



CHECKPOINT

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PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING NOTICE

The AVA National Board of Directors will meet Friday, June 5, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time Zone. This will be a virtual meeting on the Office 365 Teams platform. To access the meeting click on the link below. If you have problems accessing the meeting, please contact Hector at 210-659-2112 or email him at hector@ava.org. The meeting link will be posted on the AVA website. The agenda will also be posted on the AVA website once it is released.

[Click here for the meeting link](#)

Board Meeting Deadlines:

May 11, 2026: Agenda items due to the Board Chairman, Carl Cordes, at chairman@ava.org. Please copy henry@ava.org.

Note: If you are a Committee Chair and would like time on the agenda, please send an email request to the Board Chairman, Carl Cordes and copy Henry.

May 21, 2026: Officers, Board Members, and Committee reports and all supplemental documents for the board meeting are due at AVA National Office. Email reports and all supporting documents to henry@ava.org.

May 28, 2026: Board meeting information package emailed to Board Members and Deputy Directors.

AVA WEDNESDAY WEBINAR FOR APRIL 15, 2026, IS CANCELLED

Pardon us as we take some time to reorganize and refresh our Wednesday Webinars. These sessions have been a great success, and we want to continue offering high-quality content. We just need a little time to regroup and enhance the experience. The webinars will return in May with dynamic new speakers. In the meantime, if you have topic suggestions, please email Amanda at amanda@ava.org.

The next webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, 2026, 7:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Central.

TRANSPORTATION INQUIRY FOR CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL WALK, JUNE 6, 2026, BLACK HILLS, SD

If you plan to attend the 50th Anniversary Signature event at the Crazy Horse Memorial this June and are flying into Rapid City, will you need transportation to the events?

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The AVA National Office is researching transportation options from the Ramkota Best Western Hotel ([Click here for hotel information.](#)) in Rapid City to the Thursday reception at Crazy Horse, the Saturday walk at Crazy Horse, and Sunday Walk in Custer. If transportation is available, it will likely cost \$50 per person round-trip per event.

We need to get at least 25 bus riders to support the cost of providing this service for our members. If you know of anyone going to Rapid City who may need transportation, please share this information with them. Please note, if we have bus transportation, the pickup and drop off point will be at the Ramkota Best Western Hotel in Rapid City. The address is 2111 N Lacrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701.

This is not a commitment to provide transportation at this time. We are simply gathering information to determine how we can better accommodate our members and improve their overall experience. We expect to make a final decision by next Friday, at which point we will email everyone who inquired about transportation.

If interested in transportation, please email the following information to amanda@ava.org

1. Are you willing to pay \$50 per bus trip to the events. If yes, continue to question 2.

Yes
 No

2. Names of individuals needing transportation.

3. Where do you need transportation to? Check all that apply

a. Thursday Reception (\$50)
 b. Saturday - Crazy Horse Walk (\$50)
 c. Sunday - Custer Walk (\$50)

*Results may indicate that we provide transportation for all events, only for selected events, or no transportation at all.

Email your reply asap to Amanda at amanda@ava.org.



Photo credit for each photo goes to Crazy Horse Memorial® Foundation

SLIVER SNEAKERS UPDATE

The next Silver Sneakers virtual meeting is Wednesday, April 8, at 6:00pm. Central. This is an invite only meeting for clubs who expressed interest in participating in the Silver Sneakers Walk Program. During this meeting, all details will be discussed to include an overview of the payment process, registration/verification process, and CPR training & certifications.

Club POC's will receive an email with a meeting link to this meeting.

If your club has reconsidered and would like to participate, send an email expressing your interest to henry@ava.org prior to April 7th. Clubs can always decide to participate at a later date during the next enrollment period.

KING WILLIAM PARADE INVITATION TO COME WALK WITH US!

America's Walking Club (AVA) will participate in the King William Parade on Saturday, April 25, 2026, in San Antonio, Texas. The theme for this parade is "the Great Fiesta Bake Off Sugar & Spice, plus everything nice-that's what Fiesta is made of. The AVA's float will feature banners from the different IVV and IML countries and Elvis impersonator, Travis Hudson, singing live on the float!

