



American Volkssport Association Facts & Figures

- ✓ The American Volkssport Association (AVA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting regular physical fitness activity for Americans as an essential component of overall good health.
- ✓ AVA is America's premier noncompetitive sports organization and administers the nation's largest noncompetitive sports program from its national headquarters in Universal City, Texas.
- ✓ Since its inaugural U.S. event in 1976, AVA now boasts of more than 200 chartered sports clubs nationwide, whose activities are monitored by ten Regional Directors who are elected by the clubs in their region.
- ✓ The volkssporting movement began in Germany in 1968 – now in 28 countries worldwide.
- ✓ Volkssporting is an international sports phenomenon that promotes personal physical fitness and good health by providing fun-filled, safe exercise in a stress-free environment through self-paced walks and hikes, bike rides, swims, and in some regions cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- ✓ Walking is the most popular of all U.S. volkssporting activities and has been identified by the U.S. Surgeon General as the most beneficial form of exercise.
- ✓ Two trails are normally offered at walking events: 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) or 5 kilometers (3.1 miles).
- ✓ More than 3,000 sanctioned U.S. volkssport events are sponsored annually with participation open to the general public. No need to be an athlete.
- ✓ Special provisions also allow for the physically challenged to participate in most events.
- ✓ Nearly 400,000 people took part in AVA events during a recent two-year period.
- ✓ More than six million individuals have participated in volkssporting since 1990.
- ✓ Clubs schedule several walks annually usually one or two-day events on a weekend, available only on that date. Participants may start an event individually or in a group at

any time during a specified time period and are allowed more than enough time to finish. These are designated as “Traditional” events.

- ✓ Also there are established walk routes that can be walked throughout the year or seasonally at the participant’s personal convenience. These are designated as year-round and seasonal events.
- ✓ Many people adopt volkssporting as part of their lifestyle, and have completed hundreds of events and thousands of kilometers. While many begin walking for fitness (that inevitable medical wake-up call), most continue because of friendships and social benefits provided by the local clubs.
- ✓ A unique aspect of volkssporting is the Achievement Awards Program whereby participants may enroll in an incentive awards program keeping records of distances walked and events completed. Record books are purchased for a nominal fee.
- ✓ The record books are stamped when the events are completed and after processing at the Association headquarters, achievement awards consisting of a patch, pin and certificate are returned to the participant.
- ✓ AVA is run by an all-volunteer board of directors with a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and ten Regional Directors who form the National Executive Council. There are six paid employees at the headquarters location.
- ✓ **Mission Statement:** The AVA is the advocate for the promotion and organization of walking and other noncompetitive sporting events that encourage physical fitness, fun and friendship for people of all ages and abilities.
- ✓ **Vision Statement:** To be recognized as America’s premier noncompetitive sports organization with sustained growth and sound financial base.
- ✓ **Values Statement:** The AVA values friendship, fun and fitness through quality family oriented noncompetitive events, in America’s spirit of teamwork where all can achieve their personal best.

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