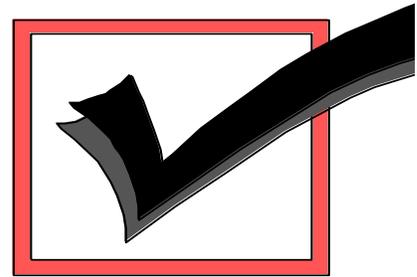


AVA CHECKPOINT



**Official voice of the American Volkssport Association,
America's premier noncompetitive sports organization!**

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NEC MEETING

Our next official National Executive Council XVII Meeting will be held July 6 and 7, 2012 at the Fairfield Inn Orlando Airport, 7100 Augusta National Drive, Orlando, Florida 32822, telephone 407.888.2666. The meeting schedule is as follows: 1) Friday, July 6: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. 2) Saturday, July 7: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.. Both of these meetings are formal meetings. We no longer have an informal meeting on Friday evening. The recommended dress is Business.

18th AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION DATE CHANGE

This is written to set the record straight regarding the changed dates of the 18th AVA Biennial Convention. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. The biennial convention is now scheduled for Monday, April 29 thru Friday, May 3, 2013 at the Orlando Airport Marriott, 7499 Augusta National Drive, Orlando, Florida 32822-5015. The overall dates including all convention volkssport events are Saturday, April 27 through Sunday, May 5, 2013.

The AVA National Executive Council conducted a special meeting on March 29 and voted unanimously on the date change. We waited to announce the dates until after the contract was signed, and that was only a few days ago.

Why the change? We were informed quite unexpectedly in March by the hotel that all of the meeting space in the hotel had been booked by a sales agent two years ago and the hotel was committed to honor that reservation. The hotel for some reason was unaware of this overbooking until they began verifying the AVA contractual details. With our convention just about one year out, the decision was also made to stay with this hotel that we knew could handle the lodging, meeting space and social event requirements. Trying to identify and negotiate with another hotel at this late date was not the expedient course of action.

An AVA room block to handle room reservations will be established by June 1, 2012. Reservations must be made no later than April 1, 2013 by calling 1.800.380.6751. Ask for the American Volkssport Association room block.

AVA INVOICES AND STATEMENTS

Due to software updates in the accounting program, invoices and statements will not be mailed from headquarters until Monday, May 7.

REVOKED CLUBS NON-PROFIT STATUS BY IRS

Keep in mind that the AVA Board of Directors voted in January 2012 to allow all revoked clubs until June 30, 2012 to become re-instated as a non-profit. If on July 1, 2012 your club is still not in

compliance per policy your club will be deactivated. Keep your Regional Director informed of your progress, especially if you are having problems. All clubs which have been revoked are not allowed to come under AVA's group exemption per the IRS when re-instated. Each club then will be under their own exemption and must provide a copy of the letter of determination issued by the IRS.

CLUBS NOT UNDER AVA'S GROUP EXEMPTION

There are still many clubs under another group exemption or under their own that have not provided proof to the AVA from the parent organization of their exemption or provided their letter of determination. This is a one-time requirement to ensure that all clubs are in compliance; not providing this proof will keep the club from voting at the convention and could cause a late fee for non-compliance with policy. All Regional Directors are urged to ensure the clubs in their region which have been identified as non-AVA group clubs provide this proof.

STARTING POINT 2013

This year only pre-orders for clubs and individuals for *Starting Point* 2013 will be accepted and will not be billed until books arrive. The deadline for pre-orders is no later than midnight Sunday, July 1. The deadline is necessary for publisher to ensure books will be delivered before Christmas. All orders will be shipped from the headquarters. Estimated delivery time is after Thanksgiving – early December. Pre-order form attached.

TAW DEADLINE

The August/September issue of *The American Wanderer* deadline is June 25. All articles, including Tails on the Trails, and photographs should be submitted directly to Laurel Parrott, Editor taw@bhi.com or mail to: 3526 Humboldt Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55412. Be sure to include "TAW" in the subject line if emailing.

ELECTRONIC SANCTION REQUESTS – EVENT CITY INPUT ERRORS

When entering data for the Event City field on the sanctioning page for your event, enter the city only. Do not include the state, zip code, commas, or use all CAPS, or other location information. Again, simply enter the name of the event city ONLY. The city will appear under the appropriate state heading. Examples of incorrect current input errors in each region are:

Culpeper, VA, VA	Okawville, Illinois, IL
Iowa City, IA, IA	Stockbridge, MA, Stockbridge, MA
Near Kuna, Idaho, ID	Pacific Grove, CA, CA
Denver, Colorado, CO	FLORISSANT, MO
NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FL	Lewisville, Tx, TX

IVV CERTIFICATION STAMP HANDLING REQUIREMENTS

Please handle all IVV Certification Stamps with care or a damage fee of \$15.00 will be billed directly to your club account. Damage is defined as:

- Stamp handle stained with Excessive Ink
- Holes drilled in handle
- Writing on IVV Certification Stamp handle with permanent marker
- Labels/Tape left on IVV Certification Stamp handle

Missing or damaged rubber slugs are \$6.00 each. Please wrap the IVV Certification Stamp with paper and rubber band it prior to mailing. If a stamp has any slight flaws, note this so the club is not charged.

