



From left to right, Sheila and Bill Kuschke, Mike and Kathy Schwencke, Winston and Morris Bundick pose for a picture while listening to the music at the Beethoven Männerchor Walk. - Photo courtesy of Martin Callahan



# CHECKPOINT

[WWW.AVA.ORG](http://WWW.AVA.ORG)



## PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

### NEW STRIDER PROGRAM = NEW PARTICIPANTS!

#### New National Initiative! - Grouper Event Fees Reimbursement for Strider Walkers

The AVA has a new agreement with Grouper (formerly known as “Element3 Health”) to promote their new referred participants called Strider participants (Walkers) to our events. This program is for Strider participants who use a physical start box and/or attend any of our other non-competitive sporting events to include Traditional events. Grouper will sponsor these participants by paying their \$2.00 event participation fee that clubs would have to pay the AVA and their \$2.00 event participation fee that goes to clubs. Note these are not free walkers. Their walk fee is paid by Grouper and the AVA will reimburse clubs for these participants.

#### Here is how it works.

Grouper will pay the AVA the \$2.00 club portion of participation fees for all Strider participants who attend any of their YRE/Seasonal Event or a Traditional Events, and have physically signed an AVA Athletic Waiver (Registration Log or Start Card) for the event. Clubs will receive a \$2.00 credit for each Strider participant who has attended any of these events. The credit will be applied quarterly to their event participation invoices. *This participation credit program does not apply to ACE, Group or Weekly Guided events.*

What this means is that all Strider participants are sponsored by Grouper and should not be charged a club participation fee when they attend any of our events. However, to credit clubs \$2.00 per Strider participant, clubs must record the number of Strider participants in their traditional and quarterly event participation reports (TE and YRE/SE). The event (TE and YRE/SE) participation reports will have a NEW category labeled Strider. This is where clubs will enter the quarterly Strider participant count beginning the second quarter of 2024 for YREs and Seasonals, and starting 6/1/2024 for Traditional events.

There is currently no support for the club to get a \$2 credit for a Strider participant who has registered and completed an OSB Year-Round/Seasonal online. A separate process will be developed for Strider participants who use the online start box soon.

**Strider participants must pay for any/all additional fees beyond the exempted \$4.00 participation fee such as awards, park fees, special events, etc.**

**This program will go into effect June 1, 2024.**

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## FORMS 900 A AND B – CHANGES

Form 900 A has changed on the website and now includes a **Strider, Guest, Child/NoStamp and Paid Participant** category. The new Paid Participant category is used in place of Awards, Credit, and Non-IVV, for clubs who do not care to track these categories. Clubs who use this form should record Paid Participants under the Credit/Paid category in the quarterly reports.

Form 900 B has also been added to the website. This form includes all the traditional categories and the new Strider, Guest, and Child/NoStamp Categories.

Clubs are free to use whichever form works best for their needs. Please update these forms in your start boxes as soon as possible.

[Form 900 A](#)

[Form 900 B](#)

For more information on participation categories use this link. [2024 AVA Participation Types and Their Proper Use](#)

Should you have any questions please contact [henry@ava.org](mailto:henry@ava.org).



## AVA ONLINE MONTHLY WEBINAR – JUNE 19, 2024 @ 7:00P.M. CENTRAL TIME

The next AVA online webinar will be Wednesday, June 19, 2024, at 7:00pm Central. The registration link will be on the AVA website, or you can [click here](#) to pre-register for the event. If asked for a passcode, the passcode is AVA.

*Special Guest Host: Carl Cordes, Vice Chair, AVA Board of Directors*

### June webinar presenters include:

A special invitation to Las Cruces, New Mexico by **Henrietta (Henrie) Vargas** co-president of Sun Country Striders.

### You Spoke We Listened

A series of roundtable discussions with the Leadership of the AVA to discuss priority concerns our members voiced in the AVA Membership Survey. The first discussion will address the budget process and how this information is communicated to the membership throughout the year.

Panel Guests: Ed McCabe, CPA, AVA Finance Chair, Henry Rosales, AVA President & CEO, and Erin Grosso, AVA Finance Director.

