

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
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CHECKPOINT

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PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING NOTICE

The AVA National Board of Directors will meet Thursday, November 19, 2026, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Central Time Zone. This will be a virtual meeting on the Office 365 Teams platform.To access the meeting click on the link below. If you have problems accessing the meeting, please contact Hector at 210-659-2112 or email him a hector@ava.org. The meeting link will also be posted on the AVA website with the agenda.

Click here for the meeting link.

BOARD MEETING DEADLINES:

November 9, 2026: Officers, Board Members, and Committee reports and all supplemental documents for the board meeting are due at AVA National Office. Email reports and all supporting documents to henry@ava.org

November 13, 2026: Board meeting information package emailed to Board Members and Deputy Directors.

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324 HEARTS, ONE MISSION: THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT

Because of your generosity, belief in our mission, and commitment to our community, our Annual Individual Donor Campaign, The Big Give, was an incredible success. Together, **324 donors contributed $124,694**, making a meaningful investment in the future of our organization.

To our clubs, members, and individual donors, we extend our deepest gratitude. Your support strengthens our ability to serve, grow, and create opportunities that make a lasting difference.

What makes this achievement especially meaningful is not just the dollars raised, but the spirit behind them. It reflects a community of people who care deeply, who believe in the power of connection, and who are willing to step forward to ensure our mission continues to thrive.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your investment in our future. We are grateful for each and every one of you and look forward to continuing this important work together.

CANDIDATES FOR SECRETARY REQUESTED

Have you considered being Secretary of AVA: America's Walking Club? Now is the time to speak up and put your name on the ballot.

The current Secretary is "term limited" and will be unable to serve as Secretary after our biennial convention in Springfield, Missouri.

Click here to view Responsibilities.

JUST THREE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTEND A 50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT!

Congratulations to Dolores Grenier and the many club members and volunteers whose hard work and dedication helped make the 25th Annual Freedom Walk Festival in Arlington, Virginia a tremendous success. We also extend our sincere congratulations to Terri Tyler and the club members and volunteers who supported the Halloween Kicks on Route 66 50th Anniversary Walk, helping create a memorable celebration of this important milestone. Both events were part of the AVA's 50th Anniversary Celebration.







There's still time to be part of our 50th Anniversary Celebration! With just three events remaining, Tampa Bay, Florida, and Dayton, Ohio in November, followed by our grand finale in Helen, Georgia in December. We hope to see you on the trails!

2027 AVA CONVENTION HOTEL BOOK TODAY – UNIVERSITY PLAZA HOTEL, SPRINGFIELD, MO

There are still plenty of rooms at the University Plaza Hotel which is the host hotel for the AVA's 2027 Biennial Convention in Springfield, MO. The room rate is $120/single or double, $130/for a triple, and $140 for a quad. The room rate includes breakfast for two people. Additional breakfast passes are available at $10.00 per person. Parking is free! Reserve your rooms soon before it is too late because with this excellent rate rooms will go quickly. Should you have problems booking online, call the hotel at (417) 864-7333 and advise them you are with the American Volkssport Association or contact Henry at henry@ava.org.

Click Below to Book Your Room!

https://reservations.travelclick.com/17728?groupID=5234055

CALL FOR 2027 AVA WALK FESTIVAL AND CONVENTION WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

If you are interested or know of anyone who may be interested in presenting a fun, educational, and engaging workshop to our members and attendees on any subject related to the work we do or walking in general, please send an email to Henry with the information requested below. The workshop date is Thursday, July 1, 2027, between the hours of 1:00-5:00pm. All workshops are a maximum of 45 minutes.

