



The official voice of the American Volkssport Association

AVA: America's Walking Club

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April 2017



THE AMERICAN VOLKSSPORTS ASSOCIATION (AVA) Annual Fundraising Campaign, the **Big Give**, is **May 4th, 2017**. ***This year, donations can be made through the Big Give website beginning April 27-May 4, 2017!!***

Will You Give Back?

How you can participate.

1. Send us a check before May 31, 2017
 2. Make an online contribution anytime from April 27 –May 4th, 2017
- OR
3. Make an online contribution the day of May 4, 2017 *to help us leverage additional cash prizes.*

How You Can Help Us Leverage Additional Cash Prizes by Making an Online Contribution May 4, 2017

This year the Big Give sponsors have announced \$236,000 in prize money.

You can help us win some of this prize money by participating in any of the following ways on May 4th. *Continued on page 4.*

Why Should I Give to the Big Give?

On **May 4th, 2017**, the American Volkssport Association will join San Antonio and surrounding counties in the Big Give, a 24-hour day of giving that brings donors and nonprofits together by creating a shared region-wide experience and connecting people to the causes that matter to them the most. In the case of AVA this is a nation-wide experience and **our only annual fundraising campaign to support the continued mission of the AVA. It is important to note that funds raised from this campaign help us offset the decrease in participation revenues so fees are not increased.**

Last year individuals, clubs, and state associations came together to raise \$53,336 of which \$11,000 was matching funds contributed from the AVA National Executive Council (NEC) and private sector donors. **The goal this year is to raise \$60,000.** Thanks to a generous contribution of "10K for the AVA" by Nancy Wittenberg, Northwest Regional Director, we are off to a great start! [Click here for a personalized message from Dennis A. Michele, AVA President.](#)

Some of the questions I have been asked to answer related to our annual fundraising campaign are:

1. What where the funds used for last year?
2. Why should I support the AVA? What does the AVA National Headquarters do for clubs?

3. Why should I give if the AVA has over \$800,000 in investment funds?

Question 1.—What the Funds were used for last year?

Here is how your Big Give contributions were used last year (fiscal 2016). The total raised was \$53,336

Use of Funds	Status/Comments	Amount
AVA Database Development	Scheduled for Completion June 2017	\$15,000
Fund Development	5 grants completed, Big Give printing, postage, etc., and radio promotion for AVA and Big Give	\$3,960
Development of Strategic Plan	The strategic plan was completed and approved June 2016; funds were used for consulting and planning committee meetings.	\$34,376
Total		\$53,336

Question 2.—Why should I support the AVA? What does the AVA National Headquarters do for clubs?

The AVA Headquarters office operates a National organization with a team of 6 full time employees and one 15 hour a week part time employee. This team provides the back-end infrastructure and operation that is needed to support club events and members with several things. Below is a partial breakdown on how staff spends some of their time in support of our clubs, members and participants. This is not inclusive of all the tasks staff must handle on a weekly basis.

Processing of Awards and Merchandise

On the average 125 books are processed weekly. In order to process one book, it takes several steps. Once a book arrives in the mail the participant is recorded in the database and then the stamps on the book are verified for authenticity. Then the awards are pulled and noted on the inventory and a certificate is made to the participant. The awards are then recorded in the database and packaged in a special wrap so they do not get lost or broken in the mail. Labels are printed and the package is weighed for the right amount of postage before being dropped in the mail bin.

Other support includes things like inventorying, ordering, packaging, shipping, and invoicing of start cards, new walker packets, brochures, trail marking supplies, event and distance books, awards (pins, patches, and creation of certificates), starting point books, membership cards and AVA merchandise.

