



# CHECKPOINT

The official voice of the American Volkssport Association

*AVA: America's Walking Club*

Volume 26, Number 4

[www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org)

April 2017



## NEC News

### Transition of Leadership—Dennis A. Michele, President, AVA

**NEC Members Meet and Greet Reception** – I am inviting **all NEC members** whether they be departing, returning or becoming a new member of the NEC to join me for a *Meet and Greet Reception* immediately following the General Membership meeting on Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the AVA convention. During this time, I will provide brief instruction on the transition of leadership to include dates, timelines, completion of required paperwork and other pertinent information for NEC members. We will also use this time to take photos of the new NEC members. Join me in welcoming our new members and bidding farewell to our departing members.

**NEC Orientation August 2017-** In order to provide as much time for planning and travel as possible, I have concurred with the two current candidates for AVA President who are in agreement to conduct NEC member training and orientation August 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> in San Antonio, Texas. Travel dates should be August 9<sup>th</sup> (arrival before 5pm) and August 13<sup>th</sup> (departure after 12 noon). More details will be made available following the election results at Convention during the Meet and Greet reception for NEC members.

### Important NEC Meeting Deadlines for the June 2017 Convention

***Call to Clubs for Agenda Items***

**April 08, 2017** (60 days before meeting): Clubs email Agenda Items to Regional Directors.

**April 18, 2017** (50 days before meeting): Agenda Items from Regional Directors due to AVA National Headquarters.

**April 23, 2017** (45 days before meeting): Final list of official Agenda Items sent to AVA Clubs and Regional Directors.

**April 23, 2017** (45 days before meeting): All submissions for the Convention Awards Booklet must be submitted to the Awards Committee Chair, Linda Neu at [ma\\_rd@ava.org](mailto:ma_rd@ava.org)

**May 8, 2017** (30 days before meeting): Officer's, Regional Director's and Committee written reports are due at AVA National Headquarters, will also appear in Biennial Report (*500 word limit please*).

**May 17, 2017** (21 days before meeting): Meeting information package emailed to NEC members.

**AVA NEC Officer's Reports and Committee Reports:**

[Click here for Agenda Items Form](#)

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

The next NEC meeting will be Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017 from 11:00a.m. – 1:45p.m. in Billings, Montana preceding the convention. The meeting room will be **Parlor 1001**. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

The AVA General Membership meeting will be on Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017 from 2:00p.m. -5:00p.m., Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> from 2:30p.m. – 5:30p.m. and Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00p.m. – 5:30p.m. The meeting room will be the **Stillwater Room**.

**All meetings will be at the Red Lion Hotel and Convention Center, 1223 Mallowney Lane, Billings, Montana 59101.**

## Deadline to submit all printed materials for the Convention

The deadline to submit all articles, reports, adds, pictures, names, events, etc., that will go in the 20<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention Biennial Report, Awards Booklet or Convention Program is April 23, 2017. This date has been set so all convention booklets can be printed in a timely fashion for the convention. Please do not miss this deadline if you want to ensure your information gets into one of these booklets. All information should be sent to Hector at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).

## If you haven't already—Necrology List

If you wish to add any names to the Necrology page for the Convention in June. The deadline date is April 23, 2017. Please email to Karen at [karen@ava.org](mailto:karen@ava.org).

**REMINDER -  2019 AVA Convention Application Due April 15<sup>th</sup>!**

The application for the 2019 AVA convention has been released. Any AVA club or group of clubs or state association is eligible to apply to host the 2019 convention. The deadline to submit a proposal is April 15, 2017 at midnight Central time zone. For full details [click here](#).

**Convention Chairperson—Sherry Sayers**

## **YOU STILL HAVE TIME TO PRE-REGISTER!**

Go to <http://2017AVAConvention.org> and select the new 'Registration' tab. You may have to refresh the page to see it. This will take you to the information you need to register successfully for the upcoming convention in Billings. Please read the page carefully. When ready, select to register for the full convention, or to select individual items.

Please read everything carefully. It can be a bit complicated, as I have attempted to save you some money with the registration process. Please email [Chairperson@2017AVAConvention.org](mailto:Chairperson@2017AVAConvention.org) if you encounter any issues, or have questions.



When you are registering, in order to get your discount code, you will enter either LifeMember or AnnualMember (not your volkssport number). This will go on the summary page. The discount is only for the full registration package, not the individual package. Please email [info@2017AVAConvention.org](mailto:info@2017AVAConvention.org) for any questions or call 719-640-6744. Sorry for any confusion.