All AVA members and their families are invited to join us in the parade, and you're welcome to wear a theme-related costume if you would like. Costumes are encouraged but not required. Parade participants must sign a waiver and be willing to walk approximately 1.5 miles carrying a banner. The parade is on Saturday, April 25, 2026. Participants must arrive at the King William by 7:30am. and the parade lasts approximately 90 minutes. This invitation is open on a first-come first-served basis for the first 30 people who confirm attendance. If you would like to participate email henry@ava.org confirming your attendance.

The AVA participates in this parade because it provides exceptional visibility for our organization at the local, regional, and even national levels. With more than 30,000 spectators and coverage from multiple news outlets, the parade places the AVA in front of a broad and diverse audience.



Special thanks to Atlantic Regional Director Karen Kaufman and the entire Atlantic Region for hosting a historic 50th Anniversary celebration as part of their Atlantic Regional Conference.



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR



PUBLICITY UPDATE

May is National Walking Month, so all walks that your clubs sponsor in May, including traditional or YRE group walks, will be promoted on the special National Walking Month webpage, and on social media. Please [fill out the form](#) to list the info on your walk. We will also have a sample press release, plus there are [marketing graphics](#) at the bottom of the page to help promote your event. If you have questions, please email me: publicity@ava.org.

We are thrilled to be the featured [blog post](#) about AVA and our 50th anniversary in the Rails to Trails Conservancy e-newsletter for April, which reaches about 200,000 RT members who love to walk and bike outdoors. What a great partnership between AVA (celebrating 50 years) and Rails to Trails (celebrating 40 years), to reach the same audience. Thank you to John McClellan for writing the article. They will also be promoting this on their [social media](#), and you may see their booth at a few of our 50th anniversary events this year, so be sure to go by and say “Hi, I’m with America’s Walking Club and I loved reading the blog about us on your website...”



We would also like to know if you have anyone attend an upcoming AVA event, especially in April, who mentions they read the blog on Rails to Trails, and decided to see what we’re about. Please let your regional director know, or email publicity@ava.org. And we hope you will attend many of the AVA events in April that are on a rails to trail.

Also, many of you have signed up for a Rails to Trails event for April 25. Please support these clubs. If there are other clubs having a Rails Trails event, let us know, to help promote the events on our social media:

- **April 17-19:** Miles of Memories Across the Mighty MO: Council Bluffs, IA, Omaha, NE, and Nebraska City, NE. A 50th anniversary signature event. Hosted by the Nebraska Trailblazers. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Shenantaha Creek Park along the Zim Smith Rail Trail in Malta, NY, hosted by the Empire State Capital Volkssporters. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Water Works Park in Des Moines, IA, hosted by the Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Group YRE event in Highland Park and Katy Rail Trail: Dallas, TX, hosted by the Dallas Trekkers. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Group bike event in Enterprise, FL along the East Central Rail Trail, hosted by the Happy Wanderers. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Elizabeth Rails to Trails, in Elizabeth, CO, hosted by the Falcon Wanderers. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Athens Sampler 5/10k Guided Walk, hosted by the Southeast Striders Walking Club. [More info here.](#)
- **April 25:** Hoover Dam Railroad Tunnels Trail, hosted by the Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers. [More info here.](#)

Congratulations to the Virginia Volkssport Association for hosting the third featured events for AVA’s 50th anniversary and the Atlantic Region Conference in March. It was a great success!



[Miles of Memories Across the Mighty Missouri](#) is the 4th featured event for AVA’s 50th celebration, April 17-19, 2026. You’ll walk in Council Bluffs, Iowa, across the Missouri River to Omaha, Nebraska, and Nebraska City, NE. The Nebraska Trailblazers have confirmed that the Mayor of Council Bluffs, Jill Shudak, and the First Lady of Omaha, Viv Ewing, will walk with us on Saturday as we cross the Missouri. Pre-registration has ended, but you can register to walk on site.

