlin, the originator of the Appalachian Trail Special Program. As a tribute to Susan Medlin, Susan Noonan will carry on the AT program until its conclusion December 31, 2029. She completed the AT program in October 2024 with Walking Adventures International. Susan is President of the West Texas Trail Walkers, a club that hikes challenging trails in West Texas and New Mexico.

To earn the Appalachian Trail Special Program certification, participants must hike/walk an AVA sanctioned trail in each of the 14 states that the AT passes through. The special event book costs \$10 and the book provides a page for each state for the stamp and for personal comments/pictures. The book is available through December 31, 2028 and must be completed by December 31, 2029. Please send an email to [susan.noonan@gmail.com](mailto:susan.noonan@gmail.com) to acquire the book, receive the Appalachian Trail patch and/or for questions.

So far, 315 people have registered for the program and 50 people have completed the program to earn the Appalachian Trail Patch. The most recent person to complete the AT program is Margaret O'Brien, 85, from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, proving that you are never too old to hike the Appalachian Trail. Congratulations Margaret!





**PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR**

**PUBLICITY UPDATE**



Thank you to all the clubs who did an #OptOutside event Friday. Many of you had group walks, and it was great to see photos on social media. As we wind down the year, we wanted to encourage you to support the clubs having multi-day events for New Year's Eve/New Year's Day.

- [Williamsburg, VA](#), sponsored by Peninsula Pathfinders of Virginia
- [Savage, MD](#), sponsored by Freestate Happy Wanderers
- [Fredricksburg, TX](#), sponsored by Volkssportverein Friedrichsburg
- [Seattle, WA](#), sponsored by Emerald City Wanderers

If you can't make these events, consider having a group walk in your area to welcome in the New Year and invite friends to join you. Send your NY Day walk to [publicity@ava.org](mailto:publicity@ava.org), and we'll promote the list on social media.

And while you plan your travels for 2025, remember to include the [Texas Trail Roundup](#) IML event Feb. 14-16 in San Antonio (3 walks, bike, swim), and the [2025 AVA Biennial Convention](#) event April 26-May 4 in Las Cruces (10 walks, bike, swim).

**CONVENTION VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR - SUSAN PINNEKE**

**VOLUNTEERING MADE EASY FOR THE 2025 CONVENTION**

The 2025 AVA Convention in Las Cruces, NM is going to be a very special event, but this very special event is being hosted by some very small Volkssport clubs. They are going to need help with everything from trail marking and checkpoints, to silent auction, to registration and much more. Volunteering is a great way to make new friends and have some extra fun along the way!! Hi, I'm Susan Pinneke, volunteer coordinator for the 2025 convention. I'm asking you, please, when you register for the convention, check the box "I'd like to volunteer". You don't have to specify a job, day or time right now. I'm just putting together a list of volunteers at this point. We will be using SignUpGenius again for this convention, as we did for the Olympiad. Once we have jobs and shifts figured out, we'll send out the link to the SignUpGenius and you can choose the job you'd like and the shifts that work into your schedule. Shifts will be designed so you can volunteer and participate in the day's activity. The SignUpGenius is scheduled to be available around the first of the year, once we know more about our volunteer needs. I know from being volunteer coordinator for the Olympiad, volkssporters are the best volunteers around. Generous with their time, friendly, helpful and flexible, the volunteers made the event a success!! If you have questions, contact me, Susan Pinneke at [volunteers@AVA.org](mailto:volunteers@AVA.org). You also can volunteer by contacting me at [volunteers@AVA.org](mailto:volunteers@AVA.org).

**ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL**

**2025 CENTURION ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE**



The 2025 program begins January 1, 2024. You must be an AVA Associate Member (annual or lifetime) to participate in the Challenge. Eligible participants may register for the 2025 Challenge between October 1, 2024 and September 30, 2025 using the official registration form. Please mail forms to AVA, **1032 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210**, or e-mail to [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org).

- [Centurion Challenge Instructions](#)
- [Centurion Challenge Registration](#)



BRITISH WALKING FEDERATION  
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES



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Come and join us for the 24th  
**US FreedomWalk**  
17-19 October 2025



Save the Date!

AVA: America's Walking Club  
2025 Biennial Convention

April 29-May 2, 2025

Las Cruces, NM  
*The Real New Mexico*  
3 Cities, 3 States,  
Two Countries



Come Walk WITH US!

For more information and registration visit AVA.org or call (210) 659-2112



39th Annual Spring Volksmarch  
June 7, 2025



TRI-STATE LIGHTHOUSE  
WALKING EVENT



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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.



1032 S Alamo St · San Antonio, TX 78210, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 Message US.