## 2025 BIENNIAL CONVENTION, LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

### Hotels, Registration, and Transportation Update

Registration for the 2025 Biennial Convention is targeted to open in September. The registration link will be on the AVA's website convention page. A select group of hotels that are offering discounted rates for AVA members will be announced in the July Checkpoint with full details to include the hotel registration links. Please do not book a hotel until you review this information. A shuttle service to and from Las Cruces to the El Paso airport is being coordinated. A discounted fee will apply.

Check the AVA website for convention updates or contact the convention committee at [convention@ava.org](mailto:convention@ava.org).

## CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR

### PLANNING TO ATTEND THE 2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

Coming to Las Cruces NM? If so, besides Convention Walks, Pre- and Post-Convention Walks there are State Capitol Walks in that area of the country.

The 2025 AVA Biennial Convention will be held in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The dates will be Tuesday, April 29 - Friday, May 2, 2025. Added to these convention dates will be pre-convention events Saturday through Monday, April 26 - 28, and post-convention events Saturday and Sunday May 3 and 4. All these walks are still to be confirmed. For those wishing to extend their visit, I did a little GPS searching for existing Capitol Walks in that area of the country. Following is what I found. All distances are slightly rounded up using the "fastest travel route", all distances measured from the Las Cruces Convention Center, 680 E. University Avenue:

- New Mexico - Santa Fe: 4 Hours Driving, 290 Miles 409 Old Santa Fe Trail
- Arizona - Phoenix: 5 ½ Hours Driving, 395 Miles 1700 W. Washington Street
- Texas - Austin: 9 Hours Driving, 620 Miles 1100 Congress Avenue
- Colorado - Denver: 9 Hours Driving, 625 Miles 200 E. Colfax Avenue
- Oklahoma - Oklahoma City: 10 Hours Driving, 665 Miles 2300 N. Lincoln Boulevard
- Utah - Salt Lake City: 12 ¼ Hours Driving, 830 Miles 350 N. State Street



City of Rocks State Park - Thumbs UP- Photo courtesy of Hellen Hull

National Office staff, Convention Committee members, nation-wide volunteers, local volunteers and local visitors bureau representatives are working to provide a great 2025 event! As details are nailed down we will share more to assist you in planning your trip to the Land of Enchantment!

## ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

### MAY NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS PATCH

If you missed the opportunity to purchase the 2024 May National Physical Fitness Patch, we still have some available for sale. The cost is \$5.00 per patch, plus a shipping/handling charge. For purchase, please e-mail [marian@ava.org](mailto:marian@ava.org), or call 210-659-2112.



Click image for order form

### CLUB DUES

Just a friendly reminder the Annual Club Dues for the upcoming 2024 – 2025 fiscal year will be invoiced on July 1, 2024. The yearly rate is \$75.00, and is due within 30 days of receipt of the invoice.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE - CARL CORDES, CHAIR**

**AVA RECOGNITION AWARDS NOMINATIONS**

The awards program is designed to recognize and honor those that have made significant contributions to furthering the AVA mission. As summer approaches take time to think about who in your walking community deserves recognition either at the national or regional level.

National Awards are considered every two years and timed to be presented at our Biennial Convention. Nominations for 2025 must be submitted to your Regional Director no later than November 1, 2024. Use AVA Form 302 for these nominations:

**Hall of Fame** - This is the lifetime achievement award for the AVA. Should have previously received the Distinguished Achievement award.

**Distinguished Achievement** – More than just years of service to an individual club. Should have previously received Meritorious Service Award.

**Ted Ballman Memorial Youth** – An individual or organization inside or outside AVA who has worked to enhance or promote Volkssport programs for youth.

**Trailblazer** - Significant contribution by an AVA Club to the development of walking trails or to the support of trail related issues.

National Awards approved by Board of Directors will be presented during AVA’s 24th Biennial Convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico April 28-May 2, 2025.

Nominations for Regional Awards (Meritorious Service, Commendable Service, Certificate of Appreciation) can be submitted at any time on AVA Form 303 to your Regional Director. These awards are reviewed, approved, and prepared by your RD. Presentation method/timing is determined by the RD.

Refer to Recognition Awards in the AVA Policy Manual for awards criteria and nominating procedures.



**AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB**  
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —



**WALKING WAVES WITH AVA**

**Inaugural Fundraising Cruise**  
1 - Pre-Cruise Walk  
2 - ACE-T Walks Onboard  
Group Rates, Free At Sea Promotion  
Military Recognition onboard  
10% Military Appreciation Discount  
The National WWII Museum & More



Scan QR Code or contact Rob McDaniel at [mcdanielr99@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdanielr99@yahoo.com)

**NOV 15 - 22, 2025**

**7-DAY ON NORWEGIAN ESCAPE**  
Caribbean: Harvest Caye, Cozumel & Roatan from New Orleans, Louisiana

**INSIDE (IA) - \$1915.70 BALCONY (BA) - \$2372.12 CLUB BALCONY (MA) - \$2576.54**  
Solo and other cabins are available based on the deposit made.

**5 PORTS OF CALL**  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Cozumel, Mexico  
Harvest Caye, Belize  
Roatán (Bay Islands), Honduras  
Costa Maya, Mexico  
New Orleans, Louisiana

A deposit of \$125 pp due by July 28, 2024  
Final Payment due by July 1, 2025

**2025 INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING CRUISE IDEA**

The AVA is considering a fun filled fundraising cruise November 15 – 22, 2025. The ship will leave from the port of New Orleans. Walk the waves with us and support the AVA! For more details refer to the information below and contact Rob McDaniel at [mcdanielr99@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdanielr99@yahoo.com)

**CLICK ON IMAGE TO VIEW PDF OR SCAN QR CODE TO CONTACT ROB!**

**IT SPECIALIST- HECTOR HERNANDEZ**

**MARKETING TOOLS**

AVA National Office is always trying to figure new ways to update and broaden our marketing reach. We offer various templates for your branding and marketing efforts as well. Always remember, if you don't know what to do for a brochure, you can download a template off the website by going to the [New Publicity Toolkit page](#). Here you can find templates for flyers and links to useful brochures that you can leave behind or pass out to anyone. You can also send me an email at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org) for help or assistance on your marketing needs.

We have two new marketing postcards that can be requested by sending an email to [Marian@ava.org](mailto:Marian@ava.org) with the amount needed, which postcard you want, and the of address of where to send them. She will be more than happy to take your order and mail them to you.



Postcard Front



Postcard Back



Convention Save the Date

**YEAR ROUND EVENT RENEWALS**

The Year Round Event (YRE) renewal process will begin June 1, 2024 and will end August 31, 2024.

To start the process, Clubs should go to their "Sanctions" tab, "Edit/New" tab and then to the "Event Renewal" section, where they will find a list of all of their 2024 YRE/SEs ready to be edited and reviewed for 2025.



On the renewal's review page, they will have the option to request approval or indicate the YRE/SE will not be renewed for 2025. **Clubs should NOT use the "Copy" feature in the "New Events to be Completed" section to sanction an existing 2024 YRE/SE for 2025.**

RD's must review and approve all events by September 15, 2024 in order to get them into the 2025 Starting Point book. Any approvals after the 15th do not guarantee a section in the 2025 Starting Point book.

If you have any questions or need any assistance please call (210) 659-2112 or email [Hector@ava.org](mailto:Hector@ava.org).

\*\*\*Please note that new events can be submitted year round. If you are planning a new event for 2025 you can submit those events anytime.



## 2025 STARTING POINT PHOTO CONTEST

So many years, so many photos, so many posts. Which of those photos captured the best memories? Share those captured memories with AVA by submitting photos of the “People”, “Places” or “Things” you've encountered on your journey to the Starting Point Photo Contest. The first and second place winners will get their photo printed on the front side (1st place) and backside (2nd place) cover of the 2025 Starting Point book. Winners will also get a complimentary copy of the Starting Point!

Entries are due to AVA National office no later than August 31, 2024. Rules, guidelines and the official entry form are attached in link below. Participation in the nationwide contest is open to AVA members, clubs and state organizations. All entries must have been created or occurred during the time period from July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024. For more information contact Hector at [hector@ava.org](mailto:hector@ava.org)

[Click here for Order Form](#)

[Click here for Photo Contest Rules](#)

## WEST TEXAS TRAIL WALKERS - SUSAN NOONAN, PRESIDENT

Hike with an Altitude! Join the West Texas Trail Walkers to hike the rugged Sacramento Mountains of Southern New Mexico near Ruidoso. Come to see these beautiful mountains in full fall color, and to discover the local history and legends of Lincoln County, New Mexico, known as the “Land of Enchantment”. Ruidoso and Lincoln County in New Mexico are famous for the legends of “Smokey Bear” and “Billy the Kid.”