***If you are registering by mail please make your check payable to AVA  
Convention and mail your checks to the AVA HQ at:***

**American Volkssport Association  
1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101  
Universal City, TX 78148**

## **20<sup>th</sup> AVA Convention in Billings 2017 -- Update**

As promised in the last Checkpoint, here is the information you will need for our special party happening in Buffalo. The Occidental Hotel's owner, Dave Stewart, is offering a special Sunday edition of its very popular Thursday night jam on Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, especially for the AVAers who will be in town. An accomplished singer, songwriter, and musician himself, Dave brings strummers, crooners, and fiddlers together for lively entertainment - and you're invited to join in the fun. Great food and a wide range of beverages are on tap at the hotel and at other Buffalo restaurants, including Pie Zanos (authentic Italian cuisine), Clear Creek Cantina (a taste of Mexico), and the Bozeman Steakhouse. So, mosey into town hungry!

In addition, the Jim Gatchell Museum (located right downtown) will be open for tours on Sunday and Monday (June 4th and 5th). The museum houses a wide variety of Indian artifacts, pioneer and battle-field history of the area, and even a ghost from days of yore. Mountain Meadow Wool Factory, the TA Ranch and Historic Fort McKinney will also be offering free tours. For a schedule of tour times and places, contact Lois Petersen at [lois.petersen@gmail.com](mailto:lois.petersen@gmail.com). Lois also had an excellent article in the April/May TAW that goes into more detail on Buffalo, so check it out. She has worked very hard to organize these events, so I'm hoping lots of walkers will take advantage of these neat things to do in Buffalo on Sunday and Monday.

Besides the awesome convention walk on the Mentock Trail, there are also two other walks in Buffalo, as well as a new seasonal in Sheridan, which is one of the new Walk Wyoming county walks sponsored by the Black Hills Volkssport Association. Go to [www.bhva.org](http://www.bhva.org) to check out this new program. It sounds like a lot of fun and I'm hoping to fill up my book. You must walk in eight counties in 2017, and the two convention events in Buffalo and Cody already qualify, so how cool is that?! Sorry, I got a little off topic here – I'm just so excited for everybody to discover the hidden treasures in beautiful Wyoming and Montana!

Thanks to everybody who has already registered for the convention. Pre-registration will close at midnight on April 30.

## Radisson Hotel Still Has Rooms For The Convention

A second block of rooms for the 2017 AVA Convention was reserved with the Radisson Hotel Billings. We have blocked room nights for June 6-9 at a discounted group rate of \$89.95++ per night. For those arriving early or departing late, the discounted rate will be honored three days prior and three days post-convention. Rooms are still available. Don't miss out!

To make your reservations: please dial 1-800-333-3333 or 406-248-7701. Make sure to mention the group block code 0606AVASSO to get your discounted rate. Stay tuned for hotel updates on Facebook and the Convention Website.

Radisson Hotel Billings

5500 Midland Road

Billings, MT 5910

## Don't forget to vote for the AVA Mascot at the Convention!

AVA Clubs will vote at the 2017 Convention during the general membership meeting for the new AVA Mascot. For more information contact Susan Medlin at [sw\\_rd@ava.org](mailto:sw_rd@ava.org)



**Click on image to view Mascots.**

**Bike Committee—Tom Jackson, Chair**

## Bicycle Rentals at the AVA Convention

Bicycle rentals (with helmets) will be available at the Red Lion Hotel in Billings. The cost is \$25 for a three hour period. Bicycles can be rented during these times:

- Wednesday, June 7: 10 am – 3 pm (return by 6 pm)
- Thursday, June 8: 8 am – 3 pm (return by 6 pm)
- Friday, June 9: 11 am – 3 pm (return by 6 pm)

Volkssporters may reserve a bike after May 7 by calling The Spoke Shop at 406-656-8342. A credit card must be used to pay the full amount. If the reservation is later cancelled, there will only be a 50% refund. If making a reservation for someone else, make sure you know their height.

For more information, contact Tom Jackson at [thomasjackson@embarqmail.com](mailto:thomasjackson@embarqmail.com).



“Volsbikers celebrating Veteran’s Day 2016 with a ride on the W&OD Trail between Leesburg and Purcellville, VA”. Photo courtesy of Tom Jackson.

## Standards and Evaluations—Suzi Glass, Chair

### AVA Best Practices -- Start Point Meet & Greet

Welcome every walker, but *especially* first time attendees and new club members. At Membership Committee Jeanne Miller’s club, there is a “welcome ambassador” a nice, out-going person that greets and helps newcomers. John McLellan’s club links newcomers with a club member. During Traditional events In Betty Green’s club, groups leave on guided walks at specific times so beginning participants do not walk alone. Turn every Traditional Start Point into a Meet & Greet.

## Programs Committee—Debra Kruep, Chair

Remember to keep #optoutside (Black Friday) in your plans for 2018. Let’s see if we can double the amount of club participation to 66 clubs!

