



CHECKPOINT

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

Volume 23, Number 5

www.ava.org

May-June 2015

Information for Clubs in Good Standing and Voting Update:

Ballots for the IVV-Americas vote to join, or not join, will be mailed out May 5, 2015 to Clubs in good standing. Clubs must be in good standing by May 4, 2015 per AVA Bylaws Article IV Section 4.3. The ballots must be mailed to the American Volkssport Association's Attorney, using the provided prepaid envelope, and received by the attorney by 12 Noon central standard time, June 1, 2015.

HQ Events Coordinator - Marie Bebley:

The [Items Due Report](#) includes the Past Due Stamp, E-Postcard Filing, Financial Reports, Missing Officer Updates, Participation, and Money Due Past 90 Days.

NEC Approved Bylaw Amendments (To be Approved by Membership Vote at 2015 Convention):

Article II & III Affiliating with Other Organizations: [Click here](#)

Article V Call for Voice Vote: [Click here](#)

Article VI – Clarify RD Election Procedures: [Click here](#)

Article VI – Deputy Regional Directors: [Click here](#)

Article XIII Two Thirds Vote to change Bylaws: [Click here](#)

Article XV Definition of Mail: [Click here](#)

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items: [Click here for Agenda Items Form](#)

If you will be submitting an agenda item for the 2015 Convention, please complete as soon as possible and note the submission deadline.

May 4: Agenda Items from Regional Directors due to AVA National Headquarters.

May 18: Final list of official Agenda Items sent to AVA Clubs.

**AVA NEC Officer's Reports and Committee Reports: [Click here for Officer Report Form](#)
[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)**

May 19: Officer's and Committee Reports due at AVA National Headquarters, this will also appear in the Biennial Report.

May 28: Meeting data information package emailed to NEC members.

Nominating Committee's Slate for Election of National Officers:

On Friday, June 19, 2015, at the AVA convention in Salem, OR, delegates may vote on behalf of their organizations and proxies for National Officers. Those elected will serve on the XIX

National Executive Council from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017. While the Committee's Slate is published, for each of the four positions, nominations from the floor will be permitted.

For President, there are two nominees:

- **Chris Mellen**, Northeast Region;
- **Dennis Michele**, Southeast Region.

For Vice President, there is one nominee:

- **Holly Pelking**, Pacific Region.

The above three candidates: Chris, Dennis, and Holly, have their submitted narratives in "The American Wanderer" (TAW) newspaper, the Feb/Mar 2015 issue.

For Secretary, there is one nominee:

- **Sam Korff**, Northwest Region.

For Treasurer, there is one nominee:

- **Lawrence Lehman**, South Central Region.

The above two candidates: Sam and Larry have their submitted narratives in "TAW" newspaper, the April/May 2015 issue.

The Nominating Committee express their gratitude to all five persons for their willingness to volunteer their services to the American Volkssport Association.

Nominating Committee Members:

Glen Conyers, South Central Region

John McClellan, Southeast Region

Ellen Ott, Southwest Region

Leonard Wojtysiak, Mid-America Region

Doug Reynolds, Northeast Region; Chair

Special Message from the Convention Committee:



Oregon is almost ready for you. Remember – **preregistration closes on May 18th**. We're hoping to see lots of walkers, bikers, and swimmers from across the nation and beyond. #9walks9days! But walkers don't have to preregister if they aren't making purchases or attending socials.

Even if you are bringing a silent auction donation with you in June, you are encouraged to register the donations on the silent auction page ([click here](#)) of the convention website. That will help us prepare for your arrival and reduce the wait time at convention.

A Message from Maryann Brown, President, Oregon Trail State Volkssport Association:

The State Associations Meeting will be held Monday June 15 from 4:30pm - 5:30 pm in Croisan B at the Grand Hotel in Salem. This meeting is not just for Association Presidents. All Volkssporters are welcome to attend whether responsible at the state level or just concerned for your club and other clubs in your area. What do you have or what are you doing that is working to help your clubs? With what do you need help? What kind of wording works to bring in new walkers? What keeps new walkers walking with you? What tools are you successfully using to accomplish all the tasks required for a sanctioned walk or event? Where and how do you publicize? How do you map trails and parks? How do you work with the various City, State, and Federal Parks?