Please put ***Convention Workshop*** on the subject line and include:

Title of Workshop and a summary of the workshop content with learning objectives
Total time requested with Q&A
AV equipment needed
Cost for your services or supplies for the workshop, if any
Room set up
Please answer these two questions:

1. How will you engage your participants in the workshop?

2. How does your workshop promote Health and Wellness?

AVA NATIONAL OFFICE HOLIDAY CLOSURES AND CLUB GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

The National Office will be closed for the seasonal holidays on the following dates:

November 26-27, 2026 Thanksgiving Holiday

December 24, 2026 – January 3, 2027 Christmas and New Year's Holidays

Please advise clubs to make sure they have received event stamps before December 14th for events that occur during the last two weeks in December and first week of January. If they have not received these stamps or need help with sanctioning, please contact Hector at hector@ava.org.

All AVA events are insured through December 31, 2026. The AVA is currently soliciting quotes from insurance carriers for 2027 coverage. This process is time-consuming and dependent on how quickly carriers respond to our broker for requested coverage. The AVA is aware of the urgency and doing everything possible to insure all events before January 1st, 2027. If you have an event in January and need a certificate of additional insurance, please make sure you have submitted an insurance request through the my.ava.org sanction website so we can track your request.

Should something urgent arise regarding insurance, please contact Hector at herctor@ava.org and copy henry@ava.org Please put Insurance on the subject line.

BIG GIVE COMMITTEE - SAMANTA SANCHEZ, CHAIR

TOGETHER, WE MADE IT HAPPEN!



With hearts full of gratitude, we are thrilled to announce the incredible success of our annual fundraiser, the Big Give 2026. Thanks to your unwavering belief in our mission, we've surpassed our $100,000 goal, raising an incredible $124,694 with the help of 324 generous donors. Every single one of you played a vital role in making a lasting impact, and for that, we are sincerely grateful.

We extend a special thank you to our AVA Board Chair, Carl Cordes, whose generous $50,000 match in honor of our 50th anniversary doubled the impact of your contributions. Your generosity truly knows no limits. Additionally, we celebrate our ten dedicated Peer-to-Peer fundraisers, who together raised a phenomenal $20,754.

Your generous gifts will transform lives and communities. We can't wait to share more updates with you, including the announcement of our Regional Challenge winner and AVA prize recipients. Thank you for paving the path to a healthier tomorrow. Stay tuned for more exciting news!

If you missed the chance to donate online, don't worry. You can contribute by mailing your donation to the American Volkssport Association at 1032 S Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210. Stay tuned to our social media channels and the upcoming issues of the Checkpoint for more updates on the Big Give.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

PUBLICITY UPDATE

What a wonderful, busy last few weeks it's been! Just in October, we had two 50th anniversary events, an IML in Canada, and several 3-day festivals that were available in all parts of the country. This is why we love volkswalking!






For the 50th events, congratulations to U.S. FreedomWalk Festival in Arlington, VA and Washington D.C. Oct 16-18. The group hosted 278 individuals from 26 states and 17 countries, with almost 800 registered participation. The Viking Strollers won the Golden Boot Award, and Terri Tyler (South Central RD) won volunteer of the year. So many more awards, too. Again, congrats to the club for another wonderful annual IML event.







Terri Tyer then had a couple of days to get to Missouri to begin the 'Halloween Klicks on Route 66' walks – 10 walks over 5 days in Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma Oct 28-Nov 1. Over 60 people from 21 states joined the fun, hosted by the Sunflower Sod Stompers, Tulsa Walking Club, Wandergruppe Walking Club, and Dogwood Trailblazers. There was a group dinner every night, and the embroidered goody bags were fabulous. Several museums/theaters were open in each Route 66 city for us to tour and rest.

There are SIX people who have attended all 14 events so far, and plan to attend the last 3 events, too. What an accomplishment! Kudos to Susan Budd, Diane Howell Evans, Frank and Sherry Sayers, and Gale and Klaus Waibel.

If you can still join one of the last three 50th anniversary events, you're showing support to the clubs who have worked hard to ensure great events: Walk Around Florida Nov. 6-8, in Bradenton, FL, hosted by Suncoast Sandpipers, Happy Wanderers, and Mid-Florida Milers; OWF Honoring Veterans Event, Nov. 14 in Dayton, OH, hosted by the Ohio Wander Freunde; and Weihnachten Christmas Lights Evening Walk, Dec. 5 in Helen, GA.

