

Walkers from three counties in #Virginia came together to #OptOutside on Friday, November 29, and show that #VirginiansForWalkingLovers. — Facebook post, Timothy Miner



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AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

December 2019

www.ava.org

CHECKPOINT ✓

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Fun, Fitness, and Friendship!

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Happy Holidays from AVA National Office!

Had a most excellent walk with the Happy Wanderers at DeLeon Springs State Park this morning! - Facebook Post, Emily English

Virtual Online Programs—Jan Van Vlack



VOP 2020: The Appalachian Trail

We hope you're ready for adventure. Take on the Great Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine and get fit along the way! Originally conceived by forester Benton 1922, this trail stretches 2,200 miles of forest and wildlands, which we will accomplish virtually by averaging 5,500 steps a day. Don't worry, we'll pass through a few towns along the way for breaks.

The AT Challenge begins 1/1/2020, \$35.00 per person, includes T-Shirt. Go to http://ava.org/Appalachian_Trail.php to Register with AVA, then further instructions will be emailed to you... seamless for current Walkin' Canada participants. Tell your friends, family, and Club Members. The Regional Traveling Trophy Challenge will also begin 1/1/2020.

Hope to see you on the AT!

AVA National Office News

Executive Director's Update—Henry Rosales

AVA Marketing and Rebranding Update

Thank you to all who have sent questions and comments regarding the new AVA logo. Being that we are a large national organization it is unlikely everyone will agree with all the changes we are implementing. Nonetheless, constructive feedback is always appreciated to continuously improve what we do.

Here are a few comments on the logo contrary to what you might have read on Facebook.

"I like the new logo!"

"The logo is modern and looks great. "

"I very much like the new logo - it strikes me as fresh, fluid and lively."

"I was surprised that the AVA came up with a new LOGO! It's attractive and modern."

"I like the new logo. It sets the stage for the future of Volkssporting in the US."

It is important to remember the logo change is part of an effort to rebrand the AVA. This rebranding effort will also include changes to our website, event collateral, and messaging (video). We must do this, so the AVA becomes part of the national conversation on the walking movement that is storming the United States. The new logo does not change Who we are or What we do. The goal is to attract new participants who we hope will one day become members and/or volunteers.

Questions and Answers on the new logo.

- Q. Will the host city receive a new AVA banner or two for the 2021 Biennial Convention?
- A. All clubs will receive a free new AVA banner once they have been designed and printed.
- Q. Will Local Clubs be receiving new AVA bumper stickers to replace those sent out a couple of years ago to appear on walk boxes?
- A. Yes, all clubs will receive new stickers for walk boxes by the end of December.
- Q. Similar goes for the trail marking ribbons and trail marking arrows that have the old AVA logo? Will clubs be able to order a new version? And will the convention host club get a supply to put our new foot forward in July 2020, and in 2021?
- A. Clubs will receive stickers they can put on trail marking arrows and small banners to cover the old logo. The AVA will not order trail marking materials until we have exhausted **most** of the current stock. We encourage clubs to continue using the old trail marking materials until further notice. Yes, the goal is to have all new branding materials implemented by the 2021 convention.
- Q. Will the current AVA logo be gone forever?
- A. Unfortunately, yes unless at some point in the future the AVA goes retro.
- Q. Will our official name be changed from "The American Volkssport Association" to "America's Walking Club"?
- A. Currently there are no plans to change our official name "American Volkssport Association". Our Doing Business As (DBA) name is America's Walking Club. It is important clubs continue to use our official name on all **legal documents and contracts**. The DBA can be used on brochures, flyers, marketing materials and social media outlets.
- Q. Do we need to include the IVV logo also along with this new logo?

