

THE AMERICAN WANDERER **TAW** The Walking Magazine



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
ESTABLISHED 1976

The American Wanderer is a national publication of the AVA: Americas Walking Club.

**AVA National Convention
April 29 - May 3, 2025
Las Cruces, NM**



**Register for AVA Convention by
April 1, 2025 for the chance to
win \$100 off your registration.**

**10 second place prizes include free
convention patch, \$15 off the AVA program
merchandise, AVA insulated tumbler, AVA
ballcap. Drawing will be held week of April 7.**

Winners receive their prizes at the AVA convention (grand prize winner will be refunded \$100 for their registration).

Click this ad to register

LAST CHANCE!



AVA'S INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING CRUISE OUT OF NEW ORLEANS NOV 15-22, 2025, IS OFF TO AN INCREDIBLE START! WITH 155+ PEOPLE AND 82 CABINS BOOKED, THERE ARE ONLY A FEW CABINS LEFT.

PRICE UPDATE:

- CLUB BALCONY CABINS (MA & MB) HAVE INCREASED SLIGHTLY.
- BALCONY CABINS (BA) REMAIN ABOUT THE SAME.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO BE PART OF THIS SPECIAL VETERAN'S DAY CELEBRATION AT SEA, EMAIL ROB@NWZTRAVEL.COM FOR UPDATED PRICING AND AVAILABILITY!

Fun, Fitness, Friendship INSIDE THIS ISSUE



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Martha & Allan Stollberg are Life Members from West Palm Beach, Florida. The Stollbergs started volkswalking in 1988, and finished 50 States and State capitals at the Madison, Wisconsin convention. They worked with local Girl Scout service unit to plan Volkssmarches for girls, and both received Thanks Badge from the Council for that and other activities (similar to Eagle award for boys and Gold for girls). Their daughter Sarah and son David completed 30 walks before other activities and work took priority. Their grandson Timothy Brand completed 50 walks starting as an infant, and attended the Cherry Hill Convention in 2005. Grandson Matthew walked 23 walks and attended the Albany NY Convention.

The Stollbergs have attended every convention since Winston Salem, NC in 1997. Most of their walks in other states were obtained by trips North to visit family (Martha was born in MA and Allan in Bronx), and attendance at AVA conventions, AARP conventions, Girl Scout conventions and USS Kearsarge (Allan was in the NAVY during Vietnam) reunions. They currently belong to the Happy Wanderers of Port Orange, Florida.

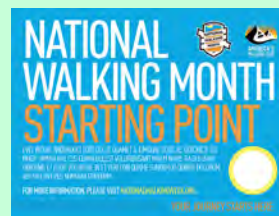
PUBLICITY UPDATE



Remember that National Walking Month is in May, and AVA: America's Walking Club encourages you to plan a group walk sometime during the month to enjoy the outdoors and celebrate our sport of walking.

National Walking Month also ties in with the patch we create each May for National Physical Fitness and Sports Month. It's a great time for you to order patches for your walking event. Order forms for the patches will be available in April.

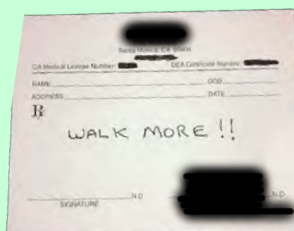
Fylers and logos can be found online.



As we promote National Walking Month, here are some articles I've been sent to showcase walking:

Carl Cordes shared this article from AOL: "What Makes Walking So Great for Your Health and What Else You Need to Do." [Read the article here.](#)

Paul Lamb submitted an article from AARP's October Bulletin: "WALK FARTHER, FASTER AND PAIN-FREE!" [Read the text here.](#)



This was shared on Facebook from the Canadian Volkssport Federation: Prescription from Dr. Jada Teta: Walk More! [Read the text here.](#)

Please send any articles you find on walking to: publicity@ava.org

And please invite your community to a walk, especially during National Walking Month in May. Submit your group walk to our special [National Walking Month](#) page, so we can promote it. Use the link to form found on the page.

Announcements

Spring 1996



Left: Girl Scout volunteers and Palm Glades Volksmarch veterans Martha and Allan Stollberg of West Palm Beach enjoy their tenth annual Palm Glades Girl Scout Council Volksmarch.

Below: Palm Glades Volksmarchers had a wonderful time, in spite of Mother Nature, during the tenth annual event which was held for the second year along West Palm Beach's beautiful intracoastal waterway.



AREA GIRL SCOUTS, PUBLIC BRAVE ELEMENTS, ENJOY 10TH ANNUAL VOLKSMARCH

Pelting rain and biting cold couldn't keep them away, as more than 400 local Girl Scouts, volunteers and members of the community came from as far away as Port St. Lucie to brave the elements and enjoy Palm Glades Girl Scout Council's 10th annual Volksmarch this spring.

Girl Scouts of all ages were joined by their family and friends as they walked, rolled or strolled along the beautiful intracoastal waterway during the annual event which was held on Saturday and Sunday, March 9 and 10.

First-timers and veterans alike enjoyed the leisurely, non-competitive 10K event which started at West Palm Beach's Curry Park, taking Volksmarchers over the intracoastal bridge to the famed island of Palm Beach. Participants experienced historical landmarks like the Flagler Museum and the oldest house (now a church) in Palm Beach County.

Girl Scout volunteers Martha and Allan Stollberg of West Palm Beach were among the diehard volksmarchers who weathered the weather to enjoy the

numbered 90 total for Martha, who has enjoyed Volkssmarches all over the country, travelling as far north as Alaska. "I have walked in 14 states," said Stollberg. "It is by far the best way to sight see." She doesn't have a favorite Volkssmarch, but the one in New Orleans wins hands down for the longest jaunt. "It took us seven hours to do that one," she said. "As you can imagine we did a lot of site seeing."

The annual event is open to the public and free of charge. It is different from other walks and runs because it is non-competitive and is not a fund raising activity. Palm Glades Girl Scout Council's annual Volksmarch is a program activity designed to offer a fun, leisurely activity for Girl Scout families and the public.

The theme for this year's event, "Girl Scouts' Be Your Best," tied in Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.'s ongoing health and fitness emphasis which culminated during Girl Scout Week on March 12, Girl Scouts' 84th Birthday and Girl Scouts' Be Your Best Day.

The event is sanctioned by the International Federation of Popular Sports & The



BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This is my last message to all of you as Board Chair. I am out of time as chair and have served now, 12 years on the board of the AVA. It has been very interesting and motivating to see the change in the board of directors and the organization over that time. Of course, there is still more to do, and more work to make AVA's reputation the wonderful walking organization that it truly is.

But now, we are faced with climate issues, terrible fires, hurricanes, blizzards and other events that put those of us around the country in harm's way. All of these put stress on us and those around us. Our mental health suffers. What can help? Getting out and walking with others, enjoying our surroundings, perhaps having lunch and socializing. We are, after all, a social organization as well as one devoted to our physical well-being. And that is my message to you: walk – and get others to walk with you. They know it's good for them. You and your club can be the motivators to make changes in their lives. As one actress and actor in the forties said: "if you rest, you rust". I don't intend to rust. I am and will continue to be out there walking – going to fests around the country and the world, enjoying the beauties of nature.

Please get behind the changes that AVA is focusing on. Change is difficult, I know, but we don't want to be dinosaurs and just fade away. We want to encourage everyone to walk, especially, and enable those things that will keep us from rusting. Take care and have fun!

PLACES YOU MIGHT WANT TO EXPLORE IN THE EL PASO, LAS CRUCES AREA.

I thought it might be helpful since I grew up in the area to recommend some places to explore while at the AVA convention this April in Las Cruces, NM. One area in Las Cruces that you don't want to miss is Old Mesilla Village. Here you will find many boutique shops and the Basilica of San Albino, one of the oldest churches in the region. If you love Mexican food, you do not want to miss La Posta de Mesilla restaurant.

El Paso is about a 30–40 minute drive from Las Cruces depending on traffic. El Paso is a big city that borders with Mexico. If you want a picturesque view of the two cities go to Scenic Drive. During the day you can see the University of El Paso that borders the pueblitos of Mexico, quite a contrast. In the evening you can see the El Paso city lights glaring against the flickering firelights in Mexico. If you are into hiking and canyons, take the short drive from Scenic Drive to McKelligon Canyon. Here you can park for free and walk up the canyon. Be sure to take water! If you want to try some famous local inexpensive fast food, look for a Chicos Tacos restaurant! El Paso is famous for these fried rolled tacos. You will either love or hate them! I hear they are a good snack after a few beverages.

For the hard-core hikers and rock climbers, from El Paso head 43 minutes east to the desert sanctuary of Hueco Tanks. We used to ride our bikes from El Paso to Hueco Tanks when I was a child. This was one of our favorite places because of the humongous rocks you can climb and creepy places to explore. Entrance to the park used to be free back in the day but now there is a small fee, and you must make reservations one week in advance to get into the park but it is worth the visit. The number to call is (915) 857-1135.

If you want to hit cooler temperatures, from Las Cruces go north about 2 hours to the mountains of Ruidoso, NM. On the way up you will pass Alamogordo, NM. Here you can visit the New Mexico Museum of Space History and stop at one of the largest pistachio orchards in the country, PistachioLand. In Ruidoso you don't want to miss Inn of the Mountain Gods. This is my favorite place in Ruidoso/Mescalero. (Inn of the Mountain Gods is in Mescalero.) Atop the Sacramento Mountains is a beautiful resort by a lake surrounded by pine trees. The hotel is also a casino in case you want to try your luck. Before you leave the area drive down to Cloudcroft, NM to refresh yourself in the Bluff Springs waterfall! This is a picnic spot where you can take pictures right under the waterfall. Be sure to take the appropriate water shoes because the rocks are slippery.

I hope you have a wonderful stay in the cities of the sun. If you cannot drive anywhere just take a walk in the desert and enjoy the blooming cacti and wildflowers!

PRESIDENT'S UPDATES



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION HOTELS

Book your stay through Playeasy for unbeatable hotel deals near our convention. Our collaboration ensures the widest variety and lowest rates from over 40 top booking sites, plus exclusive hotel special discounts for our convention attendees. Find your ideal accommodation, earn rewards and collect points for your loyalty program with each stay.

Click below and book hotels that the AVA has negotiated special rates with for convention attendees. The AVA may provide scheduled bus transportation to and from these hotels only for most convention activities on April 28–May 2, 2025.

[Convention Hotels](#)

[Nearby Hotels](#)

CANDIDATES FOR AVA NATIONAL OFFICE

ROBERT BUZOLICH, AVA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

We have one candidate for each of the AVA National Officer positions for the term of office from May 2, 2025, to the close of the 2027 General Membership at which National Officers are elected.

The candidates are



Chairperson: Carl Cordes
from North Las Vegas, Nevada



Vice Chairperson: Ed McCabe
from Dripping Springs, Texas



Secretary: Leslie Stone
from Ormond Beach, Florida



Finance Chair: Chris Mellen
from Tyngsboro, Massachusetts

In accordance with paragraph 4.06(e) of the Bylaws, nominations from the floor are not allowed.

Per paragraph 4.06(d), "the National Officers shall be elected at large by secret ballot at the regular membership meeting"

However, per paragraph 4.06(f) of the Bylaws, "Where only one candidate for a National Office has been nominated, no ballots shall be cast by the Members, and the Chair shall call for a voice vote of the Members."

During the first session of the General Membership meeting on Wednesday, April 30, the four nominees, following introduction by the Nominating Committee, will be allowed six minutes to address the Members present at the General Membership Meeting per the meeting agenda.

During the second session of the General Membership meeting on Friday, May 2, the election of the nominees shall occur per the meeting agenda.



GETTING READY FOR THE 2025 CONVENTION WALKS

HELEN HULL

The Las Cruces Convention is fast approaching, registration is open, and now people are planning their trips and have a few questions. You may have been following our planning and information about all the walks, not only the convention walks, but other area walks. And you may have some questions about what's going on with registration. Many of your questions can be answered by checking the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about hotels, general walk information, and many other questions.

I know that some people are just interested in the walks. So the question: Will there be a walkup registration table?

Yes, we will have a manned table for the walks on their 'featured' day (except for White Sands and Juarez Border Crossing) where you may register, pay, stamp, and pickup directions. These tables will be manned from 8:30-11:30 for registration and will remain open until all walkers have returned. You may also register for walks at the Las Cruces Convention Center from Mon, Apr 28 afternoon thru Fri, May 2 morning and pick up the directions and stamp your books at that time, just like a YRE. You may do the walks in any order and at any time after you have registered.

Are the walks available via OSB?

Only 3 walks are available via OSB, the 2 pre-walks (City of Rocks and Silver City) and 1 post-walk (Socorro). You cannot register or download the directions for an OSB walk until 2-weeks before the event opens. And remember, if you register via OSB, you are charged \$2 at the time of registration and then \$2 when you go back to the finish table. You may also register on site on the designated day and during the week at the convention center.