Any discussion topic you think will benefit volkssporting is welcome. Due to our time constraint (**one hour**), if you can send your topics, questions, ideas, or solutions to otsva@walkoregon.org, I will assemble them for handing out at the meeting. I look forward to welcoming you to Oregon. Maryann Brown, President, Oregon Trail State Volkssport Association, (541) 961-4279.

How to Register for Convention:

You must submit the form online. Please print two copies of your completed registration form, before you submit. **In order for your registration to be recorded, you must click the submit button called “Register and Print invoice” at the bottom of the form. Once you click that button, it will give you an ID number.** Print two copies of the invoice with your ID number. One printed copy of the completed form and ID number is your confirmation that you have registered for the convention. If paying by check one copy of the completed form and ID number must be sent with your payment to Headquarters. **If registering by credit card, there is a fee of \$9.00 to process the payment online with credit card or PayPal. Each person must have a separate registration under their name, even if paying for the entirety of the registrations with one check.** When registering by mail in payment, do NOT include payment for other merchandise such as books, membership, etc. Please send in a separate payment for merchandise, billing, late fees and other payments.

Final review of convention program and recognition awards book:

There are two documents being sent from AVAHQ by email. If you are an addressee, we ask that you take a few moments and assist us with the final review prior to printing of the convention official program and the recognition awards book. Comments are due to avawebmaster@ava.org regarding the official program no later than May 8 and no later than May 18 for the recognition awards book. If comments are not received by these dates we will proceed with printing of the documents using the information we have assembled. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Credentialing:

The 2015 Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation Forms have been mailed out to every person listed in the data base as the official POC for every club and state association. Please read this form carefully. **If you have not received this form please contact Headquarters immediately.**

Some things to keep in mind:

1. Clubs must be in good standing to vote by May 4th which is 45 days prior to be the first membership meeting. In Good Standing means that all reports received on time including participation reports, stamps that should be returned are returned on time, and no past due amounts on club accounts owed to AVA.
2. Section D. Certification is where the club officer signs not Section E. Verification. Verification is for the Executive Director's signature.
3. A person running for a National officer or Regional Director cannot be a delegate, alternate or carry proxies.
4. The form consists of a white, yellow, and pink self-carbon form. All three must be returned to the AVA with a post mark date no later than May 19, 2015 to the address on the form. If the deadline is missed, the three copies need to be brought to the credentialing booth at the convention by the delegate, alternate, or proxy. However, the club must be in good standing May 4, 2015.

5. This credentialing process is required for all voting whether at the convention or by paper ballot.

Voting Privileges: Each National Officer, Regional Director, State Organization and Regular Member club in good standing forty-five (45) days (May 4, 2015) 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 Executive Director 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 Biennial Convention. The AVA National Headquarters will mail the AVA Form 500 to State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs.

Alternates: State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may designate an alternate to the Delegate by completing AVA Form 500 and ensuring the designated alternate registers for the 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 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 Credentials 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. **Delegates, Alternates, or Proxies must be at least registered for the Convention under the Delegate registration, cost \$185.**

AVA Special Programs '2016' Qualifiers - Bonnie Johnson, Special Programs Chair:

This list consists of all the new approved Special Programs which begin on 1/1/2016 and includes the qualifiers needed on each individual Special Program. The purpose is to help the club trail-masters and point of contacts determine what will qualify on their walks as they get ready for sanctioning the year-rounds, seasonal and traditional events. Take the list with you as you are setting up new trails or revising old ones and get the benefit of more walkers who are walking for these Special Programs. More info on each program will be provided in TAW.

The Special Programs are in alphabetical order with a list of what the qualifiers and definers are for each program.

Bridges-Spanning the USA:

Any bridge counts where the route goes over or under a bridge. Bridges can be across any waterway, ravine, marsh, road or railroad to afford passage of motor vehicles, pedestrians and/or rail cars.

Lady Liberty:

Pass by or have the ability to view from the trail, the Statue of Liberty or a replica – must be stationary and non-moving. Murals of the Statue of Liberty may also be used.

Make a Wish – Water Fountains:

Decorative water fountains, splash pads; natural or manmade and the water does not need to be running. Fountain can be musical, illuminated, large, small, ornate, simple, free standing or wall mounted. No drinking fountain, aerating fountain or waterfall counts.

National Parks Centennial:

National Parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historic sites, lakeshores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails and the White House.

