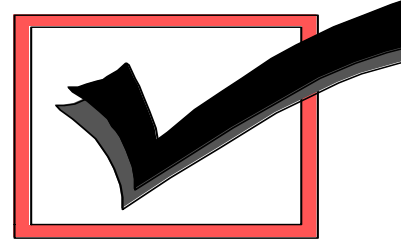


AVA CHECKPOINT



The official voice of the American Volkssport Association
America's premier noncompetitive sports organization

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Happy New Year!

NEC Meeting

The next NEC meeting is set for Friday and Saturday, January 10-11, 2014. Meeting begins Friday at 7 p.m. at the **Hotel Tucson City Center Inn & Suites**, 475 N. Granada, Tucson, AZ 85701, phone 520-622-3000. NEC meeting attendee rooms are reserved here as well.

New Year's Recruiting Opportunity – Publicity Toolkit

The New Year presents a great recruiting opportunity for all AVA clubs. Americans are out joining health clubs and gyms to fulfill their resolutions to lose weight and get in shape. Clubs should get the word out about health benefits and activities that AVA offers at little or no cost. There is a fill-in-the-blank news release with this information just waiting for you in the Club Publicity Toolkit. Go to the [Administrative/Clubs Only/Publicity Toolkit](#) and click on the News Release section. Then click on the listing for the release “*New Years Invitation to Walk.*” Simply fill in your club information and email the release to your local media outlets. Don't know the address? The toolkit also contains a listing of media contacts in your area. Just click on the Media Contacts section. Select your state and pick your area media contacts. Give it a try.

Mailing of Starting Point Books for 2014

All Starting Point 2014 books were mailed in November with tracking by the U.S. Postal Service. This included cases, boxes, and/or envelopes. There have been two reports of books not received with the tracking service not proving effective. We did discover however that with the two shipments, our local post office and the Dallas post office was to blame. All books are shipped from AVAHQ in good condition with packing materials in boxes. There was one report of damaged books. They have been returned to us, and we have scheduled a meeting with the postal service. With this possibility of the tracking service not solving our problem of lost mail by the post office, our next recourse is to increase the cost of shipping to include insurance coverage on our mailings.

2014 Stamp Slug

It's 2014 now so remember to remove the “13” portion of the 2013 year stamp slug and replace it with the “14” slug for 2014.

AVA Awards

Click here to view the [AVA Award Processing Chart 2012-2013 Comparison](#) and [Ten Events comparison](#).

TAW Deadline

Deadline for the April/May issue is February 25. All articles to include Tails on Trails and photographs should be submitted to taw@ava.org. Please include the following information in your email: Subject Line should include "TAW, the region you're covering and the article title." Send information concerning advertisements in TAW, ad contracts and TAW contract revisions to Linda Rebmann, linda@ava.org.

Centurion Achievement Challenge Registration

Registration for the 2014 Challenge is open to Associate member volkssporters. Walking for record began January 1. The annual participation fee is \$25. [2014 registration form, complete and submit by email](#). Walking for record for the 2013 Challenge ended December 31 and completed books must be received at AVAHQ no later than February 15 of this year. As of this printing, 150 individuals have completed the 2013 challenge.

Sharing Ideas to Enhance Club Events

Creative enhancements for AVA events are limited only by our imagination. Here are two concepts that you may be able to incorporate and expand on. If you have other ideas, submit them to avawebmaster@ava.org. We'll list them so that other clubs can "borrow" them. Visit the Toolkit Resource Library http://www2.ava.org/Resource_Library.php to see other ideas that were submitted.

1. Baby Buggy Boogie

Here is an idea to encourage younger adults to participate in your club walking events. The idea of this event is to give parents the opportunity to walk with their young children, get some fresh air and to meet other parents with young children. This eliminates the need and cost for child care as the children can join in on the walks either in a stroller or walking themselves. This event could easily be combined with a youth health fair at the walk start/finish location coordinated by your local hospital or health clinic. This could be expanded by approaching your local drug store asking them to provide some handouts such as diapers or other baby products, some discount coupons, and a suitable prize for the best decorated stroller. Be creative in your promotion of this potential recruiting effort and you'll probably get media coverage as well. Think up a catchy name for the event. How about Baby Buggy Boogie !!!"

2. A Canine Classic

Promote this as a community "Pooch Parade" for dogs. People love to walk their dogs and show them off. Prior to opening the trail, have a pre-walk canine costume contest. You'd be amazed at the creativity of dog owners. Present a prize for biggest dog and smallest dog and best costume. Invite a local police/military canine unit to conduct demonstrations showing how dogs can be used to capture fugitives, sniff out bombs and other life saving techniques. This is a fan favorite. Use your club information tent to pass out AVA brochures and club information and those handy dandy doggie cleanup bags. Be sure to provide some water bowls at the checkpoint. Invite local food stores to provide discount coupons. Invite dog grooming stores to offer some free dog grooming at your location and some discount coupons for their services. A pet store could conduct some dog training clinics. Invite a local veterinarian to conduct a dog health care clinic answering owner's questions. Use your imagination, have fun, and make some money. The companies that participate are gaining community goodwill, promoting their goods and services, using discount coupons to drive business to stores, and getting a positive return on their investment. So don't be afraid to ask the businesses to pay a participation fee (except police, military and media).

Walk Together Patch Design Contest

Clubs who are interested in hosting the 2014-2015 Walk Together Patch Contest please contact the AVA National Youth Coordinator, Deb Kruep, avayouth@ava.org by January 15. The volkssport club selected should contact their local Girl Scout Council for permission to have a contest. Contact them as early as possible to discuss how a contest for an AVA Participation Patch might be held within the council and the time lines involved. If the club doesn't know who to contact, contact the council Program Director. It is important that the club contact the council early, so that contest materials that go out to troops and girls can be coordinated with council mailings, if that is the method the council will use to contact troops and girls. The contest is for individual girls or troops/groups within the council, and should be council-wide rather than for one troop. When a particular patch is selected for the following year, the AVA will prepare a certificate with the patch, honoring the girl/troop/group's contribution. The certificate will be sent to your club in the fall and you may present that certificate to the girl or troop/group in a manner decided by the council and your club. The contest winning design must be sent to the youth chairman by April 1. This is a good way to get your local scouts involved. Everyone wants to come to an event where a local scout has designed the patch. For further information, contact Deb Kruep.

Event and Distance Books Submission

You must submit the correct book for each level completed for both events and distances. Clubs should have available at least one or two books for each level. If a club does not have the correct book for sale, walkers must use an insert card until the proper book is obtained. Please note that when doing only five kilometer (km) walks, you will not reach the number of required kilometers without the use of insert cards. Listed below are the levels of completion for each book.

Events. For 10, 30 and 50 events use a Green book. A Purple book is required for 75 thru 600 events and a Rose book for 601 thru 1,500 events. Use a Gold book for 1,501 and higher events.

Distance. For 500 thru 8,000km use a Blue book. An Orange book is required for 8,001 to 22,000km. For 22,001 thru 25,000km, use a Yellow book. Note that in this first Yellow book, you will record increments of 3,000km (up to 25,000km) and then submit the book. Thereafter, purchase a second Yellow book to record distance for more than 25,000km. This is the highest level distance book and should be used to record all other distances higher than 25,000km.

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Partnerships

