



# CHECKPOINT

[WWW.AVA.ORG](http://WWW.AVA.ORG)



## PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

### AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING NOTICE

The AVA National Board of Directors will meet Friday, June 5, 2026, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time. This will be a hybrid meeting. The in person meeting location is 512 Main Street, Suite 240, Rapid City, SD, in the offices of Visit Rapid City.

All AVA members and guests are invited to a Meet and Greet after the meeting from 4:00-6:00pm at a location to be announced in downtown Rapid City. No RSVP is required, cash bar. Check AVA Anniversary website page for an update on location.

For those unable to attend in person, the virtual meeting will be hosted on the Office 365 Teams platform. To access the meeting click on the link below. If you have problems accessing the meeting, please contact Hector at 210-659-2112 or email him at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org). The meeting link and agenda will be posted on the AVA website.

[Click here for the meeting link](#)

#### Board Meeting Deadlines:

**May 11, 2026:** Agenda items due to the Board Chairman, Carl Cordes, at [chairman@ava.org](mailto:chairman@ava.org). Please copy [henry@ava.org](mailto:henry@ava.org).

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

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

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

### SILVER SNEAKERS UPDATE

The AVA's Silver Sneakers partnership pilot walking program is moving forward and expected to launch by early Summer once the contract is signed. The program manager for the AVA is Suzanne Delle. If you have any questions, feel free to contact her at [suzanne@ava.org](mailto:suzanne@ava.org).

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We are grateful to the following AVA clubs who have confirmed participation in the program.

Smith Mountain Lake Walking Club  
 York White Rose Wanderers  
 Las Vegas High Rollers & Strollers  
 San Antonio Pathfinders

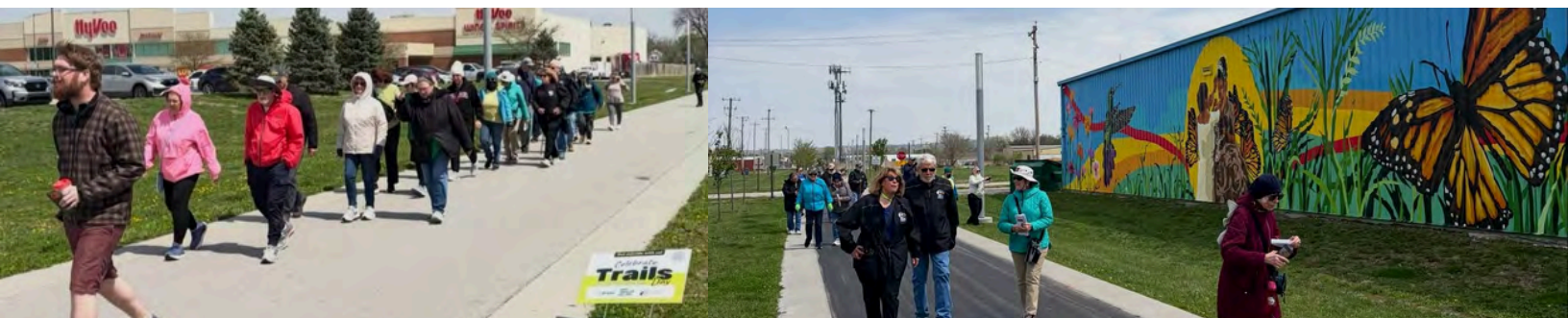
Kansas Jay Wakers  
 Nebraska Wander Freunde Trailblazers  
 Great Greenbelt Volksmarchers  
 Central Coast Beach Boardwalkers

**THANKS TO ALL AVA MEMBERS, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE KING WILLIAM PARADE! IT WAS ANOTHER REMARKABLE SUCCESS AT GETTING THE WORD OUT ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION**



**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE NEBRASKA TRAILBLAZERS CLUB FOR HOSTING A SPECTACULAR 50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY. ACCORDING TO SUZANNE MATYAS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIST FOR RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY;**

“We greatly appreciate your support in making this year's celebration extra special. Events and activities were planned in all 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico, and people visited trails all across America. In the lead-up to the celebration, we were excited to inspire people to hit the trails by sharing our [collaborative blog](#) about ways to engage with the AVA as well as highlights from your [50th anniversary event with the Nebraska Trailblazers](#)—thank you again for inviting us!”





## TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM EVENTS AT THE CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL VOLKSMARCH/UPDATE

Unfortunately, the AVA did not receive enough responses from members to warrant bus transportation to and from events in Rapid City for the Crazy Horse Memorial Volksmarch. Those individuals who did respond have been notified about the transportation situation. If anyone is interested in renting a car in Rapid City, here are a couple of recommendations.

Enterprise Rent A Car – 1254 E North Street, Rapid City, SD, 57701 605-399-9939

Casey's Auto Rental – 1318 5th Street, Rapid City, SD, 57701 605-343-227

## PROPER REPORTING OF EVENT PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE NO-SHOWS

Some clubs allow participants to pre-register and pre-pay for events and do not refund the registration fee if the participant cancels or does not attend. When this happens:

- Those participants should still be counted as non-credit participants for AVA reporting purposes.
- Counting only those who sign in, while still retaining pre-registration fees from no-show, results in underreported participation and causes the AVA to obtain less in participation fees than it should be receiving.

The only time no-shows who have pre-paid can be excluded from a participation report is when the club has issued a full refund to the participant.

Should you have any questions please contact Marian at [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org).

## PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

### PUBLICITY UPDATE

Congratulations to the Nebraska Trailblazers for a well-organized, fun weekend of walks April 17-19, in Council Bluffs, IA, Omaha, NE and Nebraska City, NE., celebrating AVA's 50th anniversary. They had 101 individuals from 18 states, with a cake, socials, and beautiful walks. It was nice that they offered group walks for both the 5K and 10K each day. While many people headed out on their own, half the walkers waited to walk with others. I met new people on the group walks, and truly enjoyed walking and talking. I know some of you don't have the volunteers to offer this, but if you do for your traditional or upcoming 50th anniversary walks, it's a great option to offer. The PhotoCircle app was also useful to share photos.



The next 50th anniversary event is based in Lake George, New York, May 16-20, hosted by the Empire State Capital Volkssporters. Sevens walks over five days, highlighting Revolutionary War Battle Sites. Pre-registration is available through May 10; afterward, you can register for walks at the start of each day's walks. Get more [info and register here](#).

June 6, 2026 is the 40th anniversary of the Crazy Horse Volksmarch... and we are celebrating as part of AVA's 50th anniversary. Crazy Horse Memorial® and the Black Hills Volkssport Association are working hard to present a fabulous morning of ceremonies to celebrate this 40th milestone, and to create a great walking event to the top of the monument. Thousands of walkers are expected to attend. Remember, bring 3 cans of food per person and \$4 for admission. The March TAW has information on all you need to know to attend Crazy Horse. [See page 5](#).

THANK YOU! to the many AVA clubs that participated in Celebrate Trails Day, to honor our partnership with [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#). I was told by one club that they had a couple of people show up at their event because of the RT promotion. If anyone mentioned Rails to Trails at your event, please let us know.

I hope you've been checking out [AVA's Group Page on Facebook](#). John McClellan has posted daily, either honoring a club in a region, or celebrating someone in the Hall of Fame, or doing a Member Profile, or something else to help celebrate AVA's 50th Anniversary in 2026. Please check our page each day, to see who/what is being honored. John has spent a lot of time to research and gather all this information. Thank you, John.



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

**NEW  
ARRIVAL**

## AVA FINANCE DIRECTOR - ERIN GROSSO COMMEMORATIVE CHALLENGE COIN FOR SALE



Join us as we celebrate our 50th Anniversary and 40 years of partnership and walking with the Crazy Horse Memorial Foundation.

We have been given a unique opportunity to offer a special Commemorative Challenge Coin featuring both milestones. This double-sided coin is available for \$10 and can be pre-ordered or purchased at the 2026 40th Annual Spring Volksmarch June 6, 2026.

[Commemorative Coin Order Form](#)

## AVA FINANCE CHAIR - SETH WERNER

### FINANCIAL HEALTH TIPS FOR LOCAL CLUBS

#### #8 Don't Rely on One Revenue Source

From the Desk of the National Finance Chair

When everyone's wearing multiple hats, finances can feel overwhelming. These tips are here to make things simpler and give your club a solid foundation.