AVA Database, Tech Support and Sanctioning Process

Before a club can host an event, it must be entered in the AVA database which is called the ESR. AVA employees spend time daily supporting clubs and Regional Directors with entering and/or correcting information in this database. This is primarily because we are using a dated system that is not very user friendly. Once events have been entered the AVA staff must record and prepare stamp handles and slugs and ship them to the clubs. In the past clubs had to send the stamp handles and slugs back to the AVA and staff had to hand scrub the stamp handles and slugs so they could be reused. This was very time consuming however thanks to your support we will discontinue this process and begin creating our own customized stamp handles and slugs that will not need to be returned and are cost



effective. Some events also require their events carry additional insured certificates. It takes staff time to follow up with the insurance company and club to make sure the insurance certificate is received timely. In the case of an incident, the staff must also follow up and process incident reports. Staff must also verify and process quarterly participation reports and when a club does not file these reports in time staff must enter the data for the club.

Reporting, Invoicing, Fiscal management

The finance team at AVA takes care of invoicing and processing payments for sanctioned events, late fees, participation fees, club dues, membership dues, and merchandise as well as paying the bills that keep the office functional. In addition, this team creates monthly financial reports, verifies club financial records, solicits and reviews vendor contracts for insurances, supplies, office equipment, etc., and in a convention year handles the fiscal management of the convention.

Other responsibilities include convention and special events support, fund development, grant research, TAW support, social media and website maintenance, NEC support, and strategic planning committee support and customer service.

Question 3.—Why should I give if the AVA has over \$800,000 in investment funds?

As of April 19, 2017, the AVA had \$828,866 in investment accounts with Edward Jones. We operate on an annual budget of about \$500,000. The AVA has an investment policy that states at least 6 months of normal operating expense plus monies earmarked for short-term purposes, like the AVA database, must remain in this account. Six months of operating expenses for the AVA is roughly \$270,000 not including any short-term purposes. In one year, this amount equates to \$540,000 which is the amount of our current budget. Although \$828,866 may sound like a lot of money in a relative short period of time, 18 months to be exact, the AVA could use up these funds if we relied solely on our investment funds.



This is not the case because we are still receiving revenue however the issue is our revenues have been steadily decreasing for the past 10 years! Expenses have been in line and even decreased however if we keep focusing on decreasing expenses without any effort on increasing revenues we will regress as an organization and will shut our doors without ever reaching our full potential as a National organization.

Fundraising initiatives like the Big Give and the AVA Convention help us raise unrestricted revenues from sources other than traditional fees so we do not have to pull from our investment funds for operations and this money can otherwise be used for short-term purposes stemming from our strategic plan like innovative programs, membership and a national publicity campaign that will impact local clubs. In short, our future growth strategies.

It is important to note that the NEC is the deciding body that determines how the investment funds are used. If you have recommendations as to the amount and use of these funds please let your Regional Director know so it can be addressed during one of the NEC meetings.

I ask you to join the NEC and myself on May 4, 2017 by going online at www.TheBigGiveSA.org and contributing of a minimum of \$25.00 to support the mission of the AVA. If you prefer to send a check that is also

appreciated and will be applied towards our goal of \$60,000.

Thank you for your continued support of the AVA.

– Henry Rosales, AVA Executive Director

Mail your check to:

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

Please be sure to put “Big Give” on the memo line and note the campaign will run the whole month of May until the 31st.

All donations are deductible from personal income taxes within current applicable IRS tax codes.

How you can help us leverage additional prize money with your donation.

1. Be a Unique Donor/Contributor

A unique donor contribution is a donation that comes from a distinct individual - all different names, addresses, and credit cards. Simply put, no duplicate donors. There are several different areas of unique donors that AVA can win cash prizes in.

A. Category Prize - This year, the AVA is representing three cause categories in the Big Give: Health and Wellness, **Seniors**, and Veterans. Cause prizes will be based on the most unique donors brought from April 27 - May 4. Although we are eligible to compete in any of these three categories, we can only win one category prize.

Category	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Health and Wellness (175)	\$5000	\$3000	\$2500	\$1500	\$1000	\$500		
Category	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	
Seniors (40)	\$5000	\$1500	\$500					
Veterans (41)	\$5000	\$1500	\$500					

There are 175 nonprofits competing in the Health and Wellness category, but there are only 40 nonprofits under the Seniors category and 41 under the Veterans category. This allows us to have a higher chance to win in any of these last two categories, 1st prize for each category is \$5,000!!