Challenge yourself to hike three trails in the Lincoln National Forest. Friday, October 11, hike the Cedar Creek trails with either a challenging 10k or an easier 5k. Hike the Jerryatics trails on Saturday, October 12th with the options of 8, 11 or 18k. Sunday, October 13th, concludes the weekend with a 6 or 10k hike on the newest trail, the Sawmill Trail. Select the shorter trail lengths for gradual inclines to see magnificent views and nature, i.e., alligator junipers, Ponderosa pines and wildlife. For more rigorous hikes, the longer distances to the ridgetops offer panoramic views of the mountain range and the city of Ruidoso below. Be aware, all the hikes are at altitudes above 6700 feet so give yourself time to be acclimated.

Back by popular demand are the “Four Fun Shorties.” These walks are easier and shorter distances and all together accumulate to 10k. The “Four Fun Shorties” will be in the on-line start box in October. Consider also walking the City of Ruidoso trail or the Mescalero Fitness trail offered by the local Sun County Striders club. You can register for these Year Round Walks through the on-line start box.

After an exhilarating first day wind down at the “Happy Hour” at Downshift Brew Pub - Riverside, Ruidoso. The “Happy Hour” is from 3:00 to 5:00 pm on Friday, October 11. On Saturday, our annual dinner and awards ceremony features genuine New Mexican cuisine with Hatch Green Chili enchiladas. Dinner begins at 6:00 pm, Saturday, October 12th at the Ruidoso Community Center.

LaQuinta Inn is our host hotel and has a negotiated rate of \$99 (before taxes) for October 8-13. Call 575-378-3514 for reservations and mention you are with the West Texas Trail Walkers. Check out vacation home rentals and other hotels by accessing Hotels.com, AirBnB, VRBO or other lodging Apps. Camping sites near our hikes are available in the Lincoln National Forest. Many private camping resorts are also available in Ruidoso.

Make plans now to join us for the long weekend or consider extending your stay to enjoy all six walks. Keep checking our website, [www.westtexastrailwalkers.org](http://www.westtexastrailwalkers.org).

For the latest information. The brochure and registration forms are attached below:

[Event Brochure](#)

[Event Registration Form](#)

**HOOSIER HIKERS - BOB BUZOLICH, PRESIDENT**

**ENJOY A STROLL WITH THE HOOSIER HIKERS DURING THE NAPPANEE SESQUINTENNIAL**

The Hoosier Hikers, a club affiliated with the American Volkssport Association (AVA), invite you to participate in a monthly series of Group Walks that incorporates the highlights of the City of Nappanee, Indiana, during its sesquicentennial Year.

The group walks are scheduled, as follows:

- Monday, July 1 Walk Start Time 10 am
- Saturday, August 10 Walk Start Time 10 am
- Saturday, September 28 Walk Start Time 10 am



All walks start from the parking area nearest the playground in Stauffer Park, 504 Stauffer Drive in Nappanee. All participants must register to participate in this event. The registration fee is \$4. Please arrive no later than one half hour prior to the walk's start time (9:30 am) to register. This event is sanctioned by the IVV through the AVA and qualifies for IVV credit. Registration for this event is also available through the AVA's online start box at <https://my.ava.org>. Persons, who register on-site, will receive a physical stamp in their IVV record books.

Upon completing registration, participants will be segregated into two groups. Those choosing to walk the 5 – kilometer (3.2 miles) route, and those choosing to walk the 11 – kilometer (6.8 miles) route. Anticipate taking about 1.75 hours to complete the 5 – kilometer route, or 2.5 hours to complete the 10 – kilometer route.

For specific information regarding this event, please use the following link: <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=126862> For information regarding Volkssporting activities hosted by the Hoosier Hikers, please contact Bob Buzolich via email at [sonofbuzz@prodigy.net](mailto:sonofbuzz@prodigy.net), or via phone at 574-339-9140.

**SUPPORT OUR NATIONAL FRIENDS**



**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](mailto: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.



1008 S Alamo St · San Antonio, TX 78210, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 Message US.