



CHECKPOINT ✓

The official voice of the American Volkssport Association
America's premier noncompetitive sports organization

Volume 23, Number 12

www.ava.org

December 2015

NEC Meeting Updates

The next NEC meeting will be held January 22 – 24, 2016 at the Hampton Inn, 4975 Dean Martin Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89118.

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items

Please complete as soon as possible.

December 8: Agenda Items from RDs due at AVA National Headquarters. Submit to Henry, execdir@ava.org, with the subject NEC Agenda item.

December 22: Final list of Agenda Items sent to AVA Clubs.

Officer's Reports and Committee Reports [Click here for Officer Report Form](#) [Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

Please complete as soon as possible.

December 22: Officer's & Committee Reports due at AVA National Headquarters. Submit to Jessica, avawebmaster@ava.org, subject Committee/Officer Report.

Due to the holidays, packets will be emailed December 31: Meeting data information package emailed to NEC members.

NEC Committee News

Special Programs 2017 – *Bonnie Johnson, Chair, Special Programs Committee*

At each January NEC Meeting, new Special Programs are introduced for review and approval by the NEC to begin in the following year. In January 2016, the Special Programs will be introduced which, if approved, would begin on January 1, 2017.

AVA's 40th Anniversary - *Susan Medlin, Chair, National Events*



Come to Fredericksburg, Texas on June 10 -12, 2016 and join in the celebration of the AVA's 40th Anniversary. The very first walking event was held in Fredericksburg on June 12- 13, 1976. Next summer we will celebrate this historic event with multiple walks, a bike event, and a swim. You'll enjoy the scenic countryside, the Wine Road 290 (featuring 15 wineries just minutes apart), a world-class WWII Museum and our many fine restaurants. Join us on the Saturday morning Founders Day Walk. We also offer 6 Year Round Walks, with new routes updated in 2014, and 2 County walks (Mason & Llano) that you can enjoy.

In the spin up to the 40th Anniversary of Volksmarching in America, we are looking for human interest stories, humorous antidotes, lessons learned, and other interesting events that would encourage folks to become volksmarchers. Please forward your memories to John McClellan, President of the Happy Wanderers, johnmc82@cfl.rr.com by **January 31, 2016**. We hope to include your memories in articles for Reader's Digest, AARP magazine, TAW and other publications.

Strategic Planning Update – David Bonewitz, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

On November 17-19, the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) met in Dallas, Texas. This short summary of the work done is intended to keep you aware of progress being made and the next steps that are to come.

Things went very well in Dallas. Everyone worked together well, even when they didn't always agree. Value was added by all the participants, Regional Reps and At-Large-Members. The SPC reached its goal by developing the three Courses of Action (COA) that will be presented to the National Executive Council (NEC) at its meeting in January. COAs are a set of intended actions designed to achieve a stated goal. The goal specified by the NEC is that "within 5 years we will reverse the decline and set conditions for positive growth and a transition to a healthy and vibrant organization." The Individual Surveys and Club/State Association Surveys provided the foundation for developing these COAs. This has been a real grassroots effort, and clearly since the NEC must choose the COA that AVA will follow (or combine elements of different COAs) there will be lots for the NEC to consider in January.

It has been hard work. However, the SPC stayed on track by focusing their efforts on those things that individuals and clubs/state associations pointed out in their survey responses. Since we promised confidentiality to participants in the surveys, we won't be able to release the raw data unless it can be completely "sanitized." For now, that task will have to take a backseat to other more pressing jobs. However, as soon as possible, we will be making summary data available on the AVA website for everyone to review as they wish. This is also a big task and will have to be done incrementally. We will get the first batch of summary data posted as quickly as we can.

It should be noted that some findings from the surveys have rather quick and easy solutions that are administrative and don't require action by the NEC. An example of one of these is distribution of the Checkpoint. From the surveys it was clear that sending the Checkpoint to only the clubs' official Point of Contact was not getting the information into the hands of the club members. Therefore, effective with this issue, the Checkpoint is being sent to all the club officers as recorded in the AVA club database. Watch for other administrative improvements that will be made based on the survey information.