BUT.... If you register for the full convention package, these walks are included with the registration. Shortly before the convention starts, registrants will receive an email with a special link to a site where they can download the directions. Registrants should NOT register via OSB or else they will end up paying an extra \$2 for the walk.

Cost of walks: The 4 pre/post walks (City of Rocks, Silver City, Las Cruces Historic Downtown, Socorro) will be \$4 each. The other convention walks will be \$10 each (without bus) due to the special nature of the convention and to help defray the cost of facilities. Buses for the El Paso, White Sands, and Mesilla Valley State Park walks are included if you have pre-registered. Limited bus transportation may be available to fill up a bus at the convention center but will be priced separately.

Special notes about the OSB walks:

Sat, Apr 26 – City of Rocks State Park – 90 miles from Las Cruces and about 35 miles from Deming – The park is halfway between Deming and Silver City and is a great place to camp (make reservations online). There is limited parking available inside the park, so we are encouraging carpooling and make-a-friend. As you turnoff of US-180, stop at the registration site on the right where you will check in, pickup directions, park-entry fee envelope, and information about where to park. We encourage you to carpool and leave a vehicle at the registration point. Please fill out the fee envelope (\$5 for New Mexico residents, \$10 for non-residents) before preceding to the park. Stop at the entry point to drop off your envelope and then continue to the Visitor Center. There are only a few parking spots in front of the center, but about 15 spaces behind the visitor center. Use these for brief stops for 'flush' toilets and to check out the exhibits. Vault toilets are also available in the campgrounds. Volunteers will direct you to the parking areas. After your walk, make sure that everyone who rode into the park with you returns with you. Check out at the registration area to stamp your books and to let us know that you have returned. We don't want to leave anyone in the park and to have to send out a search party to check under all the rocks.

Note: If you do this walk on any other day than Sat, Apr 26, ignore the above directions. Just pay your entry fee and park in the lot behind the Visitor Center. But most important, let your inner child loose and enjoy clamoring over the rocks.

Sun, Apr 27 – Silver City – 35 miles north of City of Rocks State Park – a quaint old mining town – Start point is the plaza area at Western New Mexico University at 1000 W College in Silver City. There are several parking lots around the main admission building and Campus Police building. Look for us on the upper level of the plaza. Restrooms and a snack bar available at the Student Recreation Center next to the plaza. Please note: The University is holding a major event on Sat, Apr 26, so if doing this walk on Sat, Apr 26, DO NOT park at the university. Instead use the alternate start point at the Silver City Visitor Center at 201 N Hudson and then start at instruction 6.

Sat, May 3 – Historic Downtown Las Cruces (Friendship Walk) – 2 miles north of convention center – Starting at the Las Cruces Visitor Center – 336 S Main St – We are hoping to recruit locals to join us for the 3k Friendship Walk to introduce them to AVA. Thus the charge for this walk will be the AVA standard \$4. And we are looking for friendly people to walk with them to educate them about AVA and to answer their questions.

Sun, May 4 – Socorro – 150 miles north of Las Cruces on I-25 - Another quaint town established in 1598 – Start point is the plaza area between Baca Hall and the Student Center on the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology campus (New Mexico Tech) on Neel Street. The university has a great Geology Museum (M-F 9-5; Sat 10-3) with many fantastic rock specimens and gemstones. Unfortunately, the museum is not open on Sundays. But if you do the walk on any other day, plan to spend a few minutes (or hour) checking out the exhibits.

Official Convention Walks (featured Tues-Sat plus the University Campus Walk walk):

Mon, Apr 28 – No featured walk – free day to enjoy local walks or explore – May we suggest? - University Campus Walk (NMSU) which starts at the convention center. This walk is included in the full registration package, but not the 5-day package. You can sign up for it, pay (\$10), get your directions, and stamp at the convention center Mon afternoon thru Fri morning.

Tues, Apr 29 – Dripping Springs in the Organ Mountains – About 12 miles east of the Convention Center. Just take University Dr east to the Dripping Springs Visitor Center (University becomes Dripping Springs east of I-10). Site is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and is affiliated with the National Parks. Pay your vehicle parking fee and stamp your National Park passbook at the Visitor Center.

Wed, Apr 30 - El Paso – 6k International Crossing (Juarez) and/or the 5/10k Municipal Rose Garden – 50 miles (1 hour) from Las Cruces – Must register online to insure bus transportation to El Paso. Specify which walk you wish to do on your registration form. Limited onsite registration at convention center may be available to 'fill' up a bus. **Walkup registration will not be available for the Juarez Border Crossing** but will be available at the Rose Garden from 8:00 to 11:00 at start point if providing your own transportation. If driving yourself and wishing to do one of the El Paso YREs, then plan on doing the Juarez walk first and then the other walk(s).

The International walk, 6k is only available on Wed, Apr 30 and starts at the Paso del Norte Bridge in El Paso. Depending on how much time you want to spend browsing at the local shops, the walk should not take more than 1.5 hours to complete. Bus passengers will be given a deadline for returning to the start point so that walkers can get back for the afternoon meeting. You will not necessarily return on the same bus that you arrived on so do not leave anything on the bus when arriving in El Paso. **Remember to bring your passport, \$50 exact change to cross into Mexico and \$40 exact change to return to the US.** Walkers may want to enjoy the food in Juarez or back in El Paso before returning on the bus.

If you want to spend more time in Juarez or El Paso, there are several afternoon buses from El Paso back to Las Cruces leaving from the bus station at 601 Santa Fe which is .3 mile from the Paso del Norte Bridge. Cost is \$3 (yes, exact change). Google "El Paso to Las Cruces **gold route westbound**" for times, currently 4:36, 5:15, 6:15 arriving at the University in Las Cruces at 5:12, 5:51, 7:20. There are other bus and train options but they are more expensive. Please let us know before crossing to Juarez if you plan to stay longer so that we do not needlessly wait for you to return.

The Rose Garden walk offers 2 different 5k loops so that you can explore the historic Manhattan District and its many elegant homes built in the 1910-1920's. The area consists of about 10 parallel streets extending about 10 blocks and we will be walking 1 street, then down 1 block and returning on the next street, then down and across, etc. Because of this back and forth, it is easy to take some short cuts in order to modify the walk for your time limit. There are no food options along the walking route. However, for those doing the 10k, the bus may stop for a quick lunch before returning to Las Cruces as there is an area about 5 miles from the Rose Garden with 6-8 fast food places to choose from.

We will be offering an additional bus to do the 6k Juarez walk followed by a 5k Rose Garden walk if there is sufficient demand. But those taking this option may not return in time for the afternoon meeting. Be sure and check this option on your registration form.

Thurs/Fri, May 1-2 – White Sands National Park or Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park – White Sands has limited restroom facilities at the Visitor Center and in the park and has requested that we split our group into 2 days to help with crowding. Register online and **check your choice** for either Thurs or Fri, **although we cannot guarantee your first choice.**

White Sands has been sanctioned as a 5k walk, but the distance walked will depend on your group. The park is about 1 hour away from Las Cruces and with spending 3 hours or so in the park, then busing back to Las Cruces, you might get a bit hungry. **No food is available in the park so plan ahead and bring some snacks** (water available at the visitor center). The buses will make a short stop at the visitor center upon arrival and a slightly longer stop at the end before returning to Las Cruces.

There will **NOT** be a walkup registration table either day at White Sands. You will be assigned to a bus and will remain with that group throughout your visit. Each bus will be hosted by several volunteers who will maintain a list of those on the bus making sure that everyone is back on the bus before proceeding to the next stop. There are two short walk stops and the longer trail at the 3rd stop. At the last walk stop, your hostess will give you a 'return by this time' and then turn you loose to hike in the sand dunes. Please be prompt so that the bus can return in time for the afternoon workshops and meetings. There is no food available at White Sands so bring your own snacks as the bus may not get back to Las Cruces until 2:00. **Note:** Full registration and 5-day registration includes a box lunch on Thurs and Fri back at the convention center between 12:30 and 2:00.

If traveling to White Sands on your own, then you can spend as much time as you like exploring this unique landscape. National Park fees apply or free with National Park Pass.

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park is about 5 miles from the convention center. We will have a bus circling from the convention center to the park each morning and until everyone is back. The bus will be leaving about every 30 minutes starting about 7:45 with the last bus back to the convention center at 2:00. Check in at the park pavilion behind the visitor center. The park has a 5k loop entirely inside the park. The rest of the walk will be along the hike/bike trail along the Rio Grande. If you drive to the park, then you will need to pay the vehicle parking fee (\$5 for New Mexico residents, \$10 for non-residents).

CONVENTION SPEAKERS FOCUS ON HISTORY OF THE AREA

SUSAN FINE, CHAIR, AVA PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

We are proud to feature several speakers at the 2025 Biennial AVA Convention in Las Cruces, NM. Here's some information about the upcoming fun:

Wednesday April 30th, we'll have an evening of Dessert in the Desert with two speakers (and fun dessert):

6:30-7:00 From Conflict to Cooperation: The Story of Chamizal National Memorial

This presentation explores the rich history of Chamizal National Memorial, focusing on its origins in the conflict between the United States and Mexico. Beginning with an interactive discussion about personal and international conflicts, attendees will reflect on their own conflict experiences and the emotions that arise. The narrative delves into the historical context of the Mexican-American War, the resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and the changes in territorial boundaries. Through a timeline of a century of conflict, we examine the eventual resolution and its consequences, highlighting the themes of cooperation and reconciliation. With quotes from notable figures and multimedia resources, this presentation emphasizes the mission of Chamizal as a symbol of collaboration and understanding between cultures. Join us to discover how history can bridge divides and celebrate a hopeful future.

Our speaker is J.R. Lujan, a park ranger at Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso, TX. He served two Peace Corps assignments, one in the Eastern Caribbean and the other in Liberia, West Africa. He majored in psychology at Loyola University in Chicago and studied dance/movement therapy at Columbia College Chicago. On his spare time, he enjoys listening to podcasts, practicing meditation, and perusing bookstores.

7:15-7:45 A Las Cruces Overview – From Volcanoes to Moon Rockets

This talk provides a quick look (what you can do in 30 minutes) at how the surrounding landscape was formed and how evidence of Native American occupation dates to centuries before the Spanish arrived. There are places on White Sands where you can't walk without stepping on pottery sherds. He'll take a quick look at the Civil War in the area and how farming and ranching were established in the valley. Of course, there are Billy the Kid and Sheriff Pat Garrett to consider and how German V-2 rocket testing just to the east sped the growth of Las Cruces.

Our speaker is Jim Eckles, retired from the Public Affairs Office at White Sands Missile Range, where he worked for 30 years. Informally called "WSMR's historian," he has probably been to Trinity Site, where the first atomic bomb was tested in 1945, more than any other living human being. He saw the Columbia Space Shuttle land in 1982 at Northrup Strip on WSMR, and he has climbed Victorio Peak, where the Doc Noss gold bars are supposed to be hidden. He was elected to the missile range's hall of fame in 2013. In addition, he has hiked many of the canyons and peaks in the Organ Mountains and, at 75, still rides a mountain bike in the desert bajada east of Las Cruces.

Thursday May 1, our afternoon workshops are staggered, so you can attend all three.

Workshop 1: 2:00, 2:45, 3:30 "Leaving A Mark: The Fascinating Life of Eugene Van Patten. Eugene Van Patten is one of Southern New Mexico's most fascinating characters. He did and saw it all! From working on Butterfield's Overland Mail Line, to serving as a Confederate officer, building a tuberculosis sanatorium, and more. Get an introduction into the history of Territorial New Mexico through the life of Colonel Eugene Van Patten."

Speaker bio: Alexandra McKinney is the Instructional Coordinator Supervisor at the Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site. She has a bachelor's degree in education from the University of New Mexico and a master's degree in public history from the University of West Florida. Alexandra is a sixth generation New Mexican and has been with the Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site since early 2018.

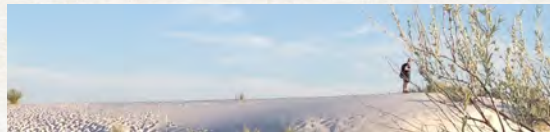
Workshop 2: 2:00, 2:45 AVA Walk App discussion

3:30 Let's Talk About Walking: Walking = exercise, fresh air, uplifting sights, and meaningful friendships. Should it also include looking out for one another's safety?

Barbara Toth, founder and Executive Director of Vulnerable Road Users NM, is a lifelong musician - teacher, church musician, and professional accompanist. When her husband was hit on his bicycle by a 17-year-old driver, they became aware, on a painfully personal level, of the tremendous number of deaths and serious injuries among persons who are not protected by being inside a motor vehicle. Although Jim did not lose his life, living with a spinal cord injury has stolen a huge amount of his quality of life! Their "new norm" led Mrs. Toth to turn her efforts toward safety for vulnerable road users. "Although I was only one voice in a distant corner of our country, a single voice has multiplied to many voices. Together, we are doing our part to help save lives!"

