



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

NOVEMBER
2025
VOLUME 34
NO. 11

CHECKPOINT

WWW.AVA.ORG



PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING NOTICE

The AVA National Board of Directors will meet Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Central Time Zone. This will be a virtual meeting on the Office 365 Teams platform. To access the meeting click on the link below. 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.

[Click here for the meeting link.](#)

Board Meeting Deadlines:

November 26, 2025: Agenda items due to the Board Chairman, Carl Cordes, at chairman@ava.org. Please copy henry@ava.org

Note: If you are a Committee Chair and would like time on the agenda, please send an email request to the Board Chairman, Carl Cordes and copy Henry.

December 3, 2025: Officers, Board Members, and Committee 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.

December 10, 2025: Board meeting information package emailed to Board Members and Deputy Directors.

AVA Board Officer's Reports and Committee Reports:

[Click here for Agenda items Form](#)

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

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AVA WEDNESDAY WEBINAR FOR NOVEMBER 19, 2025, IS CANCELLED

The November 19th AVA webinar is cancelled due to a conflict with the AVA's fundraising cruise and the Thanksgiving holidays. The next webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 7:00pm Central. Be sure to join us as we celebrate the holidays with a special guest host and announce the Big Give winners!

To register for the webinar, click the link or go to the AVA website homepage. Once you have registered for the Zoom meeting a link will be sent to the email you used to register.

A SNEAK PREVIEW AT THE JANUARY 21, 2026, AVA WEBINAR....

The Atlantic Region (Karen Kaufman, Regional Director, and Ron Jones, Deputy Regional Director) will host a webinar in January on "How to get New members and Retain Them." The panel will present how each reached out to potential members and how they kept them interested in their clubs. Although this webinar is open to all, the intended audience is club leadership and those interested and/or willing to help grow their club and retain members. Make a New Year's Resolution to tune in and get the best practices on how to grow your club. Recruiting new members is a great way to celebrate the AVA's 50th Anniversary!

AVA MICRO GRANTS AWARDED TO CLUBS FOR GRAPHIC DESIGN

In partnership with Austin Peay University, the AVA supported four clubs who responded to a request for support with graphic design from students at Austin Peay State University. The students helped the clubs design business cards, post cards, club banners, logos, coasters, and a mascot. This is the third year the AVA has partnered with the University to support clubs with graphic design.

The participating clubs awarded a micro grant include:

U.S. Freedom Walk Festival	\$200	Twin Cities Volkssport Walking Club	\$200
Colorado Springs Walking Club	\$200	Smith Mountain Lake Walking Club	\$200

BIG GIVE EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS - \$89,860 RAISED!

A heartfelt thank you to our AVA clubs, members, friends, associates, and family. Your support helps us promote healthier lives—physically, mentally, and emotionally—and build stronger social connections. We're so grateful to walk this journey with you and can't wait to celebrate together at our 50th Anniversary Events in 2026!

As our small way of saying thank you, all Big Give individual donors will be receiving two free walk coupons in the mail during the upcoming weeks. Clubs must report these walks in their quarterly participation reports under the coupon section to receive a credit reimbursement on their invoice.

Big Give prize winners will be announced in December during the December 17, 2025, AVA webinar.

AVA NATIONAL OFFICE HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The National Office will be closed for the seasonal holidays on the following dates:

November 27 - 28, 2025
 December 22-26, 2025
 January 1, 2026

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.

AVA FINANCE CHAIR - SETH WERNER

FINANCIAL HEALTH TIPS FOR LOCAL CLUBS

#2 Why Every Nonprofit Needs a Budget (Even Small Ones!)

From the Desk of the National Finance Chair

Small clubs face big challenges when it comes to finances. This series offers practical, easy-to-follow advice to help you avoid common mistakes and keep your club on track.

Your Budget = Your Roadmap

Operating without a budget is like driving without a map—you might get somewhere, but not where you intended. A simple budget helps you plan, prioritize, and avoid surprises.

Quick Start Checklist:

- ✓ List all expected income sources
- ✓ Estimate monthly expenses
- ✓ Review and adjust quarterly

Resource: Nonprofit Budgeting Basics – National Council of Nonprofits:

<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/budgeting-nonprofits>

**Stay tuned for the next tip.*

AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR - KAREN KAUFMAN

"We are looking to add one member from each of the following Regions to the Awards committee:

Mid America
North Central
Southeast
Southwest
South Central

You do not need to be a RD, DRD or Club officer to join the committee. Experience with the AVA awards program is helpful but not required to join. Please contact me at awards@ava.org if interested."

AVA SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR - AMANDA JAUREGUI



2026 TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP

The Texas Trail Roundup is a premier three-day international walking festival hosted in the beautiful city of San Antonio, Texas. Each year, walkers from around the world come together to explore one of America's most historic and culturally rich cities on foot. Whether you are an experienced walker or just starting out, you will experience San Antonio in a way few people ever do!