Points of Reference:

Directions (West Sacramento), Dimensions (Longview, TX), Times (Old German Town, OR) and Temperatures (Cold Spring, NY); Points of interest + club names count. No street names count.

State Street Sashay:

Any street named “State Street” counts.

Take a Walk In a City Park:

Walk by or through a city park. The city park must have a name. No county, state or national parks will be accepted.

Treasure Hunt:

Places –magical or real-named in honor of distinctive minerals, precious metals: ice, rock, stone; etc... Cities, counties, bodies of water, parks with mineral names count. No street names

Vice Presidential Walks :

Honor the V P’s of the U.S. Birthplaces, burial sites, towns of residence or college towns, schools, roads, towns or other geographical places named for the V P or a connection that is significant and verified.

United States Post Offices:

Pass a United States Post Office. The zip code should be displayed on the building. No rural or residential mailboxes or mail drop boxes will count (only the PO buildings).

Walking America’s Ports of Call:

Any city named for a “Port” or that passes locations that are currently or have been historically a port.. An ocean, river or lake port qualifies.

Walking the Path of Inventors:

Well known inventors/researchers: homes, gravesites, labs, workplaces or museums. Named streets, parks, statues, buildings, universities and colleges count if published research and notable work on inventions have taken or presently are taking place.

Walk the USA-Street by Street:

Use street names named after cities or states in the US with a maximum of three (3) states per event. City or state named street must be at least one block long. Can include city named streets and match it up with the state it is in.

HQ Awards Processing - Karen Winkle:

The pins and patches have been received by Headquarters. For those who have not received their awards, awaiting the reorder of stock; they will be shipping after they have been accounted for in inventory.

The Chart for [AVA Processing](#) and [Ten Events](#) are included as attachments.

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month:

May is National Physical Fitness & Sports Month. Clubs hosting events during the month of May can order patches by filling out and returning this form to AVA national headquarters at least 30 days prior to the event(s). Supplies are limited, so orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Clubs may place reorders until supply is exhausted. Don't miss the chance to offer this collectible patch to walk participants. \$2.50 each to clubs, includes shipping. ([click here for patch preorder form](#))

Celebrate World Walking Day In Universal City, Texas



Come walk with us on May 9, 2015 in Universal City, Texas on a trail that will start and finish at the AVA Headquarters and take you through the Universal City park, neighborhoods and Cibolo creek.

Special thanks to The Randolph Roadrunners, The Texas Wanderers, The Lone Star Walkers, the Selma Pathfinders, the AVA Headquarters team, and all our volunteers for their support with this walking event in celebration of World Walking Day. This event will be held May 9, 2015 from 8:00am-3:30pm at the AVA National Headquarters, 1001 Pat Booker Rd, Universal City, Texas 78148. Come out and enjoy the fun, food, live music, friendships and tour our National museum!

Don't forget if your club is also hosting a traditional event or a group walk of a YRE in celebration of World Walking Day on May 8 or between the weekends on either side of May 8, be sure to send those special World Walk Day pictures and info to SERD4AVA@gmail.com with your subject "World Walking Day." You can still order WWD certificates, although we do not guarantee it will arrive in time for your event. Please allow 10 days from the time of your order to reach you ([click here for certificate preorder form](#)). T-shirts are still available for purchase through Café Press at ([click here for direct link to our store](#)).

Countdown to The Big Give - May 5th, 2015

-An update by Henry Rosales, Executive Director, AVA

Dear Volkssporting Community and Friends of the AVA,

I am overtaken by the number and amount of Big Give donations that have been received to date. Thus far we have received a \$2,803 from clubs and individuals. With the anonymous donor match we currently have raised a total of \$5,606! With just a few days left I am hopeful we will reach our goal of \$30,000! Remember the online donation system will go live May 5th, at 1:00am and close at 12 midnight. The minimum online donation amount is \$10.00. To donate on May 5th, and see an update of donations received by AVA go to: <https://thebiggivesa.org/#npo/american-volkssport-association>

Here are the answers to some of the frequently asked questions that I have been receiving regarding The Big Give:

What is The Big Give?:



The **Big Give S.A.** is a 24-hour day of giving that will take place from midnight central standard time to midnight central standard time on May 5, 2015. The purpose of this community-wide giving challenge is to increase public awareness of the impact local nonprofits make in addressing our community's social challenges, bring nonprofits and donors together, expand the idea of online giving, connect people to the causes that move them the most and, of course, make giving FUN. By turning giving into a shared region-wide experience, we can significantly impact the future of South Central Texas and make a huge collective difference. Last year's event raised over \$2,000,000 for 467 participating agencies!

