

## **The AVA's Communication Toolbox**

**By Henry Rosales, Executive Director**

One of our biggest challenges as a National Organization is the lack of ability to communicate efficiently and effectively with our clubs and individual members. With all the recent changes in operations like the new database, the new invoicing procedures, the new stamp handles, and expanded and new program initiatives like the 401K, Olympiad (Bid), AVA Community Events (ACE events), Convention, Crazy Horse, Appalachian Trail, and the International Marching League events, it is time to implement the communications and marketing strategies of the strategic plan.

The AVA Publicity Committee will release a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) in early July, if not sooner, to seek the professional services of a consulting firm that can help us create and implement a National Communications and Marketing plan. The goal is to begin phase one of this plan by January 2019.

In the meantime, I ask your patience and support in utilizing what we currently have in our communications toolbox until we have completed our communications and marketing plan.

### **AVA Communications Tool Box**

1. **The CHECKPOINT** - The Checkpoint is the monthly National AVA newsletter that is sent to all Regional Directors, Club Officers and anyone else who requests it. **This is the Main Communication Tool of the AVA Headquarters.** In the Checkpoint you will find any/all updates for operations, programs, policies, training, and NEC business. The Checkpoint **is not** the publication where you will find updates on walking or club events. You can request the Checkpoint by emailing Hector at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).
2. **The TAW** – The American Wanderer is the National AVA newspaper publication that is published every other month and the **Main Communication Tool where Regional Directors and club members post articles on past and upcoming AVA events.** The TAW also has other information like AVA merchandise, letters to the editor, member accomplishments and letters from the AVA President, Regional Directors and Executive Director. Unfortunately, not all club member receive the TAW. The TAW is a benefit of AVA National Membership so only AVA National members receive the TAW and not all club members. This is the why some of the same information in the Checkpoint is repeated in the TAW.
3. **The AVA Website** – The AVA website is the third communication tool utilized by the AVA. The website is updated daily with pertinent information on event changes, office closures, database problems, convention updates, new program procedures, the Pay Pal link, etc. If AVA systems are down or not working properly or there is an emergency, it will be posted on the AVA website homepage provided the internet is working. The AVA website is also the main location where you can find all types of club information and forms as well as NEC meeting minutes, the AVA Audited Financial Reports, and AVA policies

and procedures. Due to the limitations of the current website limited information can be posted on the main page. However, if you would like the AVA to post info on a “major club event” please sent the request to [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org). Hector manages the website pages. A new AVA website is under construction and should be introduced in May.

4. **The AVA Facebook Page** – Facebook is the fourth main communication tool for our social media customers and the public. The AVA’s Facebook main page (our official nonprofit page) is managed by the Headquarters. This page is utilized primarily to post most of the same AVA updates posted on the website as well as to share information on club events and urgent notices. The AVA’s Facebook group page serves as a forum for our AVA club members to post discussions, share pictures, and any pertinent club and event information. The AVA’s Facebook pages are not the forum to discuss AVA operational or programmatic challenges however solutions to better the organization are always welcome. If your club would like the Headquarters to post club event information on our Facebook pages, please send the info directly to [samanta@ava.org](mailto:samanta@ava.org). Samanta manages the Facebook pages.
5. **AVA Emails** – Emails are the fifth communications tool. All Regional Directors, Deputy Directors, Committee Chairs and AVA employees have an AVA email account. All email addresses can be found on the AVA website under the “About Us” tab/AVA Committees, National Leadership and Headquarters staff. *Emails are the AVA’s current means for direct internal communication between our club members and Regional Directors, Committee Chairs, and Headquarters employees.* If clubs have concerns about operations, events, policies, committee activities or other they should first email their Regional Director who will either address their concerns or direct them to the proper, Director, Committee Chair or employee. AVA employees should also be emailed if clubs or members need information on awards, merchandise, finances and anything related to the operation of the organization.
6. **The Telephone** – The last tool in the toolbox is the traditional yet reliable telephone! The AVA Headquarters receives phone calls Monday – Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m.-6:00p.m. Central Time. When all else fails it is recommended club members call the AVA office with questions, concerns, and recommendations. If we do not have a solution we will find one and get back to you as soon as possible.

***A BIG THANKS to all our Big Give donors because if not for your continued support the AVA could not update systems, create new stamps, initiate innovative programs, streamlines services, create a marketing plan, support clubs, and the list goes on!***

Enjoy your Spring walks, its my favorite time of the year to walk! I hope to visit with everyone this June 2-3, at the Crazy Horse Memorial Spring Volksmarch!



Crazy Horse Memorial Spring Volksmarch  
June 2-3, 2018.