Workshop 3: 2:00, 2:45, 3:30 "Rails to Trails Conservancy". Many of our volkswalks are on Rails to Trails pathways. A speaker with the Rails to Trails Conservancy will discuss the organizations work since 1986 in securing public funding for trails, advocating and protecting trails, and much more. The Conservancy has more than 25,000 miles of rail-trails on the ground nationwide, and more than 9,000 miles of rail-trails ready to be built. Their mission is connecting trail networks that connect people and places, bringing transformative benefits to communities across the country.

AVA 2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION SCHEDULE



SUSAN FINE, CHAIR, AVA PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

Here is the schedule for the 2025 AVA Biennial Convention in Las Cruces, NM, April 26 – May 4, 2025. Please check the [AVA convention website](#) for updates and changes to the schedule.

Saturday, April 26, 2025

- Featured pre-convention Walk at [City of Rocks State Park](#) (1-½ Hours, 90 Miles from Las Cruces). Individuals Will be Responsible for Entry Fee. Transportation is on Your Own. Register at the park between 8:30am – 11:30am. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4.
- iMIRA! Las Cruces Spring Festival in downtown Las Cruces, 2pm – 10pm. Free event. Stop by the AVA table.

Sunday, April 27, 2025

- Featured pre-convention walk in [Silver City](#) (2 Hours, 120 Miles from Las Cruces). Transportation is on your own. Register at the Plaza Area, Western New Mexico University at 1000 W College in Silver City from 8:30am – 11:30am. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4.
- Other YREs in the area are available including [Fort Bayard](#) and [Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument](#).

Monday, April 28, 2025

- 11:00am – 4:00pm Registration, packet pickup, and silent auction drop off, book stamping, and Start Point for Convention Seasonal Events at the Las Cruces Convention Center.
- No featured walk, so we suggest [New Mexico State University 5/10K](#) walk next to the Convention Center. (Rated 1A) Directions are available at the CC. There are also 2 YREs using the city bus from the CC to the [Encanto](#) walk and [Mesilla](#) walk. Or you can drive east to the mountains for two YREs, [Cloudcroft](#) and [Ruidoso](#); north to [Truth or Consequences](#); or west to [Deming](#).
- 11:00am – 4:00pm Bike Event Opens
- 2:30pm – 4:00pm Credentialing

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

- 9:00am – 5:00pm Convention Center Open
- [Organ Mountain Dripping Springs Chairperson's Walk](#) (30 Minutes, 15 Miles from Las Cruces). This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4 and there is a parking fee. Transportation is on your own.
- 9:00am – 5:00PM Registration, packet pickup, silent auction drop off.
- 9:00am – 5:00pm Exhibit tables set up.
- 10:00am – 4:00pm Book Stamping
- 10:00am – 4:00pm Bike Event
- 0:00am – 4:30pm Silent Auction Opens
- 10:30am – 12:45pm Credentialing
- 11:00am – 3:00pm Swim Event, New Mexico State University, Recreation Swim Center, Indoor Pool (Time Subject to Change)
- 1:00pm – 3:00pm AVA Board Meeting at Convention Center. The public is invited.
- 4:15pm – 8:00pm **Opening Reception** with buffet at New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum. (Welcome by the Mayor of Mesilla Valley) Busing from and returning to the Convention Center. Buses start leaving the convention center at 4:15pm.

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

- 7:00am – 8:00pm Convention Center Open
- **Your choice of three walk options:** Bus to and From Convention Walks (One Day Only)
- **Option One: [El Paso International Walk](#)** - 6K Rated 1A Buses begin boarding from 7:00am – 7:30am from and to Las Cruces Convention Center (1 Hour, 50 Miles away). Snacks and entertainment provided in Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. To return to Las Cruces, wait for buses at the start point in El Paso. Walk Officials will be at the Enter/Exit border crossing to check-off walkers. **This walk is ONLY available on April 30, 2025, and you must pre-register. Passports or Official New REAL State ID's or Driver's License is Required.**
- **Option Two - [International Walk](#)** followed by the Rose Garden Walk Buses begin boarding from 7:00am-7:30am from and to the Las Cruces convention center. Walkers not intending to return to the Las Cruces Convention Center by the start of the General Session Meeting may select this option. Walk the International 6K walk followed by one of the Rose Garden 5K loops. Lunch on Your Own. The bus will stop for 30 minutes at a fast-food restaurant for you to buy lunch. The estimated return time to the convention center is 3:00pm.
- **Option Three - [El Paso Rose Garden](#) / Manhattan Heights District - El Paso, TX** Two 5K Loops. Buses from and to Convention Center, 7:30am – 8:00am. The last bus leaves to return to Las Cruces at 1:00pm. Passport Not Needed. Lunch On Your Own. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4.

Participants wanting to attend the AVA Regular Membership Meeting in Las Cruces should select Option 1 or Option 3.

- 7:00am – 10am and 1:30pm – 3:30pm Registration/Packet Pickup and Merchandise Sales
- 11:00am – 3:00pm Swim Event, New Mexico State University, Recreation Swim Center, Indoor Pool (Time Subject to Change)
- 12:00pm – 5:00pm Exhibits Open
- 12:30pm – 3:00pm Bike Event
- 12:30pm – 3:00pm Book Stamping
- 12:30pm – 7:45pm Silent Auction
- 1:30pm – 3:30pm Credentialing
- 3:45pm – 5:30pm Regular Membership Meeting, Part 1 (Welcome by the Mayor of Las Cruces)
- Lunch and Dinner on Your Own
- **6:30pm – 7:45pm Dessert in the Desert** Enjoy dessert, coffee, and tea while listening to great speakers:

- 6:30-7:00 **From Conflict to Cooperation: The Story of Chamizal National Memorial**, by J. R. Lujan, park ranger with Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso, TX
- 7:15-7:45 **A Las Cruces Overview – From Volcanoes to Moon Rockets**, with Jim Eckles, retired from White Sands Missile Range, known as WSMR's Historian

Thursday, May 1, 2025

- 6:30am – 10:00pm Convention Center Open
- [White Sands National Park Walk](#) - 5K Rated 2C (One hour, 55 Miles from Las Cruces). Buses leave from 7:15 - 8:15AM. Bus Ride Includes Park Entry Fee. If driving a private vehicle, you will need to pay entry or display a park pass. There are very limited parking spaces. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4, 2025. Walk participation may be switched to the Mesilla Valley State Park Walk based on busing requirements.
- [Mesilla Valley State Park](#) - 5K and 10K Rated 1B (20 Minutes, 5 Miles from Las Cruces). The bus begins to leave convention center at 7:30 and continues back and forth until 10:30am. Last Bus leaves the park at 12noon. If driving a private vehicle, there is a parking fee. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4, 2025
- 6:30am – 9:30am and 12:00pm – 4:00pm Registration/Packet Pickup and Merchandise Sales
- 12:30pm – 2:30pm Box Lunches provided at the convention center upon return from the walks. Lunches are included if you purchased the full convention or 5 days walk pass.
- 11:00am – 3:00pm Swim Event, New Mexico State University, Recreation Swim Center, Indoor Pool (Time Subject to Change)
- 12:00pm – 6:00pm Exhibits Open
- 12:30pm – 5:00pm Bike Event
- 12:30pm – 5:00pm Book Stamping
- 12:30pm – 7:00pm Silent Auction-Closes Today
- **Workshops 2:00 – 4:05pm.** Las Cruces Convention Center

	2:00 – 2:35	2:45 – 3:20	3:30 – 4:05
Workshop 1	Leaving A Mark: The Fascinating Life of Eugene Van Patten	Leaving A Mark: The Fascinating Life of Eugene Van Patten	Leaving A Mark: The Fascinating Life of Eugene Van Patten
Workshop 2	AVA Programs, Policies, and Walk Application Feedback	AVA Programs, Policies and Walk Application Feedback	Let's Talk About Walking-Vulnerable Road Users, NM
Workshop 3	Rails to Trails Conservancy	Rails to Trails Conservancy	Rails to Trails Conservancy

- 6:00pm Pre Gala Social – Entertainment and Cash Bar (Lobby of the Convention Center)
- 7:00pm- 10:00pm Gala and Hall of Fame Induction, including 2027 Convention Site Presentations

Friday, May 2, 2025

- 6:30am – 5:00pm Convention Center Open
- [White Sands National Park Walk](#) - 5K Rated 2C (Hour, 55 Miles from Las Cruces). Buses leave from 7:15 - 8:15AM. Bus Ride Includes Park Entry Fee. If you drive a private vehicle, you need to pay entry or display park pass. There are very limited parking spaces. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4. Walk participation may be switched to the Mesilla Valley State Park Walk based on busing requirements.
- [Mesilla Valley State Park](#) - 5K and 10K Rated 1B (20 Minutes, 5 Miles from Las Cruces). The bus begins to leave CC at 7:30 and continues back and forth until 10:30am. Last Bus leaves the park at 12noon. If driving a private vehicle, there is a parking fee. This walk is available anytime April 26 – May 4.

- 6:30am – 9:30am and 2:30pm – 4:30pm Registration, Packet Pickup, and Merchandise Sales
- 8:30am – 4:30pm Silent Auction payment and pickup items at the convention center
- 12:00pm – 4:00pm Exhibits Open
- 12:30pm – 2:30pm Box lunches provided at the convention center upon return from the walks. Lunches are included if you purchased the full convention or 5 days walk pass.
- 2:30pm – 2:30pm Book Stamping
- 12:30pm – 2:30pm Bike Event
- 1:00pm-3:30pm Credentialing
- 2:30 – 4:30PM **Regular Membership Meeting**, Part 2(Delegates should get on earlier AM buses to and from the morning walk event.)
- Convention Closes at End of the meeting
- 4:45pm – 6:45pm Co-Chair's Social for new and departing AVA Board Members and Deputy Directors, Location TBA

Saturday, May 3, 2025

- **Community Walk in downtown Las Cruces** , 10K start at 8am, 5K and 3K Community Group Walk at 9am. Rated 1A; (05/03/25 Main Date with Start/Finish Table) Available other dates as a seasonal event walk on your own. The start is at the Visit Las Cruces offices, 336 S. Main. Transportation on your own. City buses are free. You will walk through the large Farmer's Market and Historic Mesquite District.
- **Other Walk: Town of Mesilla** (Approximately 2.3 miles from the Convention Center) The Town will be holding their Cinco de Mayo Fiesta! City buses are free.

Sunday, May 4, 2025

- Featured post-convention Walk at **Socorro** (2-½ Hours, 150 Miles from Las Cruces) Rated 1A, mostly flat surface (05/04/25 Main Date with Start/Finish Table) Transportation is on Your Own. This walk is available on other dates as a seasonal event walk on your own. Free University Mineral & Gem Museum but not open on Sundays.

We Need Volunteers for the 2025 AVA Biennial Convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico



Choose the days and times you can help us
April 26 - May 4

Email: volunteers@ava.org
or
Say YES to Volunteering on the AVA Registration Form

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR TELLERS AND CREDENTIALING

LESLIE STONE, AVA SECRETARY

The AVA Secretary is looking for volunteers to serve as Tellers and in Credentialing.

What are tellers you ask? Tellers will assist in vote counting during the AVA's Biennial Convention in Las Cruces. Tellers would need to be available during the business meetings.

What is Credentialing? Credentialing is the process of confirming the delegates, alternates, and proxies, representing each club at the convention and providing them with their credentials to be able to vote in the business meetings. Credentialing also determines if a quorum has been met. Credentialing takes place at various times, such as during convention registration and immediately prior to business meetings. Voting delegates and alternates cannot be Tellers.

Both these positions are necessary for conducting business at the AVA Biennial Convention. Tellers and Credentialing work with the AVA Secretary to assure everyone who should vote votes and that the votes are counted accurately.

The Business Meetings are tentatively scheduled for:

- Wednesday April 30, 2025, from 3:30 P.M. through 5:30 P.M.
- Friday May 2, 2025, 2:30 P.M. through 4:30 P.M.

Credentialing is tentatively scheduled for:

- Tuesday April 29, 2025, from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- Wednesday April 30, 2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:15 P.M.
- Friday May 2, 2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 2:15 P.M.

If you are interested in serving as a Teller or in Credentialing, please email Leslie Stone at Secretary@ava.org . Please advise which position(s) and time(s) you would be interested in serving.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

SILENT AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED

FOR THE 2025 BIENNIAL CONVENTION
APRIL 29 - MAY 3

Gift Baskets, Gift Cards, Individual items & Cash are all welcome.



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION – SILENT AUCTION

BY JERRY WILSON, CHAIR, AVA CONVENTION COMMITTEE

A way to help AVA is to donate a Silent Auction (SA) item to be auctioned off during convention. Donations are your option. They can be single items or a basket of items. All donations are welcome. We regret we cannot accept any items that require refrigeration. Besides SA items, gift cards are a popular auction item, and cash donations may also be given, made payable to AVA and sent in to the National Office in advance, or hand delivered with "AVA Silent Auction" entered on the memo line.

Clubs are encouraged to bring Silent Auction donations to Las Cruces!