- A. The IVV logo is not part of the AVA logo. The IVV logo should go on club websites and all IVV/AVA sanctioned event information. For more on this please refer to the AVA website.
- Q. Do we need to include the AVA logo along with this new logo?
- A. The new logo is the AVA logo. The old logo should no longer be used anywhere.
- Q. What do we do with start cards that have the old logo?
- A. Clubs should continue to use start cards with the old logo until they run out of them. Once we run out of start cards with the old logo, we will use start cards with the new logo.
- Q. By when must clubs implement the new logo on all marketing collateral?
- A. Clubs have until June 2020 to implement the new logo on all marketing collateral.
- Q. Are we required to remove AVA from the Walk Boxes?
- A. The letters "AVA" should be removed from any literature or marketing collateral and replaced with the new logo. It is ok to continue use of the *AVA letters only* on pins and patches.

NEW AVA WEBSITE COMING DECEMBER 15th, 2019!

The AVA will be migrating to a new website with new features beginning December 15, 2019. The first thing you will see when you click on AVA.org will be a new landing page. As we continue to build the website new pages will be added. Clubs can access all existing club information from the legacy website by clicking on the Clubs Only tab. We would love to hear your comments on the new website. Please send them to Hector@ava.org.

Communications— Samanta Sanchez

#OptOutside

Thank you to all the clubs who participated in the AVA #OptOutside campaign this year. Thank you for sharing your photos on our AVA Facebook group page. We enjoyed seeing all the smiling faces! Please email your #OptOutside participation numbers to programs@ava.org and let us know how many walkers attended your event.



Upland Trail Outer Loop—at Seven Islands State Birding Park.—
Facebook Post, Kathy Nash, East Tennessee Wanderers

Facebook Etiquette

Our Facebook group page has recently been cluttered by negative comments regarding the rebranding of the national organization. Social media is not the appropriate platform to debate and discuss operational decisions. Negative comments from our own membership is damaging to the organization. If you have any concerns, please email them to your club president, Regional Director, or to sharewithus@ava.org.

Give the Gift of Health

We all know the holidays are known for a time of giving, but does generosity end with the season? This upcoming March, America's Walking Club will be participating for its 6th consecutive year in the Big Give SA. This is our only fundraiser of the year and we ask all our members to keep us in mind and consider making a gift to the Big Give. On March 26, 2020, give the gift of health. Your contributions help fund physical fitness programs that help relieve stress, serve as a preventative measure for heart disease and cancer, help improve memory in those who suffer from Alzheimer's, help lower the risk of obesity and provide a support group for those battling depression. We are more than a walking organization; we are a walking organization dedicated to help our communities live a longer, healthier life. Consider making a contribution, big or small,

to the Big Give 2020 to help us continue our mission.

Donations can be made online on March 26, 2020 through www.biggivesa.org. If you are not able to donate online on March 26, you may donate online starting March 19. You may also donate to our campaign by sending a check to the AVA National Office. Big Give updates will be announced in the TAW, Checkpoint, website, and social media.

Holiday Shopping with a Cause

With the holidays right around the corner, make sure you get the best deals by shopping with Goodshop and AmazonSmile. When you're shopping with Goodshop or AmazonSmile, you're not only saving money for yourself, but you are also raising crucial funds for the AVA.

Sign up for Goodshop by going to https://www.goodsearch.com/login?return_path=%2Finvite-friends. Your user profile will help keep track of the amount you've raised. Select AVA: America's

Walking Club from the participating organizations and begin shopping. At no cost to you, a portion of all eligible purchases will go to your chosen cause. 100% of the donation amount displayed on merchant's Goodshop page will go to the charity or school of your choice.



Shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2164037> and 0.5% of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase will be donated to the AVA directly from Amazon! Simply sign in or create an account, select American Volkssport Association, Inc. – Universal City as your charity of choice and begin shopping. It's that simple!