Empire State Capital Volkssporters invites you to “[Walk the Story that Changed the World: A Multiday Event on Revolutionary War Battle Sites](#)” based in Lake George, NY...from May 16-20, as the fifth signature event for AVA’s 50th Anniversary. Seven walks over five days, plus many walk and bike YREs/Seasonals. Hope to see you there.



We hope you can attend Crazy Horse this year in Custer, South Dakota, and we encourage you to get your hotel reservations in now. Crazy Horse Memorial® and the Black Hills Volkssport Association are celebrating the 40th volksmarch this year, along with AVA's 50th, and it will be a great celebration. Thousands of walkers are expected to attend. AVA has a special rate in Rapid City, SD, at the [Best Western Ramkota Hotel](#), about 45 miles away (about 1 hour - 15 minute drive). Remember, bring 3 cans of food per person and \$4 for admission. The current TAW has information on all you need to know to attend Crazy Horse. [See page 5.](#)

AVA SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR - AMANDA JAUREGUI

HAVE YOU TRIED MEMBERDEALS YET?

America's Walking Club has partnered with MemberDeals to bring all of our AVA members an easy way to save on travel, tickets, and more! MemberDeals offers discounts on theme parks, attractions, events, hotels, concerts, and so much more. To access MemberDeals, you will login into your [my.ava account](#), click on "My Awards," and you will see it under your awards. You will click on the button, and a whole plethora of deals is at your fingertips! This is our newest AVA Member perk, and we are happy to help you save big when you're looking for something fun to do.

Keep in mind, you must have an AVA Membership to access this perk. If you are not an AVA Member or need to renew, you can do so [here](#).



AVA FINANCE CHAIR - SETH WERNER

FINANCIAL HEALTH TIPS FOR LOCAL CLUBS

#7 Keep Your Nonprofit Tech Secure

From the Desk of the National Finance Chair

Even small steps can make a big difference in your club's financial health. This series offers practical advice you can put into action right away.

Protect Your Data and Your Donors

Financial security isn't just about money—it's also about protecting sensitive information. Many small nonprofits overlook cybersecurity, but a single breach can compromise donor trust and even lead to financial loss.

Quick Start Checklist:

- ✓ Use strong, unique passwords for all financial accounts
- ✓ Enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on banking and email accounts
- ✓ Store financial documents in a secure, cloud-based system with access controls
- ✓ Train volunteers to recognize phishing emails and scams

Pro Tip: Free tools like Google Workspace or Microsoft 365 for Nonprofits offer built-in security features—take advantage of them!

Resource: Cybersecurity Basics for Nonprofits – National Council of Nonprofits
<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/cybersecurity-nonprofits>

ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE PASSPORT BOOK

Celebrate AVA's 50th Anniversary!

In honor of this milestone, participating clubs will host 2026 Signature Events across the country. Join the celebration with the 50th Anniversary Passport Book Challenge—featuring 17 special event signature walks.

- Collect a unique sticker at each walk for your passport book.
- Complete at least 8 signature events of the passport book to earn a commemorative t-shirt.
- Complete 100% of the passport book to receive a commemorative t-shirt and an AVA tote bag!
- Program runs from 1-1-26 to 12-31-26
- Submit completed books for redemption to same address, or scan to marian@ava.org by June 31, 2027
- For more information on the walks, please visit ava.org

The cost of the books are \$15.00 each plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. Mail form along with payment to AVA, 1032 S. Alamo St., San Antonio, TX, 78210 or email form to Marian@ava.org and call with credit card information.

[Order Form](#)

1ST QUARTER PARTICIPATION

It's time once again to submit your 1st Quarter Participation Reports. Don't forget, the deadline is midnight on May 1st, and all reports submitted after this date are past due and subject to late fees.

FINANCIALS

If your club is on a calendar year, Annual Financials Reports, e-Postcard filings, and Officer Updates (ESR update) are due by May 15, 2026. Please submit a copy of your filings to marian@ava.org.

May 15th, 2026 – The following items are due:

- E-post card must be filed with the IRS and a copy provided to AVA HQ.
- Club's Annual Financial Report is due to the AVA HQ.
- Update of Officers Information in the ESR must be completed by each club.