A sub-system to register silent auction donations is available. Registering items in advance helps volunteers to plan display space and have display details prepared in advance. Walkers can access the sub-system through the registration system, or directly from the AVA webpage. We encourage convention attendees to bring donation items to the Las Cruces Convention Center as early as possible, beginning Monday, April 28. Items may also be shipped to Las Cruces; see the FAQ on the AVA webpage to determine where to send items based on the arrival date.

Southwest Regional Director Andy Thomas has volunteered to be the Silent Auction Coordinator in 2025.

Information you will need to have handy when registering Silent Auction items are:

- Type of Donation: "Personal", "Club" or "Business"
- Name of donor and mailing address
- Name of Item
- Description of Item
- Value (USD)
- Minimum Bid Amount
- Bid Increment
- Delivery Type: By Hand or By Shipping

THE SEARCH IS ON! SPECIAL PROGRAMS NEEDED FOR 2027

DIANE EVANS, CHAIR, AVA PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Does your club have an idea for a new AVA Special Program they would like to sponsor beginning in 2027? Three current Special Programs (Lighthouses II, Par For the Course, and Rails-to-Trails) will end on 12/31/26 so the Programs Committee will be looking for three new Special Programs to begin on January 1, 2027.

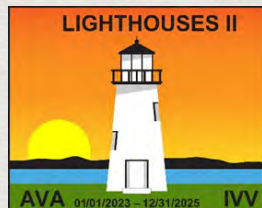
Do you know of a theme that would generate interest from a historical, cultural, educational, or scenic beauty perspective that has not previously been a Special Program. Are there major or intriguing American anniversaries occurring in 2027? Now would be the time to put your creative ideas and imagination to work. Talk with club members on walks as some have additional interests outside walking (yes, it does happen) and those other activities may generate ideas. Check your community calendars for local celebrations that are applicable across all states. Add "Brainstorming Special Programs" to the club's meeting agenda and solicit ideas at the meetings.

The AVA Special Program Policy limits new Programs Committee recommendations to just one AVA Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting per year which is typically the first meeting of the calendar year (i.e. 2026). The Special Program begins January 1st of the following year (i.e. 2027). Committee recommendations at the first BOD meeting of the calendar year provides sufficient time in the remaining year for the sponsoring club to submit articles to TAW and the Checkpoint describing the new program, obtain booklets/awards and create program information for the AVA webpage and OSB. Plus, it allows the clubs across the country to understand the details of the new Special Program, review/modify their current YRE/Seasonal trails or develop new routes or traditional events to include the qualifiers of the new program.

The deadline for new 2027 Special Program proposals is **November 1, 2025**. For a copy of the information required in the new Special Program proposal package, please contact Diane Howell Evans at Programs@ava.org.

SPECIAL PROGRAM DEADLINES

If you are still considering participating in Special Programs, the following Special Programs have a 12/31/25 deadline for the PURCHASE of the current program book:



The last date to REDEEM the following Special Programs challenge books is 12/31/25:



For information on these Special Programs, as well as all the other current programs, please review the Special Programs website at: cb.ava.org/specprog.php

RAILS-TO-TRAILS FINISHERS

SHERRY SAYERS

Congratulations to the walkers below who finished their Rails-to-Trails Special Program books in 2024. A huge thank you to all for participating in this program. This program will run for one more year (2025), so please if you are thinking about participating in this program, we welcome you to join us! Send a check for \$12 to Colorado Springs Walking Club, c/o Sherry Sayers, 3524 N. Cascade Avenue, #58, Colorado Springs, CO 80907.

David Fenster
Pastor Duane Neugebauer
Barbara Nuss
Kirstina Kenyon
Marcy Lucas
Jim Elder
Robbie Elder
Jill Champley
Molly Hayward- Koert – plus one
Barb Anderson
Susan Pinneke
Ken Nelson
Craig Gauger

Deanne Brown
Mike Cannon
Tim Mills
Carole Soenke
Wanda Moranti
Debra Hare
Cheri Stone
Dianne Purdy
Alice Filemyr
Rosemarie Hirsch
Gary Jeffers
Mary Katherine Jeffers
Jesse J. Green
Cynthia Hines



TWO IML EVENTS IN OCTOBER

The U.S. FreedomWalk Festival is proud of its new international partnership allowing walkers from around the world to walk in two capital cities in North America in October with IML and IVV credit.

La Marche Maple Leaf March in Ottawa, Canada has been approved as an IML event, and will take place October 10 – 12, 2025. According to the press release from the IML Board of Directors, the Friday Oct 10 will be a welcome walk/opening ceremony with the IML walks taking place on the Saturday/Sunday.

The following weekend, October 17 – 19, the annual US FreedomWalk in Washington, D. C. / Arlington, Virginia will be held, enabling walkers to attend two IML events in consecutive weekends in eastern North America.

As a further incentive to walkers, those who have completed all current IML walks will be eligible to purchase and receive the brand new IML award – UNIVERSAL WALKER award, of which Canada will be the 1st IML event to be able to present this award.

Get more information: <https://marchemapleleafmarch.ca/> and <https://www.usfreedomwalk.org/>.





TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP HONORING SUSAN MEDLIN

Texas Trail Roundup IML event was a great success, February 14-16, 2025. There were 196 registered walkers from 12 countries who walked over the 3 days. The winner of the Golden Boots award (veteran/military group with the most people finishing the 42K walk) was CARMIL, short for Caribische Militairen (Caribbean Military). And a special thank you to John Ives, Kathy Schwencke, Mike Schwencke, Susan Ives, Andy Thomas, Jim Tree, Ellen Ott, Wayne Henry and all the volunteers and AVA HQ staff who stepped up to make this event happen, when its founder Susan Medlin had to step aside. Susan was honored at the opening ceremonies Friday February 14. AVA Board Chair, Nancy Wittenberg, announced that Susan was inducted into the AVA Hall of Fame, to thank her for her many years of national, regional and local service. Susan passed away Sunday February 16 from ALS. More than \$1,500 was raised by volkswalkers for ALS Society in Susan's name.





REGIONAL TALES FROM THE TRAILS



ATLANTIC REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



FIRST STATE WEBFOOTERS PLANT A MEMORIAL TREE

BY MARGIE MACLEISH

The First State Webfooters held the first memorial service at Wyoming Park around the tree donated and planted in the park.

There's a story behind this article. Karen Kaufman and I attended the Liberty Bell Wanderers walk and memorial ceremony a couple of years ago. We were very moved by the ceremony where deceased prior club members were mentioned by name with the ringing of a bell following each name. This was done by a tree the club had donated and planted there.

We returned to Delaware and presented this wonderful idea to our club members. All were in favor of planting a tree and holding a memorial service for our deceased club members. My mother, Louise Fair, and I attended Wyoming Town Council meetings and received council approval to plant the tree for this purpose in Wyoming Park. We were asked to plant a maple tree on a spot where a previous maple tree had not survived. We bought the tree from a Wyoming landscaper who planted it for us. We bought our marble marker from a Wyoming funeral home. The marker says, "2024 In memory of past members of the First State Webfooters walking club."



We held our dedication and first memorial service on Saturday, December 7, 2024. Many club members attended the service as well as two Wyoming Town Councillors. We plan on holding a memorial service there every June in conjunction with our annual picnic.

Thank you to the Liberty Bell Wanderers for this great idea!



SUGARLOAFERS FIVE TRADITIONAL EVENTS IN 2025

BY ANTHONY (TONY) LAING

The Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club of Montgomery County, Maryland have sanctioned five exciting and varied walks in 2025.



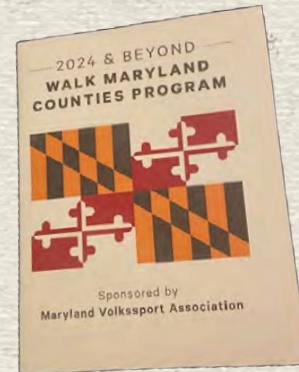
April 5 – Kensington Breakfast Walk - Enjoy a Community Pancake breakfast from 8:00 am to 10:30 am at St Paul's United Methodist Church and then enjoy a walk around historic Kensington and Antique Row and onto meandering trails.

May 31 – Jackie Johnson Memorial Walk at Black Hill, Boyds - The Sugarloafers are celebrating the life of their first President and founding club member. Please join us to celebrate a life well lived and a fellow volksmarcher. Black Hill Regional Park contains over 2000 acres of wooded land with spectacular views of Little Seneca Lake.

September 27—Frederick Oktoberfest—Prime yourself for your Oktoberfest celebration by doing a Volksmarch beforehand. The Volksmarch meanders on a trail alongside an urban canal and a historic city. The Oktoberfest costs \$10, but the entrance is free if you walk our event.

October 25—King Farm—Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park Walk, Rockville—This delightful walk starts at the 26-acre J.T. Stepanek Park (dedicated to a heroic poet who died at age 13) and showcases the relatively new walkable community of King Farm.

In addition to the five traditional events, some Sugarloafers are participating in the "2024 & Beyond Walk Maryland Counties Program". This Special Program is sponsored by the Maryland Volksport Association (MVA). To complete the book, walkers must walk on a sanctioned trail in one of Maryland's 23 counties plus Baltimore City. Four club walkers have already completed the book which was designed by club member and active Volksmarcher, Kathy Berry. The logbook is free and you can obtain one through the MVA website at mdvolks.org



View other Sugarloafer activity on our website: sugarloafers.org

MA REGION REPORT

BY CRAIG GAUGER

Hello walkers from all over the USA and beyond! We have so many events in our 5 states and we're ready for you to make a visit. We go from north of Chicago to west all along the Mississippi east of St Louis down to southern Illinois.

We're in the process of growing two new clubs in IL. A few people in the Peoria and Bloomington area are planning events. This includes a new transplant from Washington State with lots of ideas and excitement brought from out west. Another new club in southern Illinois is designing walks and seeking interested walkers to join in. A new walk at the VA Hospital in Marion, IL is nearly ready to go. He also has some golf courses who would allow walkers on their paved paths.

Walks all over Indiana, city and state parks, city walks, and more rural areas. Ohio has much diversity with rail-trails, city, state, and Natl. Parks. Michigan's events are inviting you year-round. You can still walk the Mackinac Bridge on Labor Day annually. There are a few Upper Michigan walks to experience, as well. SW and SE Michigan have many to experience.



MID-AMERICA REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



There are several Kentucky year-round walks. All are on OSB. These were developed by my predecessor to keep volkssporting alive down there. We currently don't have any Kentucky walk clubs. We hosted our successful Mid America Conference (MAC) last summer to promote walking to Kentuckians. We will continue to promote it.

We appreciate any of the bus tours that come through our region. They give those walks a shot in the arm. Given notice, we will design and sanction a walk anywhere in the Mid America Region. If you're county hunting, let me know.

We have interest in setting up a five-event long weekend to walk the "thumb" of Michigan; one walk in each county; Huron, Tuscola, Sanilac, Lapeer, and Genesee. There is a walk in Port Huron, St. Clair Co. continuing through this year.

Recently, my wife and I flew out to New Mexico to check out the walks for next year's AVA Convention. Every walk was great. We met locals along the way on most of them and explained what we were doing and gave the AVA website to those who showed interest. The elevation is at 5,500'±. I have included some photos. We hope to see many of you in Las Cruces in April.



INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK SEASONAL WALK NOW OPEN

BY ROBERT BUZOLICH

The Hoosier Hikers celebrated the opening of their newest seasonal walking event with a fantastic, in spite of the weather, Guided Group Walk at the Indiana Dunes State Park on the Southern shore of Lake Michigan.

This event consists of two loops, which together and dependent upon an individual's choice of one of two Start/Finish Points, that offer a choice of five distances. The details are provided with the map and directions that may be printed when registering for the event online.

The 5-K loop, which is common for three of the five distances, makes use of the Park's existing trail system on the backside of the Dunes, which will take you through a climax forest with good overhead cover and wetlands. The wetlands will be traversed via boardwalks. A climax forest is the result of nearing the final phase of dune succession. There are no significant inclines along the 5-K route.

The 6-K/7-K loop makes use of the Parks existing trail and road system, which will take you to and through the Park's most Western dunes where you will witness the various early stages of Dune succession. Along the 6-K/7-K route you will move through sand and encounter steps or significant inclines. The Dunes at the Western end of the Park have the least amount of elevation gain than many of the other Dunes in the Park. The 6-K/7-K route has minimal overhead cover over 60 percent of the route.



THE MARSH AT INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK AS VIEWED FROM THE TRAIL 8 BOARDWALK

Regardless of the route, it is recommended that you carry water with you on the routes and have headcover and a walking stick available. When planning to do this event during the months of June, July or August, recommend doing the walk early in the day (prior to 10 am) (Central time) on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. The Indiana Dunes State Park is the most popular IN-DNR property. So, during the summer months, you may experience a wait of more than an hour just to enter the Park, or may even be directed to an overflow parking area, which may determine which one of the two Start/Finish Points is best to use for your walk.