There will be another article in the February/March issue of TAW in which we will discuss some of the leading issues that appeared in the surveys. However, as before, due to the TAW deadline of December 25th, we will again will be looking back at what we have done while leaning forward in the saddle toward what will be happening between the TAW deadline and when people are reading it.

The next big step in this Strategic Planning Process will be a briefing to the NEC at its meeting in Las Vegas, January 21 – 24, 2016. Anyone who wishes to hear the presentation and the question/answer session that follows should plan to attend this NEC meeting. While the agenda for this NEC meeting has not yet been finalized, given the scope of the strategic planning task, it is expected that the NEC will be dealing with the SPC presentation over most of the meeting. Following the briefing, the NEC will be tasked by the AVA President to make a number of decisions based on the work of the SPC to determine which COA (or modified COA) to send back to the SPC to develop the implementation details.

AVA Headquarters Team News

HQ Events Coordinator – Marie Bebley

The 2016 slugs for YREs and Seasonal events have been mailed out December 2, 2015. When entering your new event, please remember to date your events for 2016.

Entry of Seasonals & YREs

Please [click here](#) for step by step instructions on how to enter Seasonals and YREs after the August 31st deadline. You can also find this information under Clubs > Clubs Only > ESR Help for Clubs and it is Module number 14.

HQ Finance & Operations Director – Candace Purcell

Regarding programs which began in 2015 & 2016, please check to see if you have paid the \$300 fee for each of your programs. If not, please do so. Send payment to Candace Purcell at National Headquarters.

Requirements for starting a new Club

There is now a requirement sheet and checklist for starting a new club. Please [click here](#) for more information. You can find this information by going under the Clubs tab > Clubs Only > AVA Club Forms.

Invoice and Statement Addresses

To ensure clubs receive invoices and account statements to the proper addressee, the address must be updated no later than the **25th day** of the month in club maintenance pages. If you are an AVA Associate member and you need to update your address, please contact karen@ava.org.

2016 Certificate of Liability Insurance

The Certificate of Liability Insurance for 2016 is now available on the AVA website. You can find the certificate by going to the Clubs tab > mouse over Clubs Only > and click on AVA Club Forms.

HQ Awards and Membership Coordinator – Karen Winkle

Due to working with testing of the new database, entries must be input into the system twice. Processing of books, membership, and shipping will take longer than normal. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

To view the Monthly Comparison Chart for new walkers completing their first 10 Events [click here](#), and to see the Monthly Comparison Chart for the Total Number of Awards processed [click here](#). The charts are also included as attachments.

Centurion Achievement Challenge Instructions (Associate Members Only)

Thank you for participating in the AVA Centurion Achievement Challenge. Participants are challenged to complete 100 IVV events (any type and anywhere in the world) during a calendar year. Centurion achievement record books are for a specific year. In order to be eligible for the annual awards, record books must be completed within the calendar year and submitted to AVA no later than February 15th of the following year. Event carry over from one calendar year to the next is **not** permitted.

As you complete each event, place one IVV Event Stamp in this record book. The same event may be completed and entered multiple times.

The first book purchased each calendar year is \$15, and any additional books purchased the same year are \$10 each.

Mark in the box on the back of the book whether it is your first, second, third, etc. book in the calendar year.

Submit completed Centurion record books to:
AVA Centurion Achievement Challenge
1001 Pat Booker Rd, Suite 101
Universal City, TX 78148



HQ Accounts Receivable Specialist – Theresa Hutchison

As stated within TAW, HQ allows up to 4 weeks to ship your merchandise orders. If you need your order in a few days, or a week, Headquarters is happy to oblige. There will be an additional shipping charge on your order for rush deliveries. Plan to get your orders in 30 days before you need them.

The maroon book covers are on sale for \$1.50. Due to the new price, your discount cannot be applied for the maroon book cover. Other merchandise will be put on sale from time to time. Headquarters no longer carries the purple or teal book covers.