#### *Diversify for Stability*

Depending on one grant or donor is risky. Build multiple income streams—events, small donors, partnerships.

#### Quick Start Checklist:

- ✓ Identify your top revenue source
- ✓ Brainstorm 2 new income ideas
- ✓ Start small and track results

Resource: Fundraising Ideas for Small Nonprofits  
– Candid: <https://fconline.foundationcenter.org>

## AVA SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR - AMANDA JAUREGUI



### MAY WEBINAR REMINDER

We hope you will join us for this month Wednesday Webinar on May 20th at 7pm CST! We will have two amazing speakers from the American Heart Association and iRun Texas to talk to us about heart health and the importance of a good walking shoe. You can [click here](#) to register here if you haven't already. Once you have registered for the Zoom meeting a link will be sent to the email you used to register.

## ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

### AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY STICKERS

To help celebrate the AVA's 50th Anniversary, we have a limited supply of commemorative 50th Anniversary stickers available to support your event promotion.

These stickers may be used however they work best for your event. A few fun ideas:

- Add them to flyers, postcards, or walk directions
- Include them in registration materials or welcome packets
- Hand them out to walkers as a keepsake
- Display them at your registration table to highlight your event's connection to our 50th Anniversary celebration

They're a simple way to add a little extra sparkle and help spread the word about your event being part of this milestone year. If you are interested in receiving the stickers, please e-mail [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org).

### AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE PASSPORT BOOK

#### Celebrate AVA's 50th Anniversary!

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

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

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

[Order Form](#)



### FINANCIALS

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

#### May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – The following items are due:

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

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

## CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR

### COME TO SPRINGFIELD IN 2027

Springfield Missouri that is!

Turns out there are 93 populated areas in the United States named Springfield. The location you should have your eyes on in 2027 is Springfield Missouri.

According to the US Geological Society the Springfield area in Missouri is the largest of the 93, followed closely by Springfield in Massachusetts, and Illinois.

Now is the time to start planning your visit to Springfield Missouri in 2027. The walking week and convention dates are June 28 - July 1. Pre-convention walks are being planned for the preceding weekend June 26 - 28. Post-convention walks and activities are being planned for July 2 - 4. Save these dates.

More information will be coming soon. Watch [AVA.org](http://AVA.org), future Checkpoint and The America Wanderer articles.



## MID-AMERICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR - BOB BUZOLICH

### ARE YA'LL READY TO WALK INTO HISTORY??

*MID-AMERICA REGION OFFERS*

*A SIGNATURE PR ACTIVITY FOR THE AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY*

Fun, Fitness and Friendship are high on the list for the planning the 2026 Mackinac Bridge Walk. So, why delay finalizing your plans for this much anticipated activity to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of America's Walking Club

The event brochure for this activity is attached to the public facing Electronic Sanction Request (ESR) for The Bridge Walk. The brochure provides full information for pre-registration. You may access the ESR by [clicking here](#).

If you believe The Bridge will be the only walking event, think again. The Mid-America Regional Director has a special walking event planned, which will entice your lust for thrills and adventure in Northern Michigan. Keep your eyes open for an additional short-term seasonal event opening on September 7 with a group guided walk.

As may be the case for an activity such as The Mackinac Bridge Walk and the Anniversary Celebration, volunteers are critical to support the activity and its goals. Volunteer sign up is now available through Signup Genius for the 2026 Mackinac Bridge Walk. The information at Signup Genius has been recently updated with respect to perks for the volunteers, to include when the volunteers may wish to do The Bridge Walk. The link to Signup Genius is provided by [clicking here](#).

Hoping to see many, many Volkspotters in Mackinaw City attracting attention to the activities of America's Walking Club.

Please direct questions to Bob Buzolich, the Mid-America Regional Director, via email to [ma\\_rd@ava.org](mailto:ma_rd@ava.org) or to [sonofbuzz@prodigy.net](mailto:sonofbuzz@prodigy.net).

## NATIONAL EVENTS

### GERMANIA OF POUGHKEEPSIE PRESENTS: MAIFEST 2026!

A fun, festive and authentic MAIFEST! will be held at Germania Festival Grounds, 51 Old DeGarmo Road, Poughkeepsie, NY! - Friday May 15, 5-10pm, Saturday May 16, 1pm-10pm, and Sunday May 17, Noon-5pm. Event features live German Bands, home cooked German Food, home baked German Desserts, Traditional German Beers, Children's Entertainment, Bavarian Folk Dancers, and Singers. Adult entry ticket \$5 daily, \$4 Veterans and Active Military with valid ID, children under 16 with parents, no charge.