How The Big Give works:

On May 5th beginning at 12:00am (midnight) central standard time, friends, families, club members, NEC members, etc. are encouraged to go online at <https://thebiggivesa.org/#npo/american-volkssport-association> and click the donate button to make an online contribution. The funds are collected by a 3rd party processor and after fees are deducted (the total fee is 7.48%.-credit card fees are 2.49%, the event management fee is 2% and the Kimbia processing fee is 2.99%) the remainder is disbursed by the San Antonio Area Foundation to AVA no later than June 30, 2015. There are no fees assessed for the match, those funds will come directly to the AVA based on the total amount raised in support of the AVA.

Everyone who makes an online donation will immediately receive an email receipt from the San Antonio Area Foundation confirming the gift. All donations are tax deductible.

How much can I donate?

The minimum online donation amount is \$10.00. I recommended the goal should be to raise \$30,000 for the AVA in 24 hours! If 3,000 individuals donated only \$10.00 we would reach our goal! To date we have raised \$5,606 with the support of the anonymous donor.

Is there a limit to the donation for matching?

Every donation that is given by a club or individual will be matched dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$30,000, by an anonymous donor who is also a lifetime volkssporter! This means if we reach our goal of securing \$30,000 in donations we will leverage an additional \$30,000 for a total of \$60,000!

Is there a way I can give to AVA directly (and not online) to be matched so AVA doesn't have to pay the 7+% processing fee?

Donations can be made directly to the AVA by sending a check to the Headquarters office. Be sure to put "The Big Give" on the memo line and make checks payable to the AVA. Mail contributions do **not** need to reach our office by May 5th so long as they are postmarked no later than May 5th or an email notification of your donation has been sent to execdir@ava.org by midnight on May 5th. Please put The Big Give on the subject line.

Can the donation to the matching program be given in memory of someone?

Absolutely. If a contribution is made in memory of someone the donor should send a check to the AVA office (and not donate online) with a note referencing the name of the individual the donation is being made in memory of. If the donor would also like us to send a letter to the family please include the name and address of the family member you would like us to notify.

Can the donation be "earmarked" for a specific purpose, or must it just go into the general operating budget?

No, all donations are unrestricted and will be used to support the mission of the AVA. This comprises sustainability of existing programs and services to clubs as well as the planning, development and implementation of quality educational fitness programs and other non-competitive sports activities that reflect the needs of the communities our clubs serve.

Revenues raised by The Big Give will also help support the strategic planning efforts of the AVA to include priority focus areas as prescribed by the outcomes in the strategic plan. One of the major areas of priority focus for resources and support by the new Executive Director is membership and the membership of the AVA is its clubs.

What is the “Prize Money”?

The prize money is additional funding that has been donated by private foundations and corporations to The Big Give initiative to be redistributed as incentive prize money to the nonprofits that raise the most money in specified categories within a 24 hour window through online contributions. This is one of the benefits of making an online contribution on May 5th. Mail contributions made to the AVA do not count towards the prize money categories although they do count towards the match.

For more information on The Big Give go to: <https://thebiggivesa.org/#home>

“Thank you” to all who have already sent in a contribution and to those who will make a donation on May 5th. Your donation is an investment in the future of AVA. I look forward to meeting everyone at the convention and may you have a safe trip.

I conclude by sharing with you that during the planning meeting of The Big Give it was suggested that we share a story with our donors about who we are and what is the relevance of the existence of our organization. Why do we do what we do? I believe our story is best told by those who have walked in the AVA shoes for many years. Thank you all for your dedication and inspiration...

A WALK THROUGH LIFE BY CHARLOTTE PHILLIPS

When I graduated from college or was a junior officer in the US Army, if I thought many activities of my working life and my first twenty years of retirement would be built around walking, I would have said. “Are you crazy?”

Well it was. I started walking in Germany the first week-end I arrived. We climbed up the mountain near Heidelberg. I never stopped walking week-ends for my next three years in the Army. We not only walked one walk a day, but I walked two at least—often one was a twenty. We did this nearly every Saturday and Sunday. No walks in the immediate area, so out with small camper. We would take off after work and park at a place we felt safe for the night—often churches. Then off early to start a day of walking.