The Girl Scout patches are now \$2.50.

HQ Communications Specialist – Jessica Blazejewski

The electronic copy of TAW will be sent out the first week of each new month. If you have not received the electronic copy of TAW please email Jessica at avawebmaster@ava.org with the subject as Electronic TAW. If you need to update the email address to where you receive your electronic copy of TAW, please do so no later than the **25th day** of each month by sending an email to Jessica. If you are an associate or lifetime member and would like to receive the electronic copy please go to <http://www.ava.org/tawinfo.php> for more information.

If you are hosting a multi-event and need to be listed in the multi-event calendar on the AVA website, please email Jessica with the information to be added. For examples of information to be included and the current multi-event listings, please go to <http://www.ava.org/multievent.php>.

If you would like your photos from your events and walking adventures shared on the AVA home page, please send an email to Jessica, avawebmaster@ava.org, with the images attached and a preferred caption. Show us how you put the fun and friendship into fitness with AVA!

Take care of your Holiday needs and support AVA by shopping online at AmazonSmile

Shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2164037> and 0.5% of your eligible amazonsmile purchase will be donated to AVA directly from Amazon! It's as simple as that!



If you don't find what you need through AmazonSmile try using Goodsearch and Goodshop to fulfill your Holiday needs!

Another great way to shop online is by using Goodsearch and Goodshop. Simply go to <http://www.goodsearch.com/nonprofit/american-volkssport-association-ava.aspx> sign up for Goodsearch and Goodshop and just continue searching and shopping as you normally would! Thank you to all our Volkssporters and friends who are already searching and shopping online and supporting AVA!



AVA Executive Director's Updates, Henry Rosales

Financial Update (Unaudited Report)

The AVA records all revenues and expenses on a fiscal year beginning in July and ending in June. At the close of our fiscal year ending June 2015 (this means all reports from July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) the AVA brought in \$646,860 in total revenues. Our expenses for this same reporting period were \$569,390 leaving us with a net income at the end of the fiscal year of **\$77,470**. Note: earned net income does not carry forward to the next fiscal year as revenues although it does remain in the bank to support overall operations and increases our total assets.

Overall, revenues were down from annual projections by \$108,071. However, there was an increase in TAW subscriptions and unrestricted and in-kind donations than the previous years. The Biennial Convention netted more profit than 2013 because of lower expenses. Revenues for AVA membership, club dues and participation fees were all less than projected.

Overall, expenses were lower than annual projections by \$159,904. The *decrease* in expenses was primarily in administration, operations and overhead to include the convention, TAW contract, financial services (audit), legal services, postage, marketing and personnel.

The decrease in expenses offset the decrease in revenues and made it possible to end fiscal 2015 with positive net profit. After 5 years of consecutive net losses AVA has a net profit thanks to all of our volunteers, Volkssporters, and the Headquarters team! The challenge is to make sure this becomes a trend.

A report will go out in the February Checkpoint on the current year's budget after midyear modifications have been made during the January NEC meeting.

Grant Writing and Fundraising Reports

AVA Headquarters has completed and submitted three grant request applications that are identified below.

A. Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio - 2015 Community Impact Grant

STATUS – Grant was not funded. We will reapply next year as we continue to build this partnership.

The grant application was submitted June 27, 2015. The Foundation is committed to improving the health of our community by fostering and funding clinical, educational, spiritual and scientific initiatives. The Foundation will make grants that will have a significant impact in meeting the community's health needs, particularly in communities demonstrating a great need.

B. San Antonio Area Non-Profit Foundation Grant

STATUS – Pending, Announcement to be made the week of December 7, 2015.