A WINTER SUNSET ALONG THE BEACH AT THE INDIANA DUNES STATE PARK



The Indiana Dunes State Park Seasonal Walk event is open March 1 to November 30 of this year. Registration for this event should primarily be handled through the American Volkssport Association (AVA) Online Start Box (OSB). There is no Physical Start Box (PSB) for this event. However, the Hoosier Hikers will offer three additional Guided Group Walks during the period that the event is open. For information on the Guided Group Walks, check out events at the Hoosier Hiker Face Book page: [Hoosier Hikers, Affiliate of the American Volkssport Association | Facebook](#).

Additional information for this event is available at the following link: <https://myava.org/event-view.php?sn=129179>

The Point-of-Contact for this event is Bob Buzolich, who may be contacted via email at sonofbuzz@prodigy.net or via phone at 574-339-9140.

INDIANA VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES WITH A SPRING FLING FEST IN SOUTHERN INDIANA

BY ROBERT BUZOLICH

The Indiana Volkssport Association (INVA) will celebrate the beckoning days of fantastic Spring weather with two walking events in Southern Indiana on Saturday, April 12, at Clifty Falls State Park and on Sunday, April 13, in Historic Madison on the banks and bluffs overlooking the majestic Ohio River.

On Saturday walkers will experience the tranquility and exhilaration of Clifty Creek, its water falls and fossil remnants, as it flows into the Ohio River. Walkers may choose to walk 5 or 10 kilometers. The route will be over an unimproved existing trail system that may have significant inclines for both distances. Registration, which is at the Nature Center opens at 10 am (Eastern time), and closes at noon. Walkers may begin their adventure after completing registration. Please note that this event in an Indiana State Park for which a gate fee applies. The fee is \$7 for Indiana plated vehicles and \$9 for out of state plated vehicles. For specific information on this event, please use the following link: <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=129289>.

The Majestic Ohio River as viewed from The Pointe at Hanover College, which is not along the routes to be walked during the INVA Spring Fling Fest.



On Sunday walkers follow Bob Buzolich on The Historic Madison Guided Walk that acquaints Volksmarchers with the historical and cultural aspects of an Ohio River town whose origins precede Indiana's statehood. Walkers may choose to walk 6 or 11 kilometers. The route will be over sidewalks, which may be cracked and uneven, and an improved trail with a significant incline for 11-K walkers. The guided walk starts at 10 am (Eastern time). Registration for this event, which is at Bicentennial Park in Madison, will be from 9:15 am to 10 am. For specific information on this event, please use the following link: <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=129309>.

For both events it is recommended that walkers bring headcover, water and walking stick or poles, which is highly recommended for the Saturday at Clifty Falls State Park.

Other planned activities for this fest weekend include a raffle, a state organization meeting and a Saturday evening filled with great food and wine at a fantastic venue of your choice.

The Points-of-Contact for these events are Bob Buzolich, who may be contacted via email at sonofbuzz@prodigy.net or via phone at 574-339-9140, and Teena Ligman, who may be contacted via email at tdligman@att.net or via phone 812-278-0139.



WALKING IN WISCONSIN

BY JERRY WILSON, MEMBER OF THE DAIRYLAND WALKERS (MADISON AREA VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION)

Walkers need to be hardy to walk in Wisconsin year round. The Dairyland Walkers have twelve (12) walks that are listed as year round, only one of which is held inside, away from the winter weather. But walking in the Winter can be enjoyable if walkers select a day where the weather is more reasonable, and if walkers dress for the weather.

But, come April 1st fourteen (14) other walks join the parade. These walks are open throughout the remainder of the year, with the exception of two that close in early Autumn.

Come join us in Wisconsin for these 26 walks. If you come before April, dress like those in the attached picture! Ha!

Also, under the auspices of the North Central Regional Director are the sixteen (16) AVA WI IAT (AVA Wisconsin Ice Age Trail) hiking routes with many ranges of distances.



NORTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



GREETINGS FROM THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

BY SUSAN PINNEKE

As the winter cold and snow give way to warmer, sunnier spring days, walking events around the North Central Region pick up. We just can't wait to get back outside and enjoy the beauty and history of our region. For those of you who made walking related New Year's resolution related to walking, we've got some great events to help you keep that resolution. Our clubs in Omaha and Des Moines are featuring a couple of walks in historic areas. Omaha is featuring historic Council Bluffs on April 5. Not only will this walk feature some of the area's historic houses and railroad heritage, but one of the few remaining squirrel cage jails left. On May 17, Des Moines is hosting a walk in Snusville, an area of Des Moines originally settled by Swedish immigrants. It includes the oldest tavern in Des Moines.

Several clubs are hosting walks along trails, showcasing some beautiful scenery, especially beautiful in the spring. The weekend of May 17 & 18, the North Star Trail Travelers are planning a Spring Fun weekend at Myre Big Island State Park. On the trails, you'll walk through both woodlands and prairies. And there's always a cookout after!!! What a great way to enjoy a beautiful spring weekend. Our newest club in northwest Nebraska is hosting an event in Crawford, NE on May 17 along the White River Trail. This walk combines history and nature as you enjoy the beauty of the White River and the history of the area that includes Native Americans, German prisoners of war, and archeological finds. This is the site of the surrender and death of Chief Crazy Horse. Which brings us to Crazy Horse event, the first Saturday in June, at the Crazy Horse Memorial near Custer, South Dakota.

In addition to these great traditional events, a host of new county walks open this spring in both Iowa, and South Dakota. Iowa's Walking Club & the Nebraska Trailblazers are planning a walking weekend June 27 & 28 to feature some of the new county walks in southwest Iowa. Besides the group walks, featuring Johnny Carson's birthplace, homemade ice cream and candy, and abundant nature, there will be social activities. There are many fun new trails to traverse in the North Central! Make plans to visit us this spring for some awesome, new walking adventures!!! We hope to see you soon!



NORTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



TRI-STATE LIGHTHOUSE WALKING WEEKEND 2025: GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

BY KATHRYN PIFFAT

Fast approaching! The 2025 AVA Northeast Tri-State Lighthouse Walking Weekend will take place from May 16-18, 2025 (walkescv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html or contact infotrstate25@aol.com). Hosted by Two Town Walking Club (TTWC), Twin State Volkssport Association, and Southern Maine Volkssport Association, this weekend offers many opportunities for Fun, Fitness, Friendship – and Lighthouses on the three featured walks (Gloucester, Massachusetts; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Cape Elizabeth, Maine)!

May 16 is TTWC's event in Gloucester, Massachusetts, America's oldest seaport, as well as America's longest operating art colony, including artists such as Winslow Homer and Edward Hopper. Special Programs include Lighthouses II, Par-for-the-Course, and Town/City Halls.

The new 5k/10k routes (without the big hill!) begin at Stage Fort Park, site of a fishing outpost in 1623 and a fort in 1635-1898. Both routes include three lighthouses visible from beautiful Stacey Boulevard, a garden promenade above the beach with scenic views of Gloucester Harbor, the Atlantic, and the famous Hammond Castle, built by eccentric inventor John Hays Hammond, the "Father of Radio Control." Both routes feature the iconic Gloucester Fishermen's Memorial and Gloucester Fishermen's Wives' Memorial, shops, restaurants, Stage Fort Park, and numerous war memorials – in celebration of Armed Forces Day Weekend. The 10k route also passes Gorton's headquarters, Our Lady of Good Voyage Church, the site of the First US Coast Guard Air Station, and the home of artist Fitz Henry Lane.

Ten Pound Island Lighthouse was originally built in 1821, replaced in 1881, and automated in 1989. Keeper Amos Story was one of many who claimed to have seen the Gloucester Sea Serpent. (Will you see it?)



The Gloucester Fishermen's Memorial, Gloucester, MA

Ten Pound Island Lighthouse, Gloucester, MA



Eastern Point Lighthouse, featured in *The Perfect Storm*, was lit in 1832 after conversion of an unlit daymarker (1829) to a lighthouse. It was replaced in 1848 and 1890 and automated in 1985.

In 1894-1905, Dog Bar Breakwater was built from Eastern Point over treacherous Dog Bar Reef. In 1905, Dog Bar Breakwater Lighthouse was built. It was replaced by a lighthouse on a skeletal platform in 1910 and again in 1943 and automated in 1985.

The CDC states that commercial fishing is one of the most dangerous jobs in the US. The famous Gloucester Fishermen's Memorial includes The Man at the Wheel cenotaph (1925), memorializing thousands of fishermen known to have lost their lives since 1623. The Gloucester Fishermen's Wives' Memorial (2001) honors the suffering of fishermen's wives.

Looking for more? See thecrazytourist.com/15-best-things-to-do-in-gloucester-ma/. Hammond Castle (hammondcastle.org) is WELL worth the short drive! Eccentric inventor John Hays Hammond always wanted to live in a castle, so he built one, complete with a massive pipe organ and a courtyard in which he could control the weather.

Want another walk? TTWC's Gloucester YRE (6k/11k), partly overlapping the Gloucester Tri-State, is also available.



Hammond Castle in Gloucester, MA, is well worth the visit!

Straitsmouth Island Lighthouse, Rockport, MA



TTWC's beautiful Rockport SE is also right next door in the picturesque seaside town of Rockport! The 5k/10k routes view Straitsmouth Island Lighthouse. The 10k route also views the Thatcher Island Twin Lighthouses (Cape Ann Lighthouse). Both routes include a public footpath with scenic views of the ocean and harbor and pass the famous Motif #1 (most painted view in America; newengland.com/travel/massachusetts/rockport-motif-no-1); shops and art galleries of Bearskin Neck; buildings made of granite from local quarries; beaches; and the stunning Shalin Liu Performance Center (rockportmusic.org).

See myglobalviewpoint.com/best-things-to-do-in-rockport-ma for activities. Special Programs include Lighthouses II, Par-for-the-Course, Step to the Beat, and (10k ONLY) Town/City Halls.

As a bonus, those NOT using OSB can register for Rockport at the Gloucester Tri-State Start sign-in and have their books stamped for both at the Microtel Inn & Suites.

Come visit us!

Motif #1 in Rockport, MA, is the most painted building in America.



STILL TIME TO DISCOVER RHODE ISLAND

BY CAROL ENDRISS WEST

Rhode Island County Challenge

In 2023, Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club (CVCV) and Walk 'n Mass Volkssport Club (WnM) launched an incentive program for walkers to complete walks in each of the five counties of Rhode Island. (See TAW, March, 2023 issue, "Walk All Five Rhode Island Counties"). So far, forty-five participants have registered for the Challenge from eleven states – mainly from the Northeast (CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, NY), but also from the-Atlantic (DE and MD), South Central (KS and OK) and Northwest (WA) Regions. Half of the registrants have completed the program as of December.



Carol West, CVCV, displays the award for completing the Rhode Island County Challenge, a 40"-long blue cooling towel/scarf.

A little state with a lot to offer

As participants have turned in their completed Record Books, they have written enthusiastic notes to us: "Who knew there was so much to do and see in that little state?" "Wow, was surprised to learn about the 18th century history of Bristol and East Greenwich!" "Newport is stunning!" "Providence was re-born – what a great city!" "Can't believe this is my first visit out to beautiful Block Island. Will return, though it's good you now have an on-shore alternative in Wickford for nabbing Washington County." "Loved all that quaint Wickford offers – scenery, restaurants, history, activities!" We were surprised that so many walkers, even from New England states, had never visited Rhode Island. In the absence of a Rhode Island Volkssport club, WnM and, more recently, CVCV have "adopted" the state, providing dozens of year-round and traditional walks in its towns over the years.

There's still time to participant

Walkers who redeem their books by December 31, 2025 will receive the award (see photo) and a certificate. To obtain more information, email Carol West, carol.west@sbcglobal.net. Or you can mail your name, address, email and phone, along with \$10, to Carol West, CVCV-RI County Challenge, 366 Main St., Wethersfield, CT 06109. A special Record Book will be mailed to you.



Lobster Food Truck - Cape Elizabeth, Maine

Flower Gardens at Prescott Park - Portsmouth, New Hampshire

TRI-STATE LIGHTHOUSE WALKING EVENT
MAY 16-18, 2025
Massachusetts / New Hampshire / Maine

Contact infotristate25@aol.com or visit [25NEWeekend](https://www.walkescv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html) or <https://www.walkescv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html>

MORE TO SEE THAN JUST LIGHTHOUSES ON THE TRI-STATE LIGHTHOUSE WALKING WEEKEND

BY DENISE MACARONAS

Time is running out to register for the 2025 AVA Northeast Tri-State Lighthouse Walking Weekend scheduled for May 16-18. All registration forms must be received by April 15. These forms can be found on [our website](#).

This event is hosted by Two Town Walking Club (TTWC), Twin State Volkssport Association (TSVA), and Southern Maine Volkssport Association (SMVA). The focus for the event is lighthouses as you will have the opportunity to see a total of seven lighthouses on these three walks. Walks qualify for the following AVA Special program: Lighthouse II. Individual walks may qualify for other programs.