MAINTAINING CLUB HISTORY

From time to time individuals call us asking for the name, date, location and other information of walks they attended years ago based just on the stamp number in their record books. Without club name and event number we cannot search the database. The official history that AVA maintains are the back issues of TAW, Checkpoints, and the required seven years of data in club paper files, the Starting Points and our museum; each year per our document retention policy, paper documents not of a permanent nature, older than seven years are disposed of; it is necessary to keep organization and lessen the storage space required to keep all club files. Once Officer information became available electronically, paper based officer lists past the seven years are not maintained. Unfortunately, we do not have the man-power to research these requests based only on a stamp number, and there is not time to research 15 to 20 years of walks per individual. We strongly suggest that each Volkssporter maintain a journal to record this information, and to make sure they have a club name and at least the event # per event. A good way to keep this is to use the copy of start cards received at each event and write the information you want to retain on the back, then transfer this information to your journal when you have time. Clubs maintain their own history, so contact the official club POC to find history on their events.

DOCUMENTATION OF 50/51 SPECIAL PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENT

There was a recent ground swell of response to the article that was published in the April/May edition of The American Wanderer (TAW) newspaper, "*Biography of an international walking legend - Jan Jorgensen.*"

We welcome feedback, positive or negative. Some respondents expressed amazement that one person could accomplish the 50 state/51 capital special program walk twice and was going to attempt it a third time.

However, others were somewhat disappointed that they, or others known to have completed the 50 state walk more than once, had not received AVA recognition. All of us at AVA national headquarters congratulate these personal achievements and encourage local clubs to continue to recognize the 50 or 51 program completions and to submit articles to TAW that chronicle the achievements.

However, we cannot officially recognize individual achievements unless correct administrative procedures are followed. In some cases, individuals completing the walks for the first time submitted proper documentation to AVA and received recognition, to include a name placard on the AVA museum 50 state program wall plaques. However for whatever reason, subsequent 50 state walk documentation books were not submitted for official verification by AVA.

If you want to apply after-the-fact for past achievement in the 50 state program and can provide documentation of your efforts, simply purchase a Special Program 50/51 Book from AVA HQ, complete the requested information, and mail it in. Names are added to the 50 state achievement plaques for the year AVA processes the completed 50 state walk books. There is no ending date for program completion.

Individuals completing either one of the basic 50/51 program walks receive a special recognition certificate. If you are planning to attempt this, e-mail Karen@ava.org and request your "Walking the United States" record book. You can also place an order by mail or in person to the American Volkssport Association, 1001 Pat Booker Rd., Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148-4147.

Record books are \$6.50 each (this price includes shipping). A separate book is required for each program – please order two books if participating in both programs. For an additional fee of \$25, you can purchase an optional Deluxe Package available upon walk completion that includes a state or capital certificate, a large patch, and a patriotic T-shirt. Details are on the back of each book.

WEBSITE EVALUATION - www.walkers.meetup.com

AVAHQ marketing is always on the lookout for ideas, websites, or other sources of information that may assist your clubs with event publicity and member recruiting. I may have found something. The word on the street is that there is a trending website out of New York City that all walkers should visit. So I did.

My personal evaluation is that it is very easy to use. The address is www.walkers.meetup.com. Be advised as you navigate throughout the site, there is a link to just about every social cause or organization that exists. I zeroed in on walking.

Most importantly, the site represents another opportunity and outlet for AVA clubs to announce upcoming traditional events and a chance to locate and educate interested walkers in your zip code geographic area about our AVA national network of walking trails for seasonal activities and about AVA in general.

As you enter the site, you will see two links at the top of the page in red. **Find a Meeting Group** and **Start a Meeting Group**. To locate other interested groups in your area, click on **Find a Meeting Group**. Type in "walking" or the other volkssport activities of choice and provide your zip code. And be surprised what appears. Your source to recruit members from or to convince them to join forces with an AVA sanctioned club.

I tested a few state zip codes and didn't see any AVA participation on the site.

If you decide to join and list your club as a group, click on **Start a Meeting Group** and provide the required information. This allows you to tell all walking groups operating in your zip code area that AVA clubs are already in place and ready for new walkers to join the program. Be sure to list the ava.org website in your information whenever possible.

There is an organization fee charged to start a walking group and display your group information. But it seems quite reasonable considering the exorbitant cost (thousands of dollars) you would pay for print or broadcast promotional ads at today's prices. The payments are short term and offered in three plans. Plan one: Six month participation, \$72 (\$12 per month.) Plan two: three months \$45 (\$15 per month) Plan three: One month for \$19. This would prove suitable for a periodic membership drive or event announcement.

This information is provided for your reading enjoyment and in no way should be interpreted as a directive from AVA that you must get involved. We do ask that you go to the site and take a look for yourself. Also, if you have a favorite walking website, send a link to marketing@ava.org so we can add it to our soon- to- be established digital library.

Chuck Blische, Director of Marketing and Publicity

Attachments:

Starting Point 2013 Pre-Order Form for Clubs and Individuals