



Washington DC Area Volksmarching Club

WANDERFREUNDE

February 2011

A Note from the President

It's a fairly calm time for our club. Our next meeting is on Monday, February 28, at 7:00 PM at the Barrett Branch Library at 717 Queen St. in Old Town Alexandria. Please join us then.

Our next walks are on Saturday, April 23, in Hollin Hills south of Old Town, and on Monday, April 25, for the first evening walk at the Barrett Branch Library.

It's not been a calm time for volkssporting in the U.S., however. The National Executive Committee meeting on February 18-20 in Orange Beach, Alabama, led to a majority of the NEC members declining to appoint Nicole Rogers as the Executive Director, which led to the resignation of the AVA President and Vice President. A follow-up sequence of actions led to interim appointments to those positions and to the position of AVA Treasurer. In other actions, the NEC chose to charge clubs for start cards and trail marking supplies, and they approved another half-dozen special programs to start in 2012.

Considerable discussion has swirled online and in other quarters since the weekend of the winter hurricane on the Alabama coast. Reactions I've heard from WDCAVC club members seen to waffle between bewilderment and bemusement and generate feelings ranging from apoplexy to apathy. We have to wait to see what this turmoil will yield, but it's difficult to see this being a good omen for volkssporting in the U.S. WDCAVC officers pledge to avoid trying to replicate the NEC actions at our next club meeting.

To try to provide updates and a range of views, the tail end of this newsletter includes messages circulated in recent days from a number of key figures. Draw your own conclusions.

Our weather continues to be somewhat finicky, but our trails now are snow-free more often than not, so

use these weeks to start enjoying the many YREs in our area as well as the occasional scheduled events that pop up. In less than six weeks, we'll be revving up lawnmowers and doing other springy things, so get yourself into good walking shape now while you can. Wherever and whenever you journey out, stride safely, and enjoy your walks and all else you do!

Thomas Baerwald, WDCAVC President

Looking for a Calendar?

After a couple of months of stating that there no longer is an online site with scheduled events in the Atlantic Region, the esteemed President of the Maryland Volkssport Association, Bob Schmick, informed your semi-competent editor that the MVA website contains such a calendar. Kudos to Bob and to MVA webmeister Jim McDonald for maintaining this valuable service. In addition to listing events, the site provides links to PDFs of many event brochures, thereby making it easy for walkers to find necessary info for these events. You can access this list at http://www.mdvolks.org/new_walklist.php

Minutes of the WDCAVC Meeting

January 24, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM by President Tom Baerwald. Present were Sandi Cahill and Marshall Hansen.

Members talked about their recent holiday experiences. Tom spent the holidays in Boise, Idaho visiting family. He also showed off his slim laptop, which crashed on Christmas day but was restored to health by a Dell contractor a mere three days later. Sandi went to an art exhibit in Pittsburgh, a city she had never visited before. Marshall stayed close to hold and wrote a Dolly story for *The American Wanderer* ("This Tail is Volksmarching" Feb./March edition, page 5).

The minutes of the November meeting were accepted. The treasurer's report stated the club has a profit of more than \$500 after November and December expenses and income from the Holiday event. Overall the club had about a \$1,100 net increase in its assets during 2010. This is the first time in several years the funds have provide a good cushion. It was decided to donate \$100 to Little Bennett Regional Park and \$250 to the Friends of the Barrett Library. An operating fund of about \$1500 will remain in checking.

The December holiday walk was more successful this year, because there were no weather concerns. 186 walkers attended. A hula Santa was suggested for the 2011 patch to continue to encourage the weather gods to smile kindly on us.

Miscellaneous items

The YRE totals for 2010:

Iwo Jima had 134 walkers.

National Mall had 220 walkers.

Two bus groups (33 and 22 walkers) came to participate in both walk.