The Phase II grant application was submitted September 15, 2015. Grants are awarded that build a nonprofit's capacity and help them better fulfill their missions and serve their clients. Applications are evaluated on strength of the organization (management, staffing, board involvement), strength and viability of proposed project (activities, timeline and budget are well thought out, board and staff are qualified), strength of proposed project's benefits and plan to measure effectiveness (project's benefits and plan to measure effectiveness is sufficient), financial strength of organization and overall strength of application. This was a two phase project. Information from the Core Capacity Assessment Tool (Phase I) completed earlier was combined with requirements of a second phase (Strengthening Nonprofits Phase II) of the grant request to implement the project.

AVA Proposal - To create a comprehensive strategic plan with a shared vision, mission, values and strategic goals utilizing the balanced scorecard approach that will guide the process of change for a healthy and sustainable future to better meet the needs of our communities.

Amount Requested - \$13,500

C. Call to Action: Every Body Walk! Collaborative Micro Grant

STATUS – Grant was not funded. Additional funding will be available in 2016 and AVA will reapply.

Application submitted by AVA on October 15, 2015. The grant program is designed to assist local walking advocates to build on the momentum of the newly released Surgeon General's Call to Action. This is a one-time award that will fund 10-15 community groups up \$2,500 for activities designed to increase local walking programming and stimulate community demand for infrastructure improvements that provide accessible, safe walkable places for the entire community.

D. The Disney Employee Matching Gifts Program: The Walt Disney Foundation

STATUS – In Progress

Information required for the application is being compiled by Headquarters AVA. An email to us dated October 6, 2015, indicated that a Disney employee nominated AVA to participate in this program (Nomination ID 1106573 - the employee is not identified by name) There is a 90-day window in which a nomination application must be completed by AVA and sent to Disney. That final application submission deadline date for us would be January 6, 2016. If the application is approved by Disney, all eligible Disney employees are able to submit matching gift requests for donations they made to our organization. Disney then sends an email requesting that AVA confirm the Disney donation.

E. Interactive Health Technologies, Inc. Meeting (IHT)

STATUS – This is an ongoing project that will need time to build relationships and identify funding sources.

A meeting with IHT Chief Executive Officer Mr. Gaat was held September 16, 2015. Our discussion centered on the feasibility of a joint venture partnership between AVA and IHT. The initiative could include an initial health screening pilot program and eventual submission of a proposal for an investigator-initiated government grant. The screening program could include tests to measure volkssporters body composition, blood chemistry, cholesterol, hip and waist size, bone density, short term memory and others. These would be compared to thousands of other screenings captured in the IHT data base. This is fairly complex and a go slow attitude has been adopted. Mr. Gaat is working on his thoughts and ideas going forward.

F. Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) – San Antonio Chapter Gift of Guidance Program

STATUS – Grant was funded! The Executive Director will attend this free counseling session.

The application was submitted November 6, 2015. The purpose of this grant is to provide free public relations counseling to several local nonprofit organizations in South Texas nonprofits that do not have either a public relations professional on staff or access to public relations support.

PRSA San Antonio's annual Gift of Guidance program will provide a free counseling session to six 501(c)3 organizations at PRSA's December luncheon, set for **Thursday, December 3, 2015** at La Quinta Inn & Suites Medical Center, 4431 Horizon Hill Blvd., 78229.

PR professionals will spend an hour consulting with representatives of the selected non-profit organizations about fine-tuning media messages, planning special events and developing basic public relations plans. The participating nonprofits will receive a free mini-PR plan after the session.

Please do not forget to continue to send us information on your advocacy efforts to marketing@ava.org. Use the subject line "Advocacy Initiatives." You can also mail us your information by sending it to the attention of Henry Rosales at the AVA Headquarters. Your input is critical to the effectiveness and success of our fundraising, marketing and advocacy efforts!



Special thanks to Tom Baltes for raising \$2,390 for the AVA through his bike across America Trek!

During this Holiday Season the AVA Headquarters team wishes all of our friends tidings of joy and happiness. We are thankful for the support of all of our volunteers, donors, Volkssporting families, participants and the leadership of the National Executive Council. Special thanks to the Strategic Planning Team who has been burning the night oil researching and analyzing data in search of a better future for AVA.



The American Volkssport Association

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