Day 1 (February 20): 50th Anniversary Walk in Fredericksburg, Texas. Opening Ceremony will start at 9am under the Adelsverein covered pavilion at the Marktplatz. When walkers come back they will be greeted with live entertainment, wine samples from Augusta Vin, and a food truck.

Day 2 (February 21): Full Marathon Walk through the heart of San Antonio, followed by a fun social gathering on South Alamo Street with free goodies from The Jewel and Churrostar.

Day 3 (February 22): Half Marathon Walk and Closing Ceremony at Beethoven Maennerchor.

[Registration is now open!](#) You can look at our [website](#) for the schedule, updates, and more information on where you can stay. If you are interested in volunteering for the event, you can [register here](#).

BIG GIVE COMMITTEE - SAMANTA SANCHEZ, CHAIR

\$89,860 RAISED - THANK YOU!

Our annual fundraiser, the Big Give 2025, has officially come to an end, and we couldn't be more grateful to all the 355 donors* (individuals, clubs, businesses, and partners) who donated to this year's campaign. Your contribution to the Big Give 2025 will support essential health and wellness programs within our communities. At America's Walking Club, we believe that walking isn't just a physical activity; it's a way to empower individuals and build connections that last a lifetime. We truly believe in the power of Fun, Fitness, Friendship, and with your gift, we can continue transforming lives. A special thanks to our eleven Peer-to-Peer fundraisers. Their initiative, leadership, and belief in our mission collectively raised an incredible \$8,325! We also want to take a moment to give a special shout-out to all those individuals who set their alarms and donated during the Match Minutes. Thanks to your efforts, the AVA received \$1,575** in Match Minute prize money. Cheers to all our donors! Your support means the world to us - thank you!

Please stay tuned for more Big Give updates in the upcoming issues of the Checkpoint and Social Media.

*355 includes duplicate donors

** \$1,575 in match minute money is included in the \$89,860 total



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

PUBLICITY UPDATE

So far, 15 clubs from 12 states have submitted their #OptOut walks to AVA, to invite everyone to join them the day after Thanksgiving for a walk. If you're having a group walk, for either a YRE or traditional event, please fill out the form by November 15, 2025, or email hector@ava.org. We'll promote events on social media and on the website: <https://ava.org/optoutside>.

We are working hard to keep the [50th Anniversary website](#) updated, so please be patient as we gather information and continue to add more information. I plan to complete the basic info by next week.

In the meantime, I hope you are planning your travels for 2026 to attend as many 50th events as possible. The "signature" regional events are listed on the [website](#), and we'll have a special passport to celebrate. You'll get a unique sticker at each walk for your passport book. If you complete 50% of the passport book, you'll get a 50th Anniversary souvenir. Complete 100% of the passport book (all 17 events) to receive a 50th Anniversary souvenir and commemorative t-shirt. Books are \$15 each. [Sign up here](#).

The first event is only two months away: January 9-11, 2026 with the AVA Chairman's Anniversary Celebration in Boulder City, NV, hosted by the [Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers](#). Carl Cordes has planned three days of events, socials and dinner in this beautiful city next to Hoover Dam. Get more info and [Register here](#).

Then February 20-22, the [Texas Trail Roundup](#) in San Antonio, TX celebrates its 6th year as an IML event, and becomes the second signature event celebrating the 50th anniversary. The opening day, Friday Feb. 20, will actually be in Fredericksburg, TX, where the first volkswalk occurred in 1976. Registration is open now, along with special hotel rates.

Fifteen more signature events are scheduled. See the [website](#) to plan your travels.

We're very excited about the hard work around the country by various clubs and regions to create special 50th Anniversary events throughout 2026. We encourage you to make plans now to attend as many of these 17 events as possible, to join AVA: America's Walking Club in celebrating its 50th anniversary. We will be continuously updating the 50th anniversary website: ava.org/50th-anniversary, and adding a history timeline, photos, Hall of Fame recipients, and a publicity toolkit. In the meantime, please make your plans for these events:

January 9-11 – Boulder City, NV Pre-register and more [information here](#).

AVA Chairman's Anniversary Weekend, hosted by Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers

February 20-22 – San Antonio, TX Pre-register and more [information here](#).

6th Annual Texas Trail Roundup, hosted by AVA: America's Walking Club

March 20-22 – Williamsburg, VA

Atlantic Regional Conference, hosted by Virginia Volkssport Association

April 17-19 – Council Bluffs, IA and Omaha NE

Memories on the Mighty MO, hosted by Nebraska Trailblazers

May 16-20 – Lake George, NY

Revolutionary War Battle Sites, hosted by Empire State Capitol Volkssporters

June 6-7 – Crazy Horse, SD and Black Hills, SD

40th Anniversary Crazy Horse Memorial Volksmarch, hosted by Black Hills Volkssport Association

June 19-21 – Illinois and Indiana

Mid-America Regional Conference, hosted by Mid-America Region

July 24-25 – San Francisco, CA

50 Works of Art for 50 Years of Walking, hosted by San Francisco Bay Bandits

July 28+ - Colorado Springs, CO

Rocky Mountain Rendezvous, hosted by Falcon Wanderers

August 28-29 – Boston, MA

AVA 50th Anniversary Walk in Boston

September 7 – Mackinaw City, MI

Annual Mackinac Bridge Walk, hosted by Mid-America RD

September 24-27 – Astoria, OR

NW Regional Conference "Walking in the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark", hosted by Oregon Trails State Volkssport Asso.