Note: Financials for clubs with a fiscal year ending on June 30 are not due until November 15, 2026

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - DIANE HOWELL, CHAIR

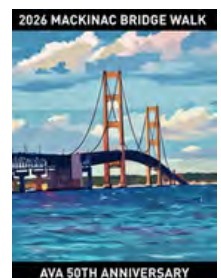
AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING COMMITTEE



If you have yet to visit one of our 50th Anniversary celebrations - don't forget we have information on each event on the main page of the AVA website, listed in the March TAW, as well as this video with the complete list on the AVA You Tube Channel!! Check it out by [clicking here](#).

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FOR MACKINAC BRIDGE WALK ON 09/07/26

Recruiting for Volunteers to support the Events and Activities associated with the AVA 50th Anniversary Celebration during the 2026 Mackinac Bridge is now open through Signup Genius. If you seek some adventure while supporting the events and activities of America's Walking Club, please check out the following link. Sign up EARLY to get the volunteer task you seek. [Click here](#) to go to sign page.





AVA PROGRAMS/SPECIAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Exciting News! Coming soon, individuals who have completed an active AVA Special Program will be recognized in future editions of TAW. The Programs Committee is currently collecting completion lists from each Special Program Point of Contact. Updates on our progress will be provided in future monthly Checkpoints as well as the quarterly American Wanderer.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR

2027 AVA WALKING WEEK AND BIENNIAL CONVENTION

The site and dates of the 2027 Walking Week and Biennial Convention have been accepted by your AVA Board of Directors.

On March 12 the AVA Board of Directors accepted the recommendation of the Convention Committee to hold the 2027 AVA Biennial Convention the week surrounding June 28 - July 2, 2027 in Springfield Missouri. As in the past, pre and post-convention activities will surround these dates. Planning is just beginning, so stay tuned.

At the 2025 AVA Biennial Convention, during the Thursday night Gala, three convention bureau representatives presented proposals for hosting our 2027 event. Selected in a non-binding vote/survey Springfield MO received the most votes of those present. In late 2025 all three locations were visited, visitor bureau representatives showed the AVA President and Convention Chair the best of their area locations. Our Trailmaster joined us for the Norman OK visit, while during late 2025 examined each of the three areas for walk route possibilities. So, work has begun.

Now is the time to form the AVA Convention Committee going forward. We envision a working committee, avoiding a committee with too many members, but walkers with varying skills, interests, and backgrounds are encouraged to show their interest. Backgrounds of working on past conventions, workshop development, walking, bicycling, and swimming are desirable. While conventions are now driven by the National Office and the various committees, we also need representation by people familiar with the Missouri area, as well as the surrounding states. One or two local club walkers will be included if available. As needed other resources will be added, or included as sub-committees as our 2027 dates approach. I anticipate approximately 12 people that are willing to meet on-line using Teams starting in late April 2026. If you are interested and have available time to commit to this effort now and in the summer of 2027 please email: Convention@AVA.org

We hope to see you all in Springfield MO in 2027.

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL DIRECTOR - JEANNE STOKES

HELP MEASURE RTC'S REGIONAL IMPACT

Want to understand how the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) article from March 24, 2026, and the April 25 events are influencing participation across your region? I'm gathering data to find out.

RDs and DRDs: Please ask your clubs to track:

- How many participants attended because of RTC outreach
- The total number of participants at the event

Send those numbers to me, and I'll compile the results for a future article highlighting RTC's impact. Thank you for helping understand RTC's true impact and identifying opportunities for future outreach.

Jeanne Stokes, SERD
Email: se_rd@ava.org

FIRST COAST TRAIL FORGERS - HOLLY SPAULDING, CLUB SECRETARY



SUN KISSED GOLDEN BEACHES AND MARSHES

Have you always wanted to explore the barrier islands off the coast of Georgia called the “Golden Isles”? The First Coast Trail Forgers (Jacksonville, FL) are excited to announce two new online start boxes on Jekyll and St. Simons Islands - two of the four Golden Isles.

