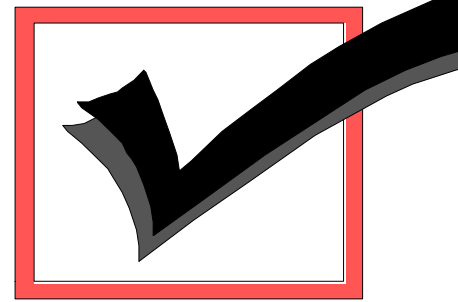


AVA CHECKPOINT



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TAW Deadline

The deadline for the October, 2009 issue of *The American Wanderer* is August 25. All articles and photographs should be submitted directly to: The American Wanderer, Laurel Parrott, Editor, 3526 Humboldt Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN 55412, email TAW@bhi.com Be sure to include "TAW" in the subject line of the email. Some folks continue to send these to AVA Headquarters and this causes delays in your information getting in.

Bylaws

The change to the AVA Bylaws that was approved at the 2009 Convention has been added. A copy of the updated Bylaws is included with this issue of **Checkpoint** and will also be posted on the AVA website.

YRE/Seasonals and Special Event Info

Please check the ending dates for Special Events before selecting them for your YRE/Seasonal listings. Special Events stay available until the actual end date because traditional events qualify for them as well. If you are entering a 2010 YRE/Seasonal Event, please make sure that the Special Event you are selecting will actually be up and running in 2010 and that it doesn't end in December 2009.

Club Officer Updates

Remember to update your club officer information. This must be done prior to November 15, 2009. If you have had no changes, simply hit the update button so that the date in the system will update indicating you have filed for this year.

Annual Financial Reports

These reports are also due by November 15 every year. We do not yet have this report as part of our electronic area so you will need to go to the AVA web page and then to publications link and then to AVA Club Forms to download the copy. Please fill it out, get the appropriate signatures and mail it to AVA at 1001 Pat Booker Rd, Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148. Remember that both this report and the Club Officer Update are required to maintain your 501(c)(3) certification.

IVV Calendar

Just a reminder that for your 2010 events to be in the IVV Calendar of Events, they must be entered in the system and approved no later than August 31, 2009.

Where's Checkpoint?

Did you know that you can find Checkpoint on the AVA web site at the AVA Club News Updates link? Please ensure that your officers know where they can find a copy if you are unable to forward it to them.

Website Errors?

If you find anything on the AVA web pages that needs to be updated, please notify Linda at Linda@ava.org or call us at 210-659-2112.

Problems entering an ESR?

Contact your State Assn, Regional Director or Cathy at AVA for assistance. You will also find instructions on the web page.

Remember to double check the Special Events. When you renew YRE/Seasonal events, you will need to add the Special Events each time. They do not carry over with the renewal.

Traditional events also qualify for the Special Event books so be sure to check out which ones your event may qualify for and add those. This information appears on the web as well as in **Starting Point**. Help us provide the walking public with a book that we are all proud of that gets them interested in your events before they even get there!

Volunteering for AVA

In the coming term, your AVA leadership will focus its efforts on growing participation in our events. Your officers are very committed people, but they can't change AVA by themselves. You will have to help as well. One way you can help is to volunteer to work on an AVA Committee or participate in a Special Project.

If you are curious about what AVA Committees do, please go to www.ava.org, click on Membership, then on Committees for a description.

I know that volunteering is sometimes a bit scary because you don't know what you are getting into. We will try to make things easier by having each of the Committee Chairs design specific tasks based on your desires so that you can know how much of your time and effort is required. But, you must start the process by expressing your interest.

Contact the Committee Chair in your area of interest or contact me at president@ava.org

Goodsearch

Remember to use www.goodsearch.com when searching the web. Select AVA and then search like you do with Google. AVA gets one cent for every donation. Although that doesn't sound like a lot, it all adds up.

Club Tips

By Bob Wright

Bob shares 33+ years of experience, research, and insights about building stronger volkssport clubs, better IVV events, and greater participation. Got tips to share or a topic to suggest? Contact Bob Wright at rwright2@jhu.edu or 43224 Cardston Place, Leesburg, VA 20176. Include an evening phone number for any follow-up.

Well-Rounded Distances

I've been conducting a very unscientific study of year-round events (YREs) in which I participate. One subject is the distance(s) offered. For example, my club's YREs all offer a choice of distances, 10 and 5 km (but occasionally 6 or 7 km), with multiple events at nearly every starting point. Sometimes other clubs' YREs only offer one 10-km distance, or an 11 or longer.

What have I concluded from analysis of my club's event registration logs? (Maybe you've noticed the same about the YREs in which you participate.) There is something inviting about 5 *and* 10 km. Longer distances, whether 6 or 11 km, discourage participation—that extra “click” appears daunting to many. And with many walkers more comfortable going 5 rather than 10 km, the lack of a 5-km distance puts them off.

Remedies

If you agree there is merit to offering 5-km distances, be sure you do that.

If there is no 5-km distance, find a way to offer one.

- Look for ways to shorten your 10-km distance.
 - In urban/suburban areas, use streets that would cut off 5 km.
 - Use little connector passages between more major trails for shortcuts.
- Your 10-km distance might be laid out such that it could be cut in two if only you had a different start. Then have participants drive to that central spot from your existing start. (AVA rules say you can't have two 5-km distances that require driving between them—insurance requirement.)
- Head in a different direction; routes need not share any distance.

If distances are greater than 5 and 10 km, find a way to shorten them to those distances.

- In urban/suburban areas, use side streets and short connector passages to cut a kilometer or so.

- In forested areas, look for little used connector trails to do the same. Maybe blaze your own trail (with permission from any private landowners).
- If necessary, give your route(s) a makeover. Over time I discover different routes to use and shortcuts on my YREs. Don't be afraid to use part of an existing route and some new stretches to get the distance(s) you need.

Your distance doesn't have to be exact.

- The AVA mandates distances be \pm one-half km, so you can be a bit short. (Ever notice that walkers don't like distances being long?) Who's measuring anyway?
- Temporary conditions might force you to shorten a distance. Walkers will overlook a walk being a bit short; many will complain if it goes long.

Do your participants a favor as you prepare your 2010 events. Offer them distances they prefer, and boost your participation. As Kevin Costner said in *Field of Dreams*, "if you build it, they will come." Build the right distances into your events, and you could attract participants.

Invitation

Attached with this **Checkpoint** is an Invitation to the 12th International IVV Olympiad in Turkey.

Enclosures:

Updated Bylaws

Olympiad Invitation