Our host hotel, Microtel Inn and Suites by Wyndham, in York, Maine, may already be full but please check with them directly as cancellations may occur. Call the hotel at 207-363-0800 or email microtelgroups@gmail.com to check on the 'Volkssport' block booking. Other local hotels include [Anchorage Inn](#), York, Maine, 207-363-5112; [Coachman Inn](#) 207-439-4434; and [Towne Lyne Motel](#), Ogunquit, Maine, 207-646-2955.

Renew friendships and make new friends while spending a weekend exploring and enjoying all that northern New England has to offer. There will be many opportunities for Fun, Fitness and Friendship. We invite everyone to explore lighthouses along the rocky coast of New England from Northern Massachusetts (Gloucester) to New Hampshire (Portsmouth) to Southern Maine (Cape Elizabeth).



A WALK AT ALBANY RURAL CEMETERY

BY JOHN W. BUSZTA

The Empire State Capital Volkssporters (ESCV) will sponsor a walk at the Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands, NY on April 26th. Incorporated in 1841 the Albany Rural Cemetery is still a hidden secret of the Capital Region. It is composed of 467 acres of scenic beauty with 32 miles of roads and pathways. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of the earliest examples of the rural cemetery movement. In the early 1800's, Albany was rapidly growing and there was limited space for burials within the city. It was decided that a rural cemetery should be established outside the city of Albany. This plan was similar to that of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge Mass. which influenced the start of the rural cemetery movement.

The Albany Rural Cemetery began to thrive in the Victorian Era and is adorned by many beautiful statues, monuments and mausoleums. It is also the resting place for 55 Mayors of Albany, 5 Governors, 8 Presidential Cabinet Members, 5 Ambassadors, 5 US Senators, 34 Congressmen and 1 President, Chester A. Arthur the 21st President of the United States. In addition to the politicians there are many other people of local and national importance.

Our 6K and 10K walks will give you an overall picture of the cemetery and you will walk by some of its most important residents. They would include: The GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) burial site. John Boyd Thatcher, State Senator and Mayor of Albany. Major General Philip Schuyler was the first of two United States Senators from New York, Co-founder of the Federalist Party and Major General in the Revolutionary War. Erastus Corning was the founder and President of the New York Central Railroad. Chester A. Arthur, was the 21st President of the United States and Quartermaster General of the United States Militia during the Civil War. Stephen Van Rensselaer was the last Dutch Patroon and founder of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. William Patterson was a signer of the United States Constitution, United States Senator, Governor of New Jersey and Assistant Justice of the Supreme Court. For more information visit our website at walkescv.org and enjoy a walk through Albany Rural Cemetery.

Come walk with us for fun, fitness and friendship.



Gloucester Fisherman's Wives' Memorial - Gloucester, Massachusetts

Prescott Park - Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Lighthouses are not the only reason to attend this event. May is a beautiful time of year to enjoy many photo opportunities such as waves crashing against the rocky coast, serene beach views, historic sites, and gardens and spring flowers.

If mist, rain or fog happen to obscure your views, your experience may be enhanced by the melancholic sounds of the foghorn. This sound symbolizes the importance of the light stations, the dedication of the men and women who have served through the years as well as the lives saved.

Make this a Foodie Road Trip! Besides the expected seafood choices, Gloucester offers a unique opportunity for foodies to experience international cuisine from traditional Italian cooking to authentic Mediterranean dishes to Asian specialties and more, all right in one city. There is something for everyone in Gloucester!

Portsmouth is a foodie delight with one of the highest concentrations of restaurants per capita in the nation! Portsmouth has beautiful architecture, a charming waterfront, fine food restaurants, and cafes whose chairs and tables spill out onto the sidewalks, giving the city an almost European feel.

For foodies looking for lobster rolls, Bite into Maine is a popular food truck at Fort Williams/Portland Head Light, the start/finish point for the Cape Elizabeth walk. They offer a variety of delicious lobster rolls with six different styles to choose from. Here you can savor iconic Maine flavors while enjoying the beautiful surroundings. Another big foodie town is Portland, just 5 miles away from Portland Head Light.

All three locations also have unique shops, craft breweries and bakeries. Browse through the shops, take a brewery tour or stop by for a sweet.

Hope to see you in May! If you have any questions, please contact us at infotristate25@aol.com



NORTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



HAPPENINGS IN THE NW REGION COMING THIS YEAR

BY SHARON MOATS

NW Region is the place to be in 2025. So many things happening.

Our clubs are enjoying making stickers for their walk events and start boxes. No messy stamp pads.

Emerald City Wanderers (Seattle) have launched their new special program for Link Light Rail Walks. Clubs have developed new routes on the east side of Lake Washington and North of Seattle for you to enjoy as you ride the Link Trains to walks.



April and May bring many special events that our clubs are doing. Our neighbors up north, Vancouver Island BC Canada, have their biennial event for walking Vancouver Island scheduled for April 26-May 2.

The second week of May, Emerald City Wanderers are doing an Alaska Cruise and walking the Seasonal Year-Round walks on the stops along the way. They have 55 enthusiastic walkers signed up.



Memorial Day weekend has the Olympic Peninsula Explorers planning a 3-day event visiting 3 different sites featuring the "Triangle of Fire" for protection of Puget Sound during the end of the 1800's and early 19th Century. Lots of history at these State Parks.

F.S Family Wanderers in Seattle WA has modified their Seattle Downtown Year-Round event, YR0011, to include many new sites in downtown that have been under construction over the last few years. This is a must-do when you visit Seattle.

October brings more traveling events to our region. Oct 2-5 is "Autumn Walks in Leavenworth and Beyond" featuring hikes and walks with beautiful fall colors and Leavenworth Octoberfest celebrations. Hosted by Interlaken Trailblazers and Central WA Sunstriders Clubs.

Later in October (16-18) walkers will head to Shady Cove Oregon to enjoy walks in the beautiful Rouge River Valley.

These are only highlights but we can guarantee you fun and interesting walks all year long.



ROGUE VALLEY WALKERS

BY PAT JEWETT

The Rogue Valley Walkers in Southern Oregon closed their club on December 31, 2024. The club had a great 38-year run. This club was officially recognized on December 31, 1987 as club member #498 and the Charter certificate was signed by Julian Bauer as President and Wendy Bumgardner as Secretary.

The remaining money in the club will be donated to the Rogue Valley Humane Society and the Southern Oregon Humane Society.

I found a very short summary of the History of the Rogue Valley Walkers starting with the formal recognition of the club in 1987. It looks like the club called themselves 'The Roving Rogues' but not officially. This was the 498th club to join the AVA and the 22nd club in Oregon. Now we have 9 remaining clubs in Oregon. The first sanctioned 10km volkswalk was held on April 16, 1988. Shirley O' Hare, Pauline Minter, Marie Jewett and Jerri Wildfong were a few of the former Presidents of this club in the earlier years.

George and Pauline Mintner, life time members of the AVA were recognized in the years 2005-2007 for 15 years of keeping volkssporting active in Southern Oregon.

This club advertised their walks and events in many local newspapers, had featured articles about the club and club members. They had brochures for their upcoming walks, hosted YRE's and walk events in the towns and cities in Southern Oregon. They held garage sales to raise money, sold club tee shirts, had Christmas dinners, game nights, club meetings, all to build membership and keep their members engaged. They also traveled to walk at other events. Club members traveled together to events in Northern CA, Washington and other parts of Oregon. I joined them at the CA Regional Conference and at walk events in Whidbey Island.

My initial involvement with the Rogue Valley Walkers came about when my parents joined this club in the late 2000's. This came as a surprise since I had taken them on the 'Heart Throb walk' in Portland, not knowing that this walk involved all the stairways in SW and NW Portland. That was their initiation to volkswalking. This later became one of my favorite walks hosted by the Columbia River Volkssport Club..

When I visited my parents in Medford I went on volkswalks with their club and even played board games with many of the club members as my parents would invite some of the members over for dinner while I was visiting. They became my friends too. I will always hold a special place in my heart for all the fun times spent with such wonderful people.



My mom, Marie Jewett came up with the idea for the highly successful 'Rogue Valley Riches' event that was held in Shady Cove every two years from 2011-2017. This event became such a treasured event that Rogue Valley Walkers co-hosted this event with the Columbia River Volkssport Club in 2023 and 2024. CRVC plans to hold it one more time on Oct. 16-18, 2025. The beauty of this part of Southern Oregon is unique and the town of Shady Cove is very friendly. The Edgewater Inn goes out of its way to help ensure that we have a successful event.

As the years went by my mom was the Treasurer and then President of this club. My dad became Vice President when Jerri Wildfong took over when my mom retired. I later took over from Jerri Wildfong as President.



I was President from 2021 until December 2024. With the support of a few longstanding members to take on the role of treasurer, secretary and walk leader for the Meetup Group walks we were able to keep the YRE's available in Southern OR, help with the Regional Conference in Ashland in 2022, and co-host the Shady Cove (formerly "The Rogue Valley Riches") in 2023 and 2024. I was trying to run this club that was in Southern Oregon from my home in Portland Oregon.

As I knew this club was going to fold within a few years my goal was to keep the YRE walks in Southern OR active. I saw the need to keep AVA sanctioned walks in Southern Oregon as we have walks in Northern OR, the Willamette Valley. It seemed important to represent Southern Oregon. Oregon Trails State Volkssport Association took over the Rogue Valley Walker YRE's and the three seasonal walks as of 2025.

It's hard to lose a club in Oregon. So many clubs have closed since I started volkswalking in 2003. Even in 2003, clubs were closing.

Longstanding members age out or die and there aren't new younger members available to step up and keep a club active. Oregon has a strong group of aging walkers in roles of leadership but when these folks age out I fear that Oregon could become a state without any AVA clubs remaining.

I hope we find ways to engage younger people to become involved with the AVA and AVA clubs.

We don't often write or acknowledge clubs that close in articles. The RD and DRD in Oregon wanted to give out awards to some of the remaining club members but I thought a better tribute was to write a short article to remember this club instead.

I want to thank the Rogue Valley walkers for all the wonderful times that my parents and I had in this club. It was a time that brought my parents and I closer together as we shared a passion for walking.

My dad kept calendars that were filled with his daily three to seven mile walks. He was a strong walker and would walk daily to the Safeway store near their house to buy newspapers and then walk home.




ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

ROCKY MOUNTAIN UPDATE

BY STEVE SANDRIDGE

The Rocky Mountain region offers several dozen great walks every year. If you're planning to visit any national parks here in the Rockies this year, here are some NP walks plus a special new Colorado event. Enjoy!

Seasonal or YRE

Larkspur, CO - Sandstone Ranch Open Space. This is a new walk in a 2,038-acre ranch bordering the Pike National Forest and features an extraordinarily diverse landscape.

Springdale, UT - Zion National Park. Follow the paths where people have walked for thousands of years. Gaze up at massive sandstone cliffs of cream, pink, and red that soar into a brilliant blue sky.

April 1, 2025 to Nov 30, 2025

Bryce Canyon City, UT - Bryce Canyon National Park. Hoodoos (irregular columns of rock) exist on every continent, but here is the largest concentration found anywhere on Earth. Situated along a high plateau at the top of the Grand Staircase.

Jul 1st, 2025 to Sep 30th, 2025

Grand Teton National Park, WY - Jenny Lake/Cascade Canyon is an inspiring walk through the Grand Teton National Park via Jenny Lake/Cascade Canyon is 12km to 24km. We recommend a camera, water, and food to enjoy the whole experience. There's also a walk at Two Ocean Lake.

Yellowstone National Park, WY - Fairy Falls/Imperial Geyser is a mostly flat trail in the heart of Yellowstone's geothermal activity. The Mount Washburn Trail Walk is on a turn-of-the-century wagon road which starts at 8,859 feet and climbs to 10,243 feet to a Lookout Tower.

East Glacier, MT - Grinnell Glacier Trail. The majestic Rocky Mountains tower above as one ventures into east Glacier National Park to the picturesque lake front lodge for the start of the Grinnell Glacier Trail.

West Glacier, MT - Highline Trail. West Glacier National Park offers picturesque forest showcased against white peaked mountain driving to the summit of "going to the sun highway" and start of this breathtaking event at Logan Pass.

Jul 16th, 2025 for 1 day. Mesa Verde, CO* - Mesa Verde National Park Walk. Visit the Spruce Tree House cliff dwellings and then continue on the rugged but scenic Petroglyphs Trail.

Jul 18th, 2025 for 1 day. Mosca, CO* - Great Sand Dunes National Park Walk. A short Ranger presentation of the park then a walk with time to explore the Dune area.

*Note: You must pre-register with Walking Adventures for the Mesa Verde and Great Sand Dunes guided walks.



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



VISIT GREEN COUNTRY THIS SPRING!!

BY TERESA ARNOLD

Tulsa Walking Club kicks off its 2025 Traditional Walk Schedule with its first Traditional Event of the year, on March 15, 2025, by walking the trails of Oxley Nature Center which are located inside Mohawk Park in Tulsa.

The nature trails are a club favorite with wildlife often spotted. The walk is in memory of deceased members, Bob Pugh and John Hanlan, who both spent many hours here. We will be having a Cookie potluck with walkers bringing their favorite cookies to share in memory of our "Cookie Man" John Hanlan, as well as a Food Drive to benefit those in need.