Program Development & Outreach—Emily Chetwood



Introducing Our Newest Team Member

Hello all, my name is Emily Chetwood! I'm working with the AVA in the areas of Program Development and Outreach as a Public Allies Americorps member. I will be working as a member of the AVA Programs Committee as well. I'm originally from San Antonio, TX. I graduated from Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona with a double major in *Human Development & Psychology* and *Arts & Letters*, BA. My goal has always been to learn how to best serve the people of my community. I intend to bring my perspective and experience as an ally, my diverse knowledge within the mental health community and my personal love of being active and in the outdoors to furthering the mission of America's Walking Club.

I can be contacted at emily@ava.org.

Information and Technology Specialist—Hector Hernan-

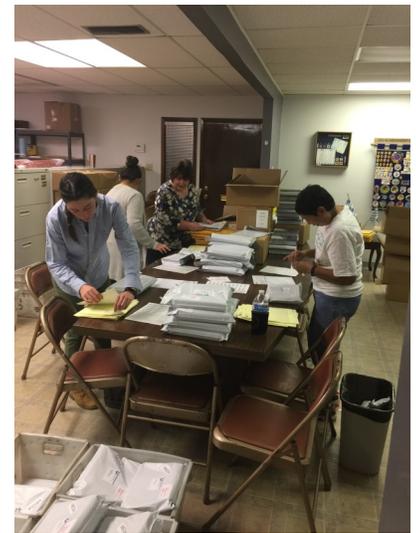
Ornaments

Last year, I began making ornaments for the clubs. This year, I'd like to add additional ornaments and also the ability to customize. If you click on the pdf, you will see the different ornaments that can be cut. I can add your Club Name & Year or maybe even your logo depending on the quality of the image. If you'd like to order a customized ornament, please email hector@ava.org for pricing. Also, please have a look at our updated bell ornament with the new AVA logo.



[Click here](#) to see club merchandise pdf.

[Click here](#) to view larger ornaments.



Starting Point Books and 2020 Stamps

As of the end of November, all Starting Point Books and 2020 Stamps plus handles have all been mailed out. If you haven't received your Starting Point Book please email marian@ava.org. If you haven't received your 2020 Stamps please email hector@ava.org.

NEC and Committee Updates

IT Committee—Mike Green, Ph.D., Board Liason

One Form for Entering Quarterly Participation Data

Beginning with the upcoming end of the year, 2019 Q4, a new one-page participation data entry form will be deployed. This new form will list all of the active YRE/SEs for a chosen club and quarter and provide data entry boxes for each of these events on a single webpage. Features of this form include:

1. Save Buttons - Instead of submitting an event's participation, this form provides a "Save" button for each event to store participation data on the AVA servers. There is no need to enter all the data at one time. You can enter the data for a few events, close your browser, then come back later and login to your AVA club account and continue on the same form where you left off.
2. Change Buttons - Once an event's participation data has been "Saved", a "Change" button is provided to make changes to previously saved entries.
3. Confirm/Submit Button - Once the participation data has all been saved for all events, a "Confirm/Submit" button will appear. The user is encouraged to do one final review of all participation entries. Clicking on the "Confirm/Submit" button results in all of the participation data on the form being submitted to the AVA server. Further changes after confirming/submitting are not supported.
4. Invoice Download - Once the participation data has been confirmed/submitted, an "Invoice Download" button will appear. The user needs to click on this button to get (download) their AVA Invoice as a pdf file. This file should be printed out and the top portion of the first page sent via US Mail to AVA along with the club payment (check). The AVA National Office will be no longer be sending out quarterly invoices, unless explicitly requested to do so by the club.

For Online Start Box (OSB) events, the OSB participation data will automatically be imported from the OSB system and displayed in the new form. Data entry boxes for OSB events are also provided to allow for entering participation done outside of the OSB system. (Some clubs have physical stamps for club group walks and/or for supporting remote registration. These entry boxes are for this separately tracked participation.)

It is hoped the new one-page, participation entry form, will make the task of entering YRE/SE data simpler for clubs as well as significantly reduce the manual effort of AVA National Office staff to handle club quarterly invoices.