Future events

The April 23 event will be in the Hollin Hills neighborhood of south Alexandria. The start point will be the carport at Tom's house. A brochure will be ready in a few weeks. Members will be asked to scout the trail when Tom gets it done. Tom has information on the history of the Hollin Hills neighborhood. The area is residential with about 60 percent of the trail on sidewalks.

The first evening walk will be Monday, April 25 and will be primarily along the river

Additional evening walks will be the 4th Mondays of May, July, August, and September.

The fall event planned for September 24 has a conflict with Loudoun's traditional Octoberfest walk in Lovettsville. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to change the date of the WDCAVC's Wilson Bridge walk to September 11 in order to avoid competition on September 24.

Other items

Nancy has updated the WDCAVC website.

MVA: Sandi did not attend the December MVA meeting. We will get notes from Ken or Steve for information the club may need.

We have received a Statement of Insurance from AVA headquarters, in case it is needed.

The AVA Checkpoint and Open Door documents were examined.

Motions on the upcoming AVA Executive Council Agenda was discussed. Club opinions were made on these items:

(1) To allow the Event Stamp to be placed in Event and Distance books each day an individual completes an event. *The WDCAVC recommends that this be allowed.*

(2) Clubs are required to inform Participants of Year Round and Seasonal Events when the registration location of the event and the walk locality for the event are different. *The WDCAVC recommends that this be approved.*

(3) The AVA Policy Manual is not clear when Free Walker Coupons must be reported. A 4-paragraph motion follows. *The WDCAVC recommends that where Paragraph 4 says "Request clubs ensure that a legible, name, mailing address and e-mail address be entered on the first Free Walker Coupon in the blocks provided" that "ensure" be changed to "encourage." It is not always possible to ensure the information is provided.*

(4) Only the AVA Convention Committee, with the approval and consent of the National Executive Council, may offer pre-AVA National Convention or post AVA National Convention IVV events. *The WDCAVC has no problem with individual clubs having pre- or post- events. If they are willing to do the work to have "local" events for traveling convention goers, let them.*

(5) Wording change for "If the actual length of the trail is different from that advertised, the club will place a sign at the start showing these differences. The club must award any additional distance." New wording has deleted the sentence "It must report the additional distance on the event after-action report." *The WDCAVC recommends that this be approved.*

Tom noted a discussion will be needed at or before the July meeting about the future of the WDCAVC, especially regarding continuation of YREs and sanctioning regular events for 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM. The next meeting will be Monday February 28, at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Cahill, WDCAVC Acting Secretary

**E-Mail Message from Interim AVA President
Dennis Michele**

From: avafuture@yahoogroups.com
[mailto:avafuture@yahoogroups.com] On Behalf Of
serd1942@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2011 9:56 AM
To: avafuture@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [avafuture] Message from Interim President

Hi all - Let me introduce myself. I'm Dennis Michele, former SE RD and RD representative to the EC, and now your president until elections at the convention. I didn't seek the position and will gladly turn it over to the new president elected at the convention. However, until then, I will serve to the best of my ability and ask for your support.

I am sorry to be so late talking to you in this forum but my first priority was getting the word out to the clubs. They are the foundation of our association and ultimately the ones who will save or destroy the AVA. They have been notified of the proceedings.

Briefly, the vote satisfied the Bylaws requirement that the NEC approve the hiring of an ED. I can't tell you why any individual voted as they did. You will have to ask them. The vote resulted in the disapproval of the hiring by the EC of Nicole Rogers. As a result, the President, Curt Myron, and Vice President, Wayne Holloway, resigned. As this situation was not covered by the Bylaws and the NEC still had work to do, I was elected as the President by the NEC and Marvin Stokes was elected as Vice President. Both of us resigned our positions as SE RD/RD Representative and Treasurer respectively. Annette Tollett was elected as treasurer and the SE is selecting a replacement for their RD. All three of us will serve until these positions are filled by the successful candidates at the convention.

The NEC did not stop because of this. We received the reports of the standing and special committees. We approved or disapproved requests for new special programs as well as the agenda items under new business. We looked at the draft operational plan and will present our recommendations to the new NEC.