Clubs: make your plans to have a group walk on Opt Out Day, the day after Thanksgiving November 27, 2026. We'll post your walk on a special page on the AVA website, plus promote on social media. Fill out the form here.

I saw three areas of the country are having New Year's Eve/Day multi-day events: Savage, MD; Fredericksburg, TX; and Seattle, WA. Get more info. If you're having a New Year's Eve or Day event, please promote on AVA Facebook.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, AVA CONVENTION COMMITTEE CHAIR

2027 AVA WALKING WEEK AND BIENNIAL CONVENTION – REGISTRATION, FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, VOLUNTEERING AND SILENT AUCTION INFORMATION

Registration: Registration for the 2027 Walking Festival and AVA Biennial Convention is planned to become available on Monday, November 9. The first edition of answers to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) should also be available on Monday, November 9. *Go to AVA.org to access both.* Registrations are confirmed after payment is made either by credit card, or by personal check. Confirmation for those paying by check is when payment is received. Those paying by check will be asked that mailed checks arrive within two (2) weeks after completing information on-line.

There will be updates to the FAQs over the coming weeks. We are planning on weekly updates most Thursdays beginning November 12 as information is confirmed.

Volunteering to Help Put on a Great Walking Festival and Biennial Convention: During on-line registering you will be able to express interest in volunteering during the pre-, post- and Walking Festival events. After answering "Yes" to the Volunteer question, you will be contacted by the volunteer coordinator to lock in volunteer times and locations around your schedule in Missouri and Arkansas.

Silent Auction to Help Fund this AVA Event: If you choose to participate by donating a Silent Auction item / basket, a separate button will be available on AVA.org, under the Convention section, allowing you to provide information on a Silent Auction Basket. You can bring or ship items to the Convention Hotel in Springfield MO. Soon Silent Auction details will be added to the FAQs.

General questions can be sent via email to: Convention@AVA.org

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

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - DIANE HOWELL EVANS, CHAIR



UPDATES

You can view all the current and new 2027 Special Programs information on the AVA website at:

Current Special Programs: cb.ava.org/specprog.php
New Special Programs beginning January 1, 2027: cb.ava.org/futureprog.php

The deadline for 2028 Special Program proposals has been extended to January 15, 2027. For information on the proposal process, please contact Diane Howell Evans at: Programs@ava.org

AVA 50th Anniversary Signature Events, 17 in all, are almost over. The previous 14 have been outstanding and offered terrific walks, socials and attractions in their regions! The last three are November 6-8 in Bradenton FL, November 14th in Dayton OH and December 5th in Helen GA. For more information, please view the AVA website at: 50th Anniversary – AVA.

AVA SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR - AMANDA JAUREGUI



MAKE SURE YOU CHECK IN TO OUR NOVEMBER WEBINAR!

Make sure you mark your calendar for this month's Wednesday Webinar on November 18th at 7pm CST! The 2027 AVA Biennial Convention Committee will be talking about the upcoming convention: what you can expect, what we have planned, and answering any questions you may have. We will then hear from the remaining 50th anniversary event hosts about their upcoming events. You can register here if you aren't already: https://ava.org/monthly-webinar/.

GRAB YOUR HEATED APPAREL AND A DEAL!

Venustas Heated Apparel is an online merchandise store that sells heated apparel. Venustas has been featured by leading media outlets worldwide, earning recognition for continuous innovation, trusted performance, and a strong commitment to bringing warmth and comfort to everyday life. AVA Members can now purchase apparel from Venustas and enjoy $30 off on their first purchase plus a $10 gift card.

To shop the deal, use this link: https://venustas.com/collections/partner-community-exclusive and enter code AVA07 at checkout.



ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

2027 CENTURION ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE:

The 2027 program begins January 1, 2026. You must be an AVA Individual Member (annual or lifetime) to participate in the Challenge. Eligible participants may register for the 2027 Challenge between October 1, 2026 and September 30, 2027 using the official registration form. Please mail forms to AVA, 1032 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210, or e-mail to Marian@ava.org.

Centurion Challenge Instructions

Centurion Challenge Form

FINANCIAL

If your club's fiscal year ends on 6-30-26, it is time to file your 990 E-Postcard, Annual Financial Report (AFR), and update your club officers. The reports can be filed after July 1, 2026, but before the November 15, 2026 deadline. An IRS user guide, and the AVA Retention policy for financial and event records have been posted on the AVA website under "Clubs Only". Please submit a copy of your filings to Marian@ava.org.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE – KEN JOHNSON, MEMBER

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

December 1, 2026 is the deadline for submission of National awards to the committee. Help recognize the individuals, clubs, and organizations whose service sustains and grows AVA. Nominations should be submitted through your Regional Director on AVA Form 302 for approval.The Regional Director will then submit to the Awards and Recognition Committee by email to awards@ava.org.

No nominations have been received for the Ted Ballman Memorial Youth Award since the 2021 AVA convention. The award recognizes an individual or organization inside or outside of AVA that has enhanced or promoted youth walking (Volkessport) programs. Help recognize those who bring young walkers into the sport.

PROCEDURE FOR NATIONAL AWARDS

Per the AVA policy Manual, page 2 of 4, J.3-4; page 3 of 4, K1
J. Nominations
3. The AVA Awards and Recognition Committee Chair will review all nominations to determine if they are complete and then forward the information to the committee members as soon as possible after the December 1 deadline. All incomplete or unsigned forms will be returned to the respective Regional Director for correction. The Regional Director will obtain corrections from the nominator, if necessary. The Regional Director will be allowed ten calendar days to resolve the problem and resubmit to the Awards and Recognition Committee Chair. If the problem is not resolved within that time frame, the nomination will be considered withdrawn by the Regional Director.

4. The AVA Awards and Recognition Committee Chair will submit the nominations and committee recommendations to the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the Board after January 1 of the year of the AVA Biennial Convention.

K. Selection and Presentation
Page 3 of 4
1.The Awards and Recognition Committee Chair and/or the Board Liaison will present each nomination and Committee recommendation for the Board of Directors to review. Submitted nomination forms are confidential and will be presented in Executive Session.

THE ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

As a Standing Committee of the BOD, the Awards and Recognition Committee is responsible for coordinating and completing procedures for the nomination and distribution of awards for clubs, individuals and organizations through the Board and CEO.

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION

For questions about national or regional awards, contact your Regional Director or awards@ava.org.



AVA'S FINAL 50th Anniversary Event



2nd Annual

WEIHNACHTEN 5K CHRISTMAS WALK

SATURDAY, DEC. 5, 2026 – HELEN, GA

This annual Bavarian Village Style Evening Walk will take you through the many lighted Christmas decorations, scenic parks, and Bavarian-style buildings in beautiful Helen, Georgia, and may remind you of strolls through Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

You can register on site and begin walking the 5K anytime between 5:00 p.m – 6:30 p.m at Loreley Resort's Clubhouse - 387 Brucken Strasse

All participants must sign and date the AVA Official Event Start Card (Waiver) registration form prior to participation in the walk event.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

50th Anniversary AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

ALPINEHELENVOLKSMARCH.ORG



IT SPECIALIST – HECTOR HERNANDEZ



#OptOutside

For those Clubs who wish to participate in OptOutside this year, AVA will gladly post your events on the website and Facebook. Please fill out the form by clicking the image to the left. This year Black Friday will land on November 27th, 2026 so I will need all submissions for participating Clubs and events to be sent in by November 15, 2026. Please email hector@ava.org for any questions or help with events.

NATIONAL EVENTS

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

Click here to go to 50th Anniversary Page





Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

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

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
ESTABLISHED 1976

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, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 Message US.