Jekyll Island, GA

Jekyll Island is the location of the Millionaire’s Club established in 1888 during the Gilded Age in the United States. Only the wealthiest applicants were admitted as members. Members included J.P. Morgan, William Rockefeller, Joseph Pulitzer, Vincent Astor, and William K. Vanderbilt. In 1910 a group of millionaires met on Jekyll Island and developed a plan for the Federal Reserve to prevent periodic economic panics which caused bank failures such as the one that had just happened in 1907. The Millionaires Club is a National Historic Landmark with hotel rooms, a beautiful dining room and lounge. The club building is surrounded by individual get away “cottages” of the wealthy. The historical district faces Jekyll Creek along which our walk takes you.



The 5K and 10K start at the Jekyll Island Golf Club where there is free parking. From there you walk to the historic district. The 5K walk explores the fascinating and beautiful historic district and returns to the golf club. After exploring the Historic District, the 10K continues along a walking path to the other side of the island. On the other side of the island walkers walk back toward the golf club along the Atlantic Ocean on a multiuse path. There are beautiful views of the dunes and ocean with plenty of restroom and covered areas to rest and enjoy the view. (Bring your bikes to ride the path around the entire island if you like.) Both the Georgia Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center and the Mosaic Jekyll Island Museum are on the walking route.

St. Simons Island, GA

The St. Simons Island start point is in the heart of the charming shopping village. St. Simons is the largest of Georgia’s barrier islands. The walk is along the Atlantic Ocean on a walking path which goes past the iconic St. Simons Lighthouse. Climb the 129-step cast iron spiral staircase to the top for stellar, panoramic views if you like. Enjoy the eclectic mixture of island homes when the walk turns into the coastal neighborhoods. You will return along Mallery Street in Pier Village which is filled with shops and restaurants. When you return to your car you may want to stop at the visitors center which is near where you parked. You will find there a great selection of Eugenia Price novels. She is a prolific author of historical novels which take place on St. Simons Island.



INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

&

NATIONAL EVENTS

First State Webfooters Walking Club
Est. 1981

DOVER WALK DE250
5K & 10K

• Saturday, May 9, 2026, 8 am – 12 pm
Start/Finish - Delaware Public Archives
121 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd N.
Dover, DE

In support of Delaware 250 and America's 250th anniversary of independence, please come join the First State Webfooters celebrative walk and explore the historic sites in Downtown Dover, The Green, Old State House is only a stone throw from the Golden Fleece Tavern where delegates ratified the U.S. Constitution making Delaware the First State.

** Free Admission Biggs Museum of American Art **
Registered walkers receive America 250th gift and water bottle
Event \$5.00, show military ID for discount

AMERICA 250 DE250 50th Anniversary AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

Dover

For more information: Google website: firststatewebfooters.org
Email: info@firststatewebfooters.org POC Kathy Kresko 302-339-0097

50th Anniversary
AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
FROM 1976 TO 2026

Click here to go to
50th Anniversary Page

WORLD WALKING DAY

Here is the World Walking Day certificate. Please click the image to view and download the certificate for printing

Welt-Wander-Tag
World Walking Day
Journée Mondiale de la Marche



Urkunde für / Certificate for / Diplôme pour

Urkunde • Certificate • Diplôme 2026

Internationaler Volkssportverband e. V.
International Federation of Popular Sports
Fédération Internationale des Sports Populaires



50th Anniversary
AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
FROM 1976 TO 2026
AVA.ORG

Celebrating 50 Years of Walking

Come Walk WITH US!



Come and join us for the 25th US FreedomWalk
16-18 October 2026



Celebrating 25 Years
2002-2026

An International Walking Experience

Walk Arlington

IML Walking Association

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

Volksmarching at its Best

40th Annual Spring Volksmarch
June 6, 2026
AVA 50th Anniversary Event



Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send your request to Hector at hector@ava.org. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.



The American Volkssport Association

The Mission of AVA is to promote and organize noncompetitive physical fitness activities that encourage lifelong fun, fitness, and friendship for all ages and abilities.



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