April 5, we will travel to the historic town of Ponca City, which is in Kay County. The afternoon will find us in Arkansas City, Kansas, for a walk in Cowley County, hosted by Sunflower Sod Stompers. These walks are only half an hour apart. This will be a Great Adventure!

Join us on May 17 to explore Washington Irving Park along the banks of the Arkansas River in Bixby, Oklahoma.

June 21 finds us in Jenks, Oklahoma, exploring the new outlet mall. This is a new walk for the club. While you are in the area, why not walk our RiverWalk YRE, and make it a two-fer?

This is a great time of year to explore Green Country! Be sure and make plans to attend! Walk details will be updated on the ava.org website, and flyers will be available to be downloaded as well. We look forward to seeing YOU on the trails in 2025!

SAINT LOUIS WALKERS ARTICLE

BY SUSAN FINE

Saint Louis Walkers was mentioned on January's "Rent" blog. "Rent" is a subsidiary of the national real estate company, Redfin. The blog features an article about "Winter Things To Do in St. Louis", and features walking with the club for their Downtown walk. Check it out: [5 Winter Things to Do in St. Louis, MO | Rent Blog](#), and look under #3: Walk Around the City.

SPRING BREAK IN ARKANSAS: WALK TWO NEW COUNTIES AND EXPLORE THE REGION

BY PAT GOLDEN

The Ozark Hills Walking Club of Arkansas will offer two new county walks in 2025: Clarksville in Johnson County and Ozark in Franklin County. Only a physical start box will be available to register for the walks. The walk box will be located at the Quality Inn, 1167 S. Rogers Street, Clarksville.

On April 10-11, 2025, all walkers are invited to attend a 2-day event. The 2-day event will feature the two new county walks and additional YRE walks in Fort Smith (Sebastian County) and Van Buren (Crawford County). We encourage you to walk our YRE walks. You can register for all four walks and receive walking directions for each. Registration will be at the Quality Inn in Clarksville from 7:30 to 10:30. Room reservations may also be made there by calling 479-754-3000.

The Clarksville 5K walk will be along the paved Spadra Creek Nature Trail and the 10K will continue from the trail to include a walk around the University of the Ozarks campus, in residential areas, and finally will rejoin a paved path leading back to the Nature Trail.

After completing the Clarksville walk, Walkers may also want to take spring break the afternoon of the 10th exploring attractions in the area. A 20 minute drive south of Clarksville is Subicaco Abey, a working monastery with lovely grounds, a picturesque cathedral, picnic area, and a gift shop. Another side trip might be to Altus, AR, 30 minutes west of Clarksville. Altus features seven wineries with most offering a tasting room. On your return to Clarksville, join the group at Kaspar's restaurant in Clarksville for a 5:30 dinner.

The Ozark walk will take walkers through the downtown area, residential areas, and along the street adjacent to the Arkansas River where beautiful river homes sit along its bank.

Walk directions for a revised Fort Smith (Sebastian County) walk and the club's year-round walk in Van Buren (Crawford County) will also be available to those who wish to add more Arkansas county walks during the trip and continue their "spring break" explorations. The Fort Smith walk has been revised to take walkers by the new Marshall's Museum. It is worth a visit (a fee is charged). Van Buren offers an historic main street with lots of unique shops.

Please join us in April for a spring break!



Sunflower Sod Stompers'
Huffin' & Puffin'
On the
High Plains of Kansas
May 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11, 2025
7 Walks & 8 Swims
7 Different counties in southwest Kansas

COME WALK IN THE SUNFLOWER STATE!

BY TERRI TYLER

Volkssporters! Are you traveling to the 2025 AVA Convention? Depending on your state of residence, consider traveling to (or from) New Mexico via Kansas – the Sunflower State. The Sod Stompers of Topeka have set-up 5 seasonal events in southwest Kansas to help volkssporters have some opportunities to use those walking muscles as they drive towards Las Cruces.

The 5 "mini" seasonals are located in the cities of Great Bend, Larned, Garden City, Liberal, and Elkhart from April 1 to June 10. These communities are reachable by way of U.S. 50, 54, and 56. The towns of Great Bend and Larned are along US 56 – the Historic route of the Santa Fe Trail. Remember your NPS Passport Book! Liberal is known for its annual Pancake Race and Wizard of Oz sites. Elkhart lies on the Kansas-Oklahoma border and qualifies for the Border Crossing Special Program besides a Rail-Trail. The Lee Richardson Zoo and "The Big Pool" can be enjoyed as you walk in Garden City. Four of these towns will have visible grain elevators as qualifiers for the "Monarch of the Plains" Special Program. All of these walks will have a physical start box. And some of the registration sites will be located at well-maintained motels in their communities – offering discounts to participants.

Now, if you plan your time and travels just right, you can participate in the Sunflower Sod Stompers annual "Huffin' and Puffin' on the High Plains of Kansas" weekend May 7-11. In the pursuit of walking the 105 counties, the club will offer 7 walking events that weekend in 6 "new" counties of the State. These traditional walks will be in Pratt, Saint John, Greensburg, Kingsley, Jetmore, Cimarron, and Dodge City. These sanctioned events are also located in the southwestern part of the State for your convenience. The above mentioned towns are county seats so businesses are based around government, besides farming and ranching, mining, oil, railroading and associated businesses.

Although some of the walking communities are not heavily populated, all of them should provide some interesting sites, histories, and charm for participants. Walkers are invited to come and take-part and enjoy the small towns located on America's High Plains. These traditional events will have a variance of qualifiers for current AVA Special Programs. Two sanctioned swims will be available through the weekend for those who enjoy that aspect of volkssporting.

The walking routes will feature local business areas besides well-kept residential sections. Courses are fairly flat but there are some inclines especially in Dodge City. Be prepared to be walking in some full sun even though you will be doing town routes on streets that are tree-lined. The low humidity and the ever-blowing winds in Kansas can dehydrate the body while on the trails so bring your water bottles. Of course the Sod Stompers will have water stops/checkpoints along the way. Conveniences can be rather limited in these communities so take advantage when available.

Long horn steer statue in Dodge City honoring the many cattle drives to the rail head



The Sunflower Sod Stompers would appreciate your support for their efforts. Motels and group meals have been arranged for participants who are attending the traditional May "Huffin' & Puffin" walking-weekend. If you have any questions regarding these Kansas events, contact Terri Tyler by e-mail: tttyler50@gmail.com. Sarah Long at s.glong@att.net can also provide information for these events.



SOUTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



SAVE THE DATE - WAF34

BY CATHY METHERELL

Walk Around Florida 34 South Orange and North Osceola County Nov. 7-9, 2025. By Cathy Metherell, John McClellan and Alice Lawrence

The thirty-fourth Walk Around Florida will be held in south Orange and north Osceola counties in central Florida. Three clubs along I-4 - the Mid-Florida Milers, Happy Wanderers and Suncoast Sandpipers - are in the planning process for the weekend. We are planning walks in St Cloud, Kissimmee, and Celebration in the county of Osceola and Lake Nona in Orange county.

The city of St Cloud is located on the south shore of East Lake Tohopekaliga and started out as a retirement community for Civil War union veterans. The city of Kissimmee is located on the northwest shore of Lake Tohopekaliga and is the county seat of Osceola County. Cattle ranching was its main source of income until Disney came along.

Celebration is a planned community originally developed by Walt Disney Company and is known for its nature trails.

Lake Nona in Orange county is a part of the City of Orlando along both sides of the 417 toll road. This a mixed-use planned community that includes Medical City where the University of Central Florida College of Medicine and several hospitals including Orlando VA Hospital are situated.

More information on WAF34 can be found in future articles and at the three club websites: midfloridamilers.org; happywanderersfl.org; suncoastsandpipers.org.



SOUTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



FINDING THE WILD THINGS IN CENTRAL TEXAS EN ROUTE TO THE AVA CONVENTION

BY TERRY SULLIVAN, COLORADO RIVER WALKERS

If you are looking for Wild Things to complete your special program book "Where the Wild Things Are," try Austin, Texas. The Colorado River Walkers' Historical Capital YRE features gargoyles. At the Lady Bird Lake YRE you can find another gargoyle. There is a fairy to be found on the Fairview/Travis Heights YRE. Going north along I-35, on the Pflugerville YRE you can find a gnome (and dragons). There is a rumor of gnomes along the trail on the Georgetown YRE. Farther north on the Salado YRE there is a fine statue of a troll with one of the Billy Goats Gruff.

The Colorado River Walkers also have other YRE's in the I-35 corridor including Belton, Round Rock, and Cedar Park (where there is also a bike event). All of these events showcase scenic beauty and historic sites, and they qualify for additional special programs. For more information, see our website: coloradoriverwalkers.org or the AVA site: ava.org.

If you plan to drive to Las Cruces, NM, for the AVA convention, I-35 could be your route south. Then take US Highway 290 west from Austin to the intersection with I-10 in west Texas, and then I-10 all the way to El Paso. And while you are taking that route, you will find a YRE in Stonewall, five YREs in Fredericksburg, two in Junction, and two in El Paso. There is a lot of walking fun to have in Texas.

NEW MEXICO, IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

BY HELEN HULL

Spring is just around the corner and a perfect time to explore New Mexico. New Mexico is the 5th largest state in the US and with 2.2 million people, ranks 37th in population. The state is home to 33 counties and is served by 3 AVA clubs. These clubs offer 15 YREs in 8 different counties. And with the help of a couple of outsider clubs, the state has walks in 4 other counties. With the convention this year centered around Las Cruces, there will be walks in an additional 4 counties. So let's go visit the 33 counties.

The convention is a great start and will have walks in Las Cruces and 4 surrounding counties. The Sun Country Striders are offering several other walks in Deming, Gila Cliffs Dwelling NM, and Truth or Consequences for another 3 counties. The Kiwanis Club of Raton has walks in Raton and Capulin Volcano while the Double Eagle Hike & Bike Club has walks in Albuquerque, Los Alamos, and Santa Fe. They are also sponsoring walks in Bandelier NM and Taos from April thru December covering 2 more counties. The Midland Walkabouts sponsor a walk at Carlsbad NM while the Woodland Wanderers sponsor walks in Lordsburg, Roswell, and San Antonio (NM, not TX) for 3 more counties.

So after visiting New Mexico and discovering the deserts, mountains, volcanos, forests, lakes, Native American and Spanish cultures, and 15 National Park properties, you might be tempted to visit more of the state. The Sun Country Striders of Las Cruces started a county walking program in 2022 and will complete the 33 counties this year. But it is never too late to walk the 33 counties, especially with so many of the walks currently listed on the OSB. The club still have a few log books and patches available. Look for us at the convention or else contact me (HelenTheHun@yahoo.com).

Now you're thinking, I'd like to visit, but I can't do it all on this one trip. You can always come back next year(s) to visit more of the counties. I know that there are some walks that were offered for just 1 year and you missed them. Contact me and let me know which ones you need, and we will sanction them for you. We have walked in most of the National Park sites, many Route 66 towns, small towns, historic towns and have traveled down some dusty roads.



WALKING WITH THE ANGELS



BETTY LEE GREEN

It is with great sorrow that the family of Betty Lee (Knott) Green, 72, announce her passing on February 5, 2025, at Grand View Hospital in Sellersville, PA. Betty was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend.

Betty was born to Hayden Knott and Margaret (Horsely) Knott on February 17, 1952, in Anderson, IN as the younger sister to Peggy. The two were easy to identify as sisters, often dressed in matching outfits, blond bangs and cat-eye rimmed glasses, though most would guess their birth order wrong after Betty's 3rd grade growth spurt put her a few inches taller than Peggy. As adults they shared fond memories growing up in Indiana and visiting their grandparents' farm in Kentucky.

In her teenage years at Highland High School in Anderson, IN, you would be hard-pressed to find a club that Betty didn't belong to. She participated in every club from Math, Science, Latin, Drama and the 'Quiz Bowl Team'. She also played the clarinet, while dressed in a plaid kilt, in the Highlander Marching Band where she had the honor of playing for two sitting US Presidents.

[Click here to see full Obituary](#)

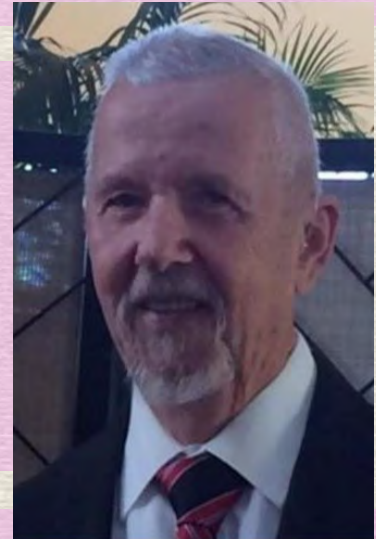
PAUL CHESTER CHASTEEN

Paul Chester Chasteen, age 96, of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida passed away peacefully on January 27, 2025.