AVA and Navigators USA scouts have connected in the following states: Georgia, South Carolina, Colorado, Wisconsin, Indiana, Missouri, Nevada and Virginia. If you are called by the program committee to host a Walk Together with your local chapter, please say YES. It is so easy and the program committee will help you.

We are still looking for 4 more clubs to volunteer for a pilot program working with your local grade school. This would require one or



Gateway Milers World Bird Sanctuary Walk in St. Louis, MO on 11/12/16. This was also a designated Girl Scout "Walk Together" entitled Ramble with the Raptors. Photo courtesy of Debra Kruep

two club members to walk with your local grade school once or twice a week before or after school culminating in a large walking event at the end of the school year. To find out more information or volunteer, email Deb Kruep at [avayouth@ava.org](mailto:avayouth@ava.org).

## **North Central Regional Director—Jerry Wilson**

### **National Program: Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail Distance Program**

We were delayed getting the Wisconsin Ice Age Trail Distance Program off-the-ground in 2017. This national program will run each year April 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>, however this first year will start a little later. We anticipate sending the national program event book to print in May, and we are working on loading maps and documentation to the on-line registration box system.

Updates will be shared in future Checkpoints. If you have questions please address them to Jerry Wilson, North Central Regional Director at [NC\\_RD@AVA.org](mailto:NC_RD@AVA.org).

## **OLSB Support—Mike Green**

### **The Online Start Box**

This is the third of a series of articles that will help you understand the capabilities of the OLSB (Online Start Box). This article discusses the club management interface for the OLSB. At this time there are 16 different clubs sponsoring 48 AVA events that use the OLSB. Any club that does not already have an OLSB walk for 2017 and is interested in sanctioning an AVA event that would employ the OLSB should contact either Chris Zegelin or Mike Green.

*[Click here to view full article on how to setup your OLSB!](#)*

## **AVA National Office Team**

## **Awards and Membership Coordinator—Karen Winkle**

To view the Monthly Comparison Chart for the Total Number of Awards processed [click here](#).

May Physical Fitness ([order form](#)) patches and October ([order form](#)) patches are available.

Limited amount WWD patches are still available on a first come first serve basis.

SNOB books will be ending December 31, 2018. You will receive a book in your Convention Packet. You can start and complete your book in one week!

If you have not received your validated books back in a timely manner, it may be due to a shortage of pins or patches. My orders for them have been kept low due to the changes in the IVV. We will continue to issue our current levels. Right now, I am out of 1700E, 6000k, and 15000k. They should be here shortly.

## Information and Technology Specialist—Hector Hernandez

*Fun fact: It would take, on average, 1 hour and 43 minutes of walking to burn off a 540-calorie Big Mac.*

### Walks to Remember

Who has the good weather this time of year? What is your club's famous walk coming up for the month of May? Email your club's walks information to [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org) and we will help market your walk.

### Publicity Contest

Thank you everyone for your submissions of photos, websites, brochures and newsletters. The Publicity Contest committee is reviewing them as we speak. If you have submitted an entry please see the link to the pdf on the right to make sure I have received it. If your name is not on the list please email me as soon as you can at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).

[Publicity Contest Entries](#)



**TO UNDERSTAND THE  
JOURNEY YOU HAVE TO  
DO THE WALKING**

BRYANT H MCGILL  
PICTUREQUOTES.COM

### Starting Point Changes

Please remember to make all changes within your ESR and then send to Hector. The website will be updated weekly. Email changes to [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org).

*Click here for this months [Starting Point Changes](#)*

**Reminder: Please update all Club and contact info in your ESR asap to make sure you get all your important updates.**

## Communications—Samanta Sanchez

### Events—Don't Miss the Deadline!

Don't miss the deadline to submit your 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter YRE Participation Reports for period ending March 31, 2017. Please complete your reports by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Clubs won't be able to submit participation numbers through the ESR after this date. Clubs who miss the deadline must call or email [jessica@ava.org](mailto:jessica@ava.org) or [samanta@ava.org](mailto:samanta@ava.org) to submit participation numbers. A late fee will be applied. Thank you!

## Notify the AVA

To hold traditional events, it's preferable that events are sanctioned at least 90 days prior to the event date. This time allows us to prepare and mail out stamps in a timely manner. It also allows us time to get your event in the TAW. If the event is in less than 90 days and it has been approved by your Regional Director, please have them notify [jessica@ava.org](mailto:jessica@ava.org) or [samanta@ava.org](mailto:samanta@ava.org) by email or call the ava office as soon as possible. Thank you!