Of particular note was the passage of Bylaw changes to be presented to the clubs for approval at the convention concerning when conventions can be held (April, May or June) and the start times for NEC officials terms (July 1 after the convention) which would be necessary if convention times were changed.

I highly recommend you ask your RDs for full details as it is his or hers responsibility to keep you informed.

I have been a member of this forum since its inception and will continue to review the positions and ideas given here.

**E-Mail Message from Former AVA President
Curt Myron**

From: avafuture@yahoogroups.com
[avafuture@yahoogroups.com] on behalf of Curt Myron [cmmmyron@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, February 21, 2011 10:40 PM
To: avafuture@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [avafuture] Message to AVA Clubs from Former AVA President

Dear Volkssporters:

As you may have heard, on Friday, February 18, eight members of the National Executive Council forced a vote to take the Council into closed session where, as the new President has announced, the firing of the AVA Executive Director was accomplished.

This action, and the manner in which the firing was accomplished, reflect the current board's direction, which I believe is detrimental to our sport. Because I will never support any action I believe detrimental to AVA, I resigned. The Vice President resigned also and the meeting continued without us.

I greatly appreciate the support I have received from most of you and I wish you well.

Curt Myron

**E-Mail Message from Atlantic Regional
Director Sam Tollett**

From: Sam Tollett [mailto:runsbears@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2011 11:37 AM
Subject: NEC meeting in Orange Beach, Alabama

I am in Montgomery, Alabama. I am returning home from the National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Orange Beach, Alabama.

I was planning on addressing this issue after I got back home, but too there are too many messages floating around on the internet. There is some

speculation, many comments – both good and bad, some anger, some disbelief, and too much confusion about the future of the AVA.

The members of the NEC send messages to other members and occasionally we talk to each other on the telephone. We have become friends and sometimes we just communicate to discover how each other are doing, what walks we have been on, or to talk about how someone is recovering from an illness. Just like we do with other members of our own walking clubs. We do, occasionally, discuss upcoming motions and projects which we believe will better the AVA. This is one method to decide how we should support one issue or another or maybe swing another member over to seeing the benefit of doing something in a certain way which will better the AVA as a whole. I have been known to change my mind on a certain issue after hearing the other side of the issue because I now saw that it would indeed better the AVA.

At the start of the NEC meeting on Friday night the NEC went into an Executive Session where no members other than the NEC are allowed. These sessions normally address personnel issues, decisions on whom to award AVA honors (AVA Hall of Fame or AVA Distinguished Service Award, Ted Ballman Memorial Award for Youth Volkssporters, or the AVA Trailblazer Award), or very sensitive topics which will affect the corporation (yes, the American Volkssport Association is a corporation).

AVA By Laws require the NEC to approve the hiring of an Executive Director. Glen Conyers, the South Central Region Director, attempted to have a motion placed on the floor at the Albany, New York NEC meeting but our President, Curt Myron, stated the motion was out-of-order and would not allow the motion to be placed on the floor.

Glen attempted to have this motion again placed on the agenda for our meeting in Orange Beach, Alabama. Again, it was blocked by Curt. Our By Laws require the NEC to approve the hiring. I am still uncertain why we, the NEC, were being asked to go against what is required by our By Laws. Suggestions were made regarding how to make this motion more acceptable by Curt, but Glen's modifications to his original motion were not accepted.

I was asked to review Robert's Rules to discover how we could override Curt's decision not to allow this motion to come to the floor. This I did.

The majority of the NEC sided with Glen in the decision to bring this motion to the floor. After Glen's motion was approved to be included in the agenda, then there was a second motion which asked that this motion be considered immediately. This motion was accepted by a majority vote of the NEC.

I made a motion that since this was a personnel issue that we adjourn into Executive Session. This motion was accepted by a majority vote of the NEC. Nicole Rogers, our acting Executive Director (acting because she had never been approved by the NEC), was present during this Executive Session.