B. Budget Size of the Organization – The operating budget of the AVA falls into the medium size Big Give category. The nonprofit in this category with the most unique donors brought from April 27- May 4 will win \$5,000 for 1st place, \$2,500 for 2nd place, and \$1,500 for 3rd place!

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Extra small	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500
Small	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500
Medium	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500
Large	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500

C. Champion Prize (Peer to Peer)

- This year we can leverage a prize through the Champion Prize category by utilizing the peer to peer option. This is accomplished by sharing your Fundraising page on social

Champion Prizes

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Most unique donors	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$500
Most money raised	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$500

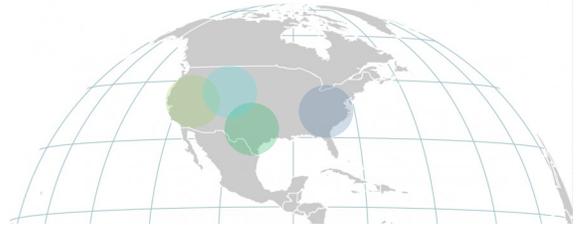
media and asking your friends/family for support. By raising money through this campaign we have a chance of winning another \$1,500, 1,000, and 500. Get out and share the word! [Click here for information and instructions.](#)

2. Contribute During a Specific Time Slot

Make your donation online during one of the two specified hours listed below and you can help us better our chances to win an hourly prize of \$1,000. Every hour there will be a drawing for \$1,000. The nonprofit with the most unique donors in the hour will be awarded \$1,000. The goal here is to get as many individuals as possible to donate to the AVA during one of the two time slots indicated based on your time zone.

West Coast—May 3rd 10pm—11pm

Or May 4th 2pm—3pm



Mountain Time—May 3rd 11pm—12pm

Or May 4th 3pm—4pm

Central—May 4th 12am—1am

Or May 4th 4pm—5pm

East Coast—May 4th 1am—2am

Or May 4th 5pm—6pm

AVA BIG GIVEaway!!

This year, individuals and clubs who donate during our two targeted hours on May 4 are eligible for AVA prizes!



Prizes include:
2018 Starting Point Books
Event Books
Distance Books
Customized Stamps (Clubs)
Gift Cards
Free Walker Packets

- ◆ All donations made through May 31st are eligible for a Grand Prize (TBA). Winner will be announced at the 2017 Convention.

Prize Money Won by AVA Last Year/Potential Prize Money This Year

\$3,500

\$12,500

Categories We Won Last Year.

- Most unique donors between 12:00am - 1:00am - \$1,000 Prize
- Most unique donors within Medium Size Budget organizations - \$1,000 Prize
- Golden Ticket drawing for the 6:00pm - 7:00pm hour - \$1,500 Prize

3. Make a Contribution in Any Amount at Any Time on May 4, 2017

The Big Give online giving campaign will begin at 12:01 a.m. on May 4th and close at 12 p.m. midnight. We ask that you invite all your family, friends, work associates and anyone else to go online May 4th and make a contribution of \$20.00 or more to support the mission of the AVA. (The minimum online contribution per Big Give guidelines is \$15.00) Don't want to wait that long? ***This year, donations can be made through the Big Give website beginning April 27-May 4, 2017!!***



**2017
Big Give
Goal
\$60,000**



**\$17,740
Raised**
(Includes Match)



Matching Contributions: A Big Thank You to our growing list of matching donors. Thanks to them your donation will be matched dollar per dollar up to the total amount of matching funds raised. Our goal is to raise a minimum of \$20,000 in matching funds.

Special thanks to our Big Give matching donors:

- Anonymous
- AVA NEC Members
- Documation
- Eagle Print
- Mary Ptacek *Tater Tours
- Nancy Wittenberg, NWRD



Be sure to stay tuned into our YouTube channel for more Big Give Video messages.



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.