## The Joy of Giving

The Big Give 2017 is less than a month away!!! On **May 4<sup>th</sup>**, celebrate with us the joy of giving by visiting the Big Give website at <https://www.thebiggivesa.org/organizations/american-volkssport-association-inc> and making a small contribution to the AVA. Help us reach our \$60,000 goal by making a gift to your favorite walking organization - AVA: America's Walking Club. With AVA, you're not only improving your physical health, but you are also creating long lasting friendships all while rediscovering the world around you. Help us continue to bring Fun, Fitness and Friendship to our community by making a small contribution to the AVA on May 4th through the Big Give! Don't want to wait that long? This year, donations can be made through the Big Give website beginning *April 27!* THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE BIG GIVE 2017!

To donate by check mail to:  
American Volkssport Association  
1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101  
Universal City, Texas 78148

big  
give

"Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness that you are able to give." – Eleanor Roosevelt



## Finance Manager—Erin Grosso

### CONVENTION 2017 – Reminders

#### DELEGATE SELECTION AND PROXY DESIGNATION

##### *Credentialing:*

The 2017 Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation Forms have been mailed out to every person listed in the data base as the official POC for every club and state association. Please read this form carefully.

***If you have not received this form, please contact Headquarters.***

The form consists of a white, yellow, and pink self-carbon form. All three must be returned to the AVA with a post mark date no later than May 8, 2017 to the address on the form. After verification, ***all credentialing forms will be maintained and taken by the National Office to the convention. They will not be mailed back to the club.*** If the deadline is missed, the three copies need to be brought to the credentialing booth at the convention by the delegate, alternate, or proxy. However, the club must be in good standing as of **April 24, 2017**, which is 45 days prior to the first membership meeting. In Good Standing means that all reports have been received on time. These reports include the Quarterly Reports, Annual Financial Report, Officer Update Report, E-Post Card and participation reports. Also, any stamps that are due to be returned and payment of outstanding balances must be received in AVA HQ by April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

*All 2017 Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation forms (AVA Form 500) may be picked up at the Credentials booth at the Convention.*

## AVA's Executive Director's Update—Henry Rosales

### NOTICE OF AVA'S NEW PRIVACY POLICY ON THE COLLECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last June the NEC approved the creation of a Privacy Policy so that certain personal data collected by the AVA could be shared with club presidents, state association presidents and Regional Directors and used only for dissemination of information related to AVA services and activities. It is important to note this information does not include any personal financial information and anyone can opt out at any time should they not want their information shared by contacting Karen at the AVA National office or by sending an email notice that you do not want your information shared to [optout@ava.org](mailto:optout@ava.org)

It is equally important to note that if this information is misused by clubs it could result in termination of membership. Unfortunately, AVA procedures on the release of this information will not be released until May because they are still awaiting approval from our legal counsel. Look for the procedures in the May Checkpoint. A copy of the privacy policy and procedures will be mailed to all AVA Associate and Lifetime members as well as posted on the AVA website.

Please see the AVA Privacy Policy for our information sharing practices located on our website, [www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org) or you may [click here](#) to review it.

### \*Training Opportunities for Clubs During the 20<sup>th</sup> AVA Biennial Convention

Please advise club members who are responsible for using the ESR to attend the AVA Tech Bar Training Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. in the Rosebud Room. This training is critical for all clubs because participants will learn how to use the new AVA database.

Another very important workshop for club members to attend is the **HQ Operations Workshop**. This workshop will take place on Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 7a.m. It is recommended by the AVA National Office that all club members responsible for club finances, club policies and club operations attend this workshop. Join us for a fun and engaging workshop and enjoy a cup of coffee with the AVA National Office team.

For a complete listing of all AVA convention workshops [click here](#).

### National office welcomes newest member.



Hi, my name is Jessica! I am very excited to be the newest member of the AVA team! Although I may be new to the AVA, I am not new to the nonprofit world. My mom has been the CEO of the Epilepsy Foundation Central & South Texas for over twenty years! I have seen first-hand the importance of nonprofits, and all the hard work that goes into planning events and making sure they run smoothly. I will be supporting the AVA National Office on a part time basis with events and clerical work. I am still learning the ropes so please be patient with me; I look forward to working with everyone! My AVA email is... [Jessica@ava.org](mailto:Jessica@ava.org)

I will also be in charge of this year's peer-to-peer page setup for the Big Give. If you need any help or assistance, please let me know. What is peer to peer? Peer to Peer is a way to spread the word

amongst your friends, family and colleagues about donating money online for AVA through the Big Give (April 27—May 4, 2017). Once you set up your Peer to Peer page you can spread the word via social media or email. If you have any questions regarding Peer to Peer please contact [jessica@ava.org](mailto:jessica@ava.org).

## Support Our National and International Friends!

National

International

Checks can be mailed in  
April 1—May 31, 2017

big  
give

Online Giving Day

May 4th!



Click image for more information.

### Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send us an email to the attention of Samanta requesting that you be put on our distribution list for the Checkpoint. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint. Send your request to Samanta at [samanta@ava.org](mailto:samanta@ava.org).



Fun, Fitness, Friendship



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.