October 16-18 – Arlington, VA

25th Annual IML Freedom Walk Festival, hosted by US FreedomWalk

October 28 – November 1 – KS, MO, OK

Halloween Kicks on Route 66, hosted by Sunflower Sod Stompers + Other SC Clubs

November 6-8 – Florida

35th Annual Walk Around Florida, hosted by Suncoast Sandpipers

November 14 – Dayton, OH

OWF Honors Veterans, hosted by Ohio Wander Freunde

December 5 – Helen, GA

Weihnachten Lights Spectacular, hosted by Alpine Helen Volksmarch Club

More to celebrate: We will be also celebrating our many clubs on social media throughout 2026. Please send a paragraph about your club. Send to publicity@ava.org. Here's one we received, to give you an idea:

The Niagara Frontier club has it all: Niagara Falls and Seneca Falls; our walks meet the banks of two Great Lakes and two Finger Lakes- Ontario, Erie and Chautauqua, Seneca; our routes trace the Erie Canal; and, battles of the War of 1812 and for Emancipation were fought in our walk locations. Visit 18 historic walks and view outstanding scenery with the added bonus of learning about America.

And... we want to **celebrate our walkers**, who are the lifeblood of America's Walking Club. Have you walked all 50 states/51 capitals? Walked all 7 continents? Have a funny story to tell? Whatever it might be, please send to publicity@ava.org so we can share.

TAW deadline for the December issue is October 25. Please send stories for TAW to taw@ava.org

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - DIANE HOWELL EVANS , CHAIR**AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY SIGNATURE EVENTS**

The AVA 50th Anniversary Planning Committee has been busy soliciting events from AVA's Regional Directors and clubs, as well as creating and designing several items to promote and publicize these upcoming signature events around the country next year.

There will be seventeen 50th Anniversary signature events in 2026 with at least one event in each of AVA's ten regions. A newly designed 50th Anniversary banner, postcard, T-shirt and Commemorative Passport will list each of these signature events and be utilized at their events to generate publicity for the events locally and nationally. Local and regional media sources in the club's area, as well social media outlets, will be used to promote the event and introduce folks and communities to America's Walking Club. The goal in the short run is to recruit new folks to our sport. In the long run -- identify future leaders.

The Planning Committee has closed the search for "signature" events. For more information, please contact Programs@ava.org.

ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL**FINANCIAL**

If your club's fiscal year ends on 6-30-25, it is time to file your 990 E-Postcard, Annual Financial Report (AFR), and update your club officers. Both documents are to be submitted to the national office before the November 15, 2025 deadline. An IRS user guide, and the AVA Retention policy for financial and event records have been posted on the AVA website under "Clubs Only". Please submit a copy of your filings to marian@ava.org.

2026 CENTURION ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE:

The 2026 program begins January 1, 2026. You must be an AVA Individual Member (annual or lifetime) to participate in the Challenge. Eligible participants may register for the 2026 Challenge between October 1, 2025 and September 30, 2026 using the official registration form. Please mail forms to AVA, 1032 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX78210, or e-mail to marian@ava.org.

[Centurion Instructions](#)

[Centurion Form](#)

AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE PASSPORT BOOK

Celebrate AVA's 50th Anniversary!

In honor of this milestone, participating clubs will host 2026 Signature Events across the country. Join the celebration with the 50th Anniversary Passport Book Challenge— featuring 17 special event signature walks.

- Collect a unique sticker at each walk for your passport book.
- Complete 50% of the passport book to earn a 50th Anniversary souvenir.
- Complete 100% of the passport book to receive a 50th Anniversary souvenir and commemorative t-shirt.
- Program runs from 1-1-26 to 12-31-26
- Submit completed books for redemption to same address, or scan to marian@ava.org by June 31, 2027
- For more information on the walks, please visit ava.org

Passport books will be mailed in December, arriving in time for the first January event. The cost of the books are \$15.00 each plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. Mail form along with payment to AVA, 1032 S. Alamo St., San Antonio, TX, 78210 or email form to Marian@ava.org and call with credit card information.

[Order Form](#)

40th Annual Spring Volksmarch June 6, 2026



**Come and join us for the 25th
US FreedomWalk**
16-18 October 2026



An International Walking Experience

NATIONAL EVENTS



You're invited to roundup for our 3-day international walk fest known as the:

Texas Trail Roundup February 20-22, 2026

A premier three-day international walking festival hosted in the beautiful city of San Antonio, Texas. Each year, walkers from around the world come together to explore one of America's most historic and culturally rich cities on foot.



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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