I walked not only in Germany but Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and beautiful Switzerland. I saw a great deal of Europe as a part of volksmarching trips. One four day week-end I took off with three friends for a series of walks in France, Italy and Switzerland. What a pair of sore knees I came home with.

There was massive community walk in the Netherlands which we did every year, great fun—lots of beer and wurst. What I remember, is as we walked through the towns we were greeted with flowers, water, and sometimes cookies. There were also bands distributed among the walking groups, oh we started on a schedule with a mixed group, which made it easier for me to walk when I got tired.

Every walk had at least one party place—the place we call a start and finish is USA. Not only did we start and finish, but we ate wurst, drank beer and wine, danced and made friends with

the local population. What an experience. Sometimes there would be a concession with wurst, beer or wine along the trail at checkpoints. I can remember one walk in Switzerland, where after we had climbed a long hill, there was a spring with several bottles of wine in it. There was a big sign inviting us to partake of the wine.

One more experience I will never forget was a wine fest parade. After a walk we went to a wine fest where there was a parade. All you needed was a glass.

Before I leave talking about Germany, I must say how much of the European world the walking program introduced me to. Of course the mountains, the towns and the way the people lived in them, the beautiful gardens, the wineries, and the special events of the various towns, like walking with the town crier on his night trip around the town wall. Yes, many of the towns were walled.

Well the big walk in Germany had to end. I came home to the United States and participated in minimal number of walks, if they happened to be where I was—no more long week-ends of going to walks, until I retired.

When I retired and returned to Vermont in 1985, the walking blitz began. I renewed my acquaintance with Ruth Cade, who was an avid walker. She would come to visit me in Vermont for the summer and she had a big plan for us to walk all over the east. We walked all the New England States and New York, often going early to help mark the trail, which was followed with an evening of fellowship at a local restaurant.

There was a club in Vermont. Ruth was a charter member of the Twin State Volksmarching Association in Vermont, but not me. But she swiftly got me walking with the Vermont club, which had a core of about 5 members. I joined quickly and became an active member when the serving president, Pat Stark who had started the club 10 years previously, said she was through. Well, but then my enthusiasm for volksmarching was really growing again, I did not want to see the club fail. It was a rainy day in a horse shed in Vermont, I remember standing there raising my hand and saying "I will be president." The first thing that happened after those elections was the trail master told me he was through. But Ruth and I began putting a club together and all those wonderful people we had help mark trails came to our assistance. My hand and it stayed up for 20 years.

Now my life changed, I was busy running the club and organizing the volksmarches in Vermont, volksmarching my way across the country as I returned to Texas with Ruth. Volksmarching was important now, but there was a big difference from Europe, church was a big part of my life. So we as we returned to Texas we also visited different churches. I remember one Sunday when we were looking for a church, and elder man all dressed up hardly stopped at the four way sign I was sitting at. "I bet he is going to church, let's follow him." So we did and ended up at church.

Every fall before we left for Texas, we would plan a general route and then look what volksmarches were along the way, so we made detours to do walks. Then later we learned to do the same things on the trip east. We still do, particularly if we want to explore a new area. There is no better way to get a feel for an area than by walking.

We have walked all fifty states, all capitals, and all the Canadian Provinces and Territories (except the new one with a cost of \$1000 for a flight.).

My walks have not been limited to the USA and Canada, I have gone on volksmarching tours to the Great Wall in China(where I met the Forinash's), through the Panama Canal with walks before and after the canal, Africa, and Europe which allowed me to do a walk in London England.

I still walk, but only do a very limited walk, but it is still a great way to learn about the areas around where you live. When I start speaking of things in different areas where I have walked to my friends, they are amazed. Volkssmarching has opened the world up to me. It has made me aware of how fortunate I am to be an American, how so many cultures come together to make up this great nation and how different the states are that make up the United States.

Volkssmarching has not always been just fun, I have helped run walks in all the New England states and New York, and frequently volunteered to help at conventions.

To the best of my knowledge I have done about 2575 walks for a distance of 15500 kilometers (records from Germany were lost).

The American Volkssport Association

1001 Pat Booker Road · Suite 101 · Universal City, TX 78148
Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 · Email avahq@ava.org

Website ava.org

[Click to Like Us on Facebook](#)

[Click for our Cafepress Store](#)