He held graduate and postgraduate degrees from Stanford and Purdue Universities. After a 22 year military career, Paul went on to share his love of education as a teacher, an insurance salesperson, a gentleman farmer, bee keeper, winemaker and recreational walker.

After a successful business in personal computers, they moved to North Carolina where he and Loretta joined the Winston Wanderers, a Volksmarching Walking Club. During his tenure as president, in addition to adding numerous walks in and around Winston-Salem, they helped to organize a state Volksmarching association. They are fondly remembered by many across the country as they made it a mission to walk in every state in the US at least twice.

[Click here to see full Obituary](#)



SUSAN AMELING MEDLIN

Susan Ameling Medlin, 65 years of age, of San Antonio, TX, passed away from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) on 16 February 2025.

She was born in Cleveland, OH in 1960 and graduated from Firestone High School in Akron, OH, and earned her Bachelor's Degree in history at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL. She was married to Darren Medlin of Plano, TX.

Susan retired as a Lieutenant Colonel after a successful career as an intelligence officer in the US Army. She earned a Master's Degree in Strategic Intelligence and received numerous awards including the Legion of Merit.

After retiring she and her husband returned to a pastime they had enjoyed when they were dating in Germany, Volksmarching. These locally hosted walks became a vehicle for seeing the US and the world with hundreds of walks and hikes ranging in distance from 5 to 42 kilometers. She led clubs and held offices at the local and national level in America's Walking Club, AVA.org.

She is survived by her mother Josaphine Ameling, her husband of 37 years Darren, her sons Travis (Brittney) and Kyle (Megan) Medlin, brothers Michael and Steve (Pat) Ameling, and sister Betsey (John) (Ameling) Plevrit.

Susan will be interred at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery; details are to be announced.



HERE IS A LIST OF UPCOMING MULTI-DAY EVENTS FOR YOUR TRAVEL PLANNING. CLICK ON THE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION. THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THESE CLUBS.

Month	Date	Multi-day Event Description	Host Club	Location
2025				
April	10 - 11	Walk 2 New Arkansas Counties, Clarksville, AR	Ozark Hill Hikers	AR
April	12 - 13	Indiana Spring Fling Fest	Indiana Volkssport Association	IN
April/May	26 - 4	AVA Biennial Convention Walks & Socials Las Cruces, NM	AVA	NM
May - National Walking Month & National Physical Fitness Month				
May	5 - 8	Group Walk - New NM County Walks	Sun Country Striders	NM
May	7 - 11	Huffin and Puffin on the High Plains	Sunflower Sod Stompers	KS
May	16 - 18	Tri-State Lighthouse Walks	AVA Northeast Region	NH, ME, MA
May	23 - 25	Triangle of Fire - Port Townsend, WA	Olympic Peninsula Explorers	WA
June	27 - 28	Iowa County Weekend	Iowa's Walking Club and Nebraska Trailblazers	IA
October	2 - 5	Walking Stevens Pass to Leavenworth	Interlaken & Central WA Sun Striders	WA
October	16 - 19	Shady Cove, Oregon	Columbia River Volkssport Club	OR
October	17 - 19	24th U.S. FreedomWalk Festival	U.S. Freedom Walk Festival Club	VA/D.C.

PARTICIPANTS CORNER

CLICK ICONS TO VIEW ANNIVERSARIES, EVENTS AND AWARDS.



UPCOMING



EVENTS

IVV EVENT



AWARDS

AVA FEATURED EVENTS

Arkansas County Walks



**Group Walk of Two
New Counties
April 10-11, 2025**

Start: Clarksville, Arkansas

Walk Johnson and Franklin Counties

Sponsored by Ozark Hill Hikers

Info: Pat Golden at bvohh@gmail.com

[Click here for more information](#)

INDIANA SPRING FLING FEST



**South Indiana:
Clifty Falls State Park &
Historic Madison
April 12-13, 2025**

Fest weekend includes a raffle, a state organization meeting and a Saturday evening filled with great food

Bob Buzolich: sonofbuzz@prodigy.net, 574-339-9140, or
Teena Ligman, tdligman@att.net, 812-278-0139.

[Click here for more information](#)

See all the walks/bike/swim events: ava.org – find a walk

AVA Convention & Walk Fest



**Las Cruces, NM
April 26 – May 4, 2025
3 Cities – 3 States – 2 Countries**

9 Planned Walks + Many YREs
Swim and Bike Events

Social Events + Hall of Fame Dinner
General Membership Meetings for Clubs

Convention Dates are April 29 – May 2
[Registration & hotel info here.](#)

[Click Here for More Information](#)

New Mexico County Walks



**Walk Counties in
Northwest New Mexico
7 Walks in 3 Days**

Group Walks May 5 – 8, 2025
or walk anytime this year

Aztec Ruins Natl Monument, Gallup,
Chaco Culture Natl Historic, & more.

Sponsored by Sun Country Striders

[Click Here for More Information](#)

See all the walks/bike/swim events: ava.org – find a walk

Kansas Counties Walks



**Huffin' and Puffin' on the
High Plains of Kansas**

7 Walks and 2 Swims in 6 New
Counties in Southwest Kansas

Group Walks May 7 – 11, 2025
or walk anytime April 1 – June 10

Sponsored by Sunflower Sod Stompers

[Click Here for More Information](#)

Tri-State Lighthouse Wknd



**3 States over 3 Days
Several Lighthouses**

May 16 – 18, 2025

Gloucester, MA – Portsmouth, NH –
Cape Elizabeth, ME

Meet and Greet, and Dinner

Sponsored by the Two Town Walking Club the Twin State
Volkssport Association, & Maine Volkssport Association


[Click Here for More Information](#)

SMALL CHANGES THAT LEAD TO BIG IMPROVEMENTS IN WELL-BEING

BY PATRICIA SARMIENTO, PUBLIC HEALTH CORPS
INFO@PUBLICHEALTHCORPS.ORG 

Feeling your best every day begins with intentional choices that support your overall well-being. Building a foundation of healthy habits fosters balance, resilience, and energy that carries into every aspect of life. Small, consistent changes have the power to transform how you feel and function, creating a sense of alignment and vitality. Prioritizing what nurtures both your body and mind enhances your ability to navigate challenges and embrace opportunities. A life centered on well-being empowers you to thrive with confidence and clarity.

ADD ORGANIC SUPER GREENS

Elevating your nutrition is a crucial step toward achieving optimal health and vitality. By incorporating organic super greens into your diet, you can significantly enhance your nutrient intake. These greens are rich in essential vitamins and minerals that support overall well-being. Opting for super greens in powder form allows you to create delicious, nutrient-rich smoothies that seamlessly fit into your daily routine. This simple dietary addition can lead to noticeable improvements in energy levels and digestive health, making it a valuable investment in your long-term wellness. For a deeper understanding of the benefits, [consider an analysis of Live it Up Greens](#), which highlights their role in supporting a healthy lifestyle. 

WHOLE FOODS FOR BETTER HEALTH

Incorporating whole foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins into your diet promotes balanced energy and overall health. These nutrient-rich options provide essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that support optimal digestion and vitality. Fresh produce offers natural antioxidants, whole grains sustain energy levels, and lean proteins aid in muscle repair and maintenance. Adding variety from these sources ensures [your body gets a broad spectrum of nutrients](#) without unnecessary additives. Choosing whole foods over processed alternatives fosters a nourishing, sustainable approach to eating that benefits both body and mind.

USE PORTION CONTROL

Understanding portion control is essential for effective weight management and overall well-being. By recognizing [appropriate serving sizes](#), you can positively influence your eating habits and maintain a healthy weight. Utilizing tools like scales, measuring cups, and smaller plates can enhance your ability to estimate portions accurately. Incorporating pre-portioned foods into your meals simplifies decisions about food quantities, supporting weight loss and maintenance. While the effectiveness of these strategies can vary, they offer practical solutions to the challenges posed by large portion sizes, which are often linked to obesity.

SET THE STAGE FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S REST

Quality sleep is essential for rejuvenating the body and mind, making it a cornerstone of overall well-being. Establishing a bedtime routine helps signal your body to wind down and prepare for rest, promoting deeper, more restorative sleep. Calming activities like reading, gentle stretching, or meditation can ease the transition from a busy day to a restful night. [Prioritizing consistent sleep schedules](#) reinforces this rhythm, ensuring your body gets the recovery it needs. With these habits, sleep becomes a powerful ally in maintaining energy and resilience every day.



Image via Pexels


PRIORITIZE GUT HEALTH

Understanding the connection between gut health and nutrition is crucial for boosting your overall well-being. By adopting a balanced diet rich in diverse fibers, quality probiotics, and colorful plant foods, you can significantly enhance your microbiome. This, in turn, supports your immune system and mental clarity. Incorporating fermented foods and paying attention to your body's unique responses allows you to tailor your diet for optimal energy and vitality. Although research on the [long-term effects of dietary interventions on gut microbiota](#) is still evolving, embracing a microbiome-friendly diet is a proactive step towards disease prevention and longevity.

CHOOSE A VARIETY OF EXERCISES

Incorporating a variety of exercises, including walking, ensures your body stays engaged while preventing monotony. Walking, whether solo or as [part of a walking club](#), is an accessible way to boost cardiovascular health and build endurance. Combining this with strength training, cardio workouts, and flexibility exercises targets different muscle groups for a balanced approach to fitness. Joining others for a walk adds a social aspect, making it more enjoyable and motivating. Mixing activities keeps workouts fresh and reduces the risk of overuse, helping you stay consistent and energized.

DRINK MORE WATER

Recognizing the vital role of hydration in your daily life is key to enhancing both physical and mental health. Even slight dehydration can lead to reduced energy, mood swings, and impaired cognitive functions like memory and attention. [A recent study](#) involving college-aged males found that dehydration negatively impacted energy and self-esteem, while rehydration improved mood and cognitive performance. Despite its importance, many struggle to maintain adequate hydration due to busy lifestyles or forgetfulness. To address this, consider using reminders or apps to track your water intake, ensuring you meet your personal hydration needs based on your activity level and environment. 

Incorporating these strategies into your lifestyle can lead to profound improvements in your health and well-being. Each choice you make, from the food you eat to the water you drink, contributes to a healthier you. By prioritizing these practices, you not only enhance your own life but also contribute positively to the environment and future generations.

Discover the joy of walking with [America's Walking Club](#) and join a vibrant community dedicated to Fun, Fitness, and Friendship. Check out our exciting events and partnerships today!



Members of the National AVA Convention Committee met in Las Cruces to finalize plans for the 2025 convention. They also walked the International walk to Juarez, Mexico with representatives of Visit El Paso and Visita Juarez and found the walk pleasant and full of fun. They will post speakers at various point of interest along the route. Plus Visit El Paso and the Chihuahua government will sponsor the 50 cent and 40 cent bordere costs, to make the passage faster and easier





**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
ESTABLISHED 1976

Come Walk With Us!

AVA: America's Walking Club is a national walking organization located here in King William District. Join us for a walk and discover the fun we have, the fitness in walking, and the friendships we create. There are dozens of walks in the San Antonio area, and hundreds of walks in Texas and the U.S.A



**9 DAY WALKING FESTIVAL
IN LAS CRUCES, NM
APRIL 26 - MAY 4, 2025**

Everyone is invited to join America's Walking Club in the Las Cruces area. Choose a few days, or join us all 9 days to walk in Organ Mountains, state parks, El Paso, White Sands, Las Cruces & more. Get info: ava.org/2025-convention



**7 DAY WALKING CRUISE -
WESTERN CARRIBBEAN
NOVEMBER 15 - 22, 2025**

Walk with us in 5 ports and on ship, as we discover Belize, Honduras, Cozumel, Costa Maya, and New Orleans. Special AVA rates available from \$763.50 per person (double occupancy). Get info: rob@nwztravel.com



Find a local or national walk

ava.org

AVA: America's Walking Club

1032 S. Alamo | San Antonio, TX 78210 | 210.659.1212



BECOME A AVA MEMBER



AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

CLICK [HERE](#) TO JOIN



AMERICA'S
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39th Annual Spring Volksmarch June 7, 2025



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SEPTEMBER EDITION - DEADLINE JULY 25

DECEMBER EDITION - DEADLINE OCTOBER 25

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AVA IS AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB, WHICH IS THE LARGEST MEMBERSHIP WALKING ORGANIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

WE ARE DEDICATED TO PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLNESS BY PROVIDING FUN-FILLED, WELL-PLANNED AND INFORMATIVE WALKS. THESE WALKS ARE NON-COMPETITIVE, WHICH ALLOWS PARTICIPANTS TO WALK AT THEIR OWN PACE. WE ALSO HOST HIKES, BIKE RIDES, SWIM, AND IN SOME REGIONS, CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING AND SNOWSHOEING.

WE HAVE MORE THAN 180 CLUBS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES, WITH MORE THAN 2,500 EVENTS EACH YEAR. VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT AVA.ORG TO LOCATE A CLUB AND WALKS NEAR YOU.

AVA: AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
1008 S. ALAMO ST. AVA.ORG
(210) 659-2112



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