Programs & Special Programs Committee—Tim Miner, Chair

Last Call For AVA Special Program Nominations For 2021

The Programs Committee of the AVA is hard at work building the programs and products for the future of the AVA: America's Walking Club.

The deadline for nominations for AVA special programs that begin on January 1, 2021, is rapidly approaching. So far two clubs have nominated "new versions" of two very popular, special programs that have ended. There is one nomination for a new special program. One important change is that all future special programs should strive for a collaborative relationship with another national organization related to the theme of the special program. This gives the AVA new markets for its walking efforts.

If you or a club member has a nomination, even if only in the idea stage, please contact the Programs Committee right away at programs@ava.org. The chair is Tim Miner at timothy.miner@walkvirginia.org.

Are Your 2020 Walks Ready For The New Special Programs?

The following special programs must be redeemed by December 31, 2019:

Bridges - Spanning the USA
Doin' The Louisiana Purchase
Lady Liberty
Make a Wish at a Water Fountain
National Park Centennial
Points of Reference
State Street Sashay
Take a Walk In a City Park
Treasure Hunt
United States Post Offices
Vice Presidential Walks
Walk the USA - Street by Street
Walking America's Port of Call
Walking the Path of Invention

A quick reminder that the following special programs are ending on December 31, 2019:

Ice Cream Parlors
Underground Railroad

The following new special programs begin January 1, 2020:

Airports- Celebrating American Flight
Mayflower - 400th Anniversary Walk
Rockin' Around the Clock

Get more details at the website at: <http://ava.org/futureprog.php>

Questions? Contact the POC for each program or the AVA Program Committee at programs@ava.org.

Club Development & Support Committee—John McClellan, Chair

Committee Interviews – New Clubs

Last month our committee interviewed Ty Fredericks of the Central Coast Beach Boardwalkers in Santa Maria, CA. Formerly the Peregrine Pathfinders, this AVA club has re-invented itself under Ty's leadership and spent a few minutes telling us about their successes and challenges.

The club typically holds events twice a month, and sponsors 16 year-round events consisting of 15 walks and 1 bike. The club uses a website, Facebook and MeetUp.com to help promote itself. Ty said they started out with little publicity experience and felt that making more "templates" of successful club publicity products like flyers, brochures and press releases available via the AVA website would be a good step. Training Development products like mapping software were also mentioned as being something we need to make more available.

Ty described an initial period of steep learning curve where they "Didn't know what they didn't know!" So they reached out for support from other clubs, notably the Sacramento Walking Sticks, where Steve Hughart answered numerous questions and became

a mentor to Ty and his leadership on “all things AVA.” They also received a start-up grant from the California (State) Volkssporting Association and good support from their RD. The club recommends scheduling a “booster” event early on to get participation and awareness amped-up in the area -- and Ty told us that they got theirs courtesy of the Tater Tours making a visit along with the CVA and RD helping to get the word out. He also recognized terrific support from our National Office in administrative issues such as understanding reports, deadlines, 501(c). status and setting up bank accounts and tax-exempt status.

Our committee is still looking to better understand the challenge faced by new clubs in the AVA. If you are leading a club that has started within the last 2 years – we’d like to talk to you! Please contact me at johnmc82@cfl.rr.com and I’ll schedule a future date for you to “interview” with our committee. *My thanks.*

Club Tip of the Month

Here is a great example of how to incorporate our new **national logo** with your **club logo** either on your **walk box** and/or as a **flyer** at one of your supporting local businesses, or in this case a national chain!

The **Upstate Pathfinders** in Greenville, SC are highlighting their affiliation with both **Starbucks** and **America’s Walking Club**, and their local Starbucks is willing to post this flyer in the store highlighting that they are an **AVA Starting Point!**

Try to replicate this kind of partnership and go one step further: get your start point mentioned on **their website or Facebook page**, with a hotlink back to **your club!**



Support Our National and International Friends

International



Happy Holidays from the IVV!



Click on image for more information



Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

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

The American Volkssport Association

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



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