I will state that I believed Nicole would be approved to be the AVA Executive Director by the majority of the NEC. I was stunned this motion was not approved.

What is discussed during the Executive Session is privileged. There was discussion and then a vote to approve the hiring of Nicole Rogers as the Executive Director. The NEC decided by a majority vote not to approve the hiring.

Be it known that this Executive Session met **only to discuss a personnel issue**. We discovered that Nicole Rogers had been operating as Executive Director for many months without a contract. {Do not know why because this was never discussed.} The NEC did not discuss the Strategic Planning: Executive Summary A 5-Year Plan, the Yahoo Forum group that has been established, the Plan for AVA's Growth, the "Open Door" forum, any decision of the Executive Committee other than the hiring of Nicole as the Executive Director, the "Civility" letter which was sent to the membership, the website development, or the computer information system. The NEC discussion centered only on a personnel issue!

As a result of the a majority vote of the NEC Curt Myron, AVA President and Wayne Holloway, AVA Vice President, both verbally stated they would resign. They both submitted their letter of resignation. The NEC by a majority vote accepted their resignations.

The AVA then had no President or Vice President. Our By Laws state only that the Vice President will take over the duties as President. We referred to Robert's Rules and then this is what transpired: Dennis Michele resigned as the region directors representative to the Executive Committee of the National Executive Council and as the South East Region Director. Dennis was appointed the interim AVA President by a majority vote of the NEC.

Marvin Stokes submitted his resignation as the AVA Treasurer. Marvin was appointed the interim AVA Vice President by a majority vote of the NEC. After discussion it was moved that Annette Tollett become our interim AVA Treasurer since she served two terms previously as AVA Treasurer. By a majority vote Annette Tollett was appointed the interim AVA Treasurer.

Candace “Candy” Purcell was appointed by a majority vote of the NEC to be the interim / acting AVA Executive Director until a new Executive Director could be hired.

Annette Tollett has been tasked by the NEC to compile replies from the NEC members on Nicole’s Executive Summary for a Five-Year Plan. We are to decide what items we like to see implemented which will better the AVA, what items we think might be nice but not necessary required at the present for AVA’s growth, and what issues we disagree with because we feel they are not necessary or that we feel AVA just cannot afford at the present time.

AVA has membership problems as do all national organizations. Americans are not joining organizations as they did many years ago. Declining membership in AVA is not new. It has been declining for many, many years. I believe we can trace the being of our declining membership back to when the United States started pulling its military troops out of Europe. Germany, the home of Volkssports, has more serious membership problems than the United States.

AVA is a grass roots organization. We are a series of individual clubs which came together to form the AVA. Rule of the AVA is not from the top down but rather from our membership (the clubs). National and Region Directors do not always vote on issues as dictated by our clubs, but we are required to vote for what we believe is in the best interest of the American Volkssport Association, Inc.

It is up to the clubs and our members to recruit new members. Each of us must attempt to bring at least one friend to each of our walking events and attempt to persuade them to join our club. That is the only way AVA will survive. AVA now has less than 300 clubs. Each year a few clubs fold. The reason these

clubs fold is because the membership overall in their club has decreased too much or that its membership has reached an age of seniority and they fell they can just not take the burdens of their office into the future. The only solution to prevent clubs from folding is for each of us to recruit new members.

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And finally, we share a story that ended the last club meeting....



Some chickens came into the Alexandria Library. Sandi Cahill asked if she could help them, and they said “Book, Book, Book.” Sandi gave them 3 books and they left. They soon came back. Sandi again asked how she could help them. “Book, Book, Bok” they said. Sandi gave them 3 more books and they left. They came in a third time and said “Book, Book, Book. Sandi’s curiosity was piqued, so she gave them 3 books and followed them to see what the chickens were doing. The chickens skittered down Queen Street to the park by the river. They stopped at the edge and threw the books into the marshy cove. A frog appeared where the books landed and tossed each book back to shore, saying “Read it. Read it. Read it.”