This Event will be held RAIN or SHINE under tents. FREE PARKING!

Germania of Poughkeepsie, founded 1850, is a benevolent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit and 509(a)(2) charitable organization committed to the education of German heritage and culture. Germania hosts various authentic cultural events throughout the year including an annual Maifest, Oktoberfest, Christkindmarkt, Heritage Bake Sale, Biergartens, authentic German Friday Night dinners, Tavern Trail historical events, Wednesday Stammtisch, along with other events.

Over the past 176 years, Germania has hosted educational programs in music, sport, dance, and citizenship. Germania sponsors numerous "Sister Clubs" who also promote many educational and authentic cultural events. These include the Germania Singers, Germania Almrausch Schuhplattler Verein, Steuben Society of America Dr. Charles Gilbert Spross Unit #167, and the Germania Blue & White Soccer Club. Germania also sponsors German Language Classes, Ballroom Dancing Classes, Senior Line Dancing Classes, and a Volkssport Club.

Throughout the year Germania holds clothing, food, toy drives, as well as grants annual scholarships to BOCES CTI Culinary program graduates. Since the pandemic, Germania has donated over seven hundred German Friday and Saturday Take Out Dinners to area First Responders.

Germania supports the community by procuring goods and services through locally owned Hudson Valley businesses. The organization remains a 100% volunteer, private organization, and is actively looking to increase membership, along with Sponsorship and Event Vendors. Membership is open to individuals of all faiths and backgrounds.

Please visit [maifest2026 – Germania](#) for additional details, and Facebook [\(20+\) Facebook](#)

Contact Germania directly for further information, [president@germaniapok.com](mailto:president@germaniapok.com), call 845-471-0609 or visit [Germania – Willkommen](#)

-Only service animals please- SEE YOU AT MAIFEST 2026!

[Entertainment Schedule](#)

[Dessert Menu](#)

[Brathaus Menu](#)

[Main Menu](#)

**A Springtime Oktoberfest!**

**GERMANIA OF POUGHKEEPSIE**

# MAIFEST 2026

**MAY 15, 16, 17**

**BIER!**

**BRATWURST**

**PRETZELS**

**GAMES PRIZES CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES LOCAL VENDORS**

**RAIN OR SHINE**

**FUN FOOD FEST**

Doors Open: Fri, May 15th-5-10pm / Sat, May 16th-1pm-10pm / Sun, May 17th-12-5pm  
\$5.00 Daily Admission — 16 & under FREE - \$1.00 discount for Veterans/Military with ID

**FREE PARKING!**

GERMANIA FESTPLATZ  
51 OLD DEGARMO ROAD  
POUGHKEEPSIE, NY 12603

**GERMANIAPOK.COM**

MUSIC BY  
BERNIE'S ORCHESTRA  
MARIA & JOHN BAND  
DAVE BETZ BAND  
THE ADLERS BAND

BAVARIAN FOLK DANCES  
BY  
Germania Almrausch Schuhplattler Verein & Kindergruppe  
OMA'S FAMOUS GERMAN BAKED GOODIES!

NATIONAL EVENTS



Click here to go to 50th Anniversary Page

**First State Webfooters Walking Club**  
Est. 1981

**DOVER WALK DE250**  
5K & 10K

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

**SAVE THE DATE**

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

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

AMERICA 250 DE250 1776-2026 AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

**Dover**

For more information: Google website: firststatewebfooters.org  
Email: [info@firststatewebfooters.org](mailto:info@firststatewebfooters.org) POC Kathy Kresko 302-339-0097

50th Anniversary Celebrating 50 Years of Walking

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

**Come Walk WITH US!**

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

**Celebrating 25 Years 2002-2026**

An International Walking Experience

Walk Arlington

IMI International Mountain Incentive

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB Volksmarching at its Best



Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

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



The American Volkssport Association

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



1032 S Alamo St · San Antonio, TX 78210, [ava.org](http://ava.org), Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 Message US.