



CHECKPOINT

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PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR THE APRIL 29TH, 2025 BOARD MEETING AND THE APRIL 30TH AND MAY 2ND, 2025 REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items for the Regular Membership

March 1, 2025 (60 days before the Regular Membership meeting)

- Clubs and Regional Directors must email Agenda Items for the Board Meeting and the Regular Membership meeting to the AVA National Office.
- Any bylaws amendments must be sent to the membership by this date.

March 15, 2025 – (45 days before the Regular Membership meeting)

- Deadline date for clubs to be in “good standing” in order to be eligible to vote during the Regular Membership meeting this April. If you are not sure your club is in good standing contact Erin at erin@ava.org
- Credentialing forms must be postmarked or emailed to the National Office by this date
- Officer's, Regional Director's and Committee biennial reports are due at AVA National Office. Reports will be published in the convention program (300-word limit please).

March 31, 2025 (30 days before the Regular Membership meeting)

- Final list of agenda items for the Regular Membership and Board meeting sent to AVA Clubs and Regional Directors.
- Officer, Board Member, and Committee reports and all supplemental documents for the April Board Meeting and Regular Membership meeting are due at AVA National Office.

April 9, 2025 (21 days before meeting)

- Meeting information package for General Membership and Board meeting emailed to Board Members and Club POC's.

[Click here for Agenda items Form](#)

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

The AVA National Board will meet Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The AVA Regular Membership meeting is Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Friday, May 2, 2025, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

All meetings will be held at the Las Cruces Convention Center. Room # to be announced.

Las Cruces Convention Center
680 East University Avenue
Las Cruces, NM 88001
(575) 526-0100

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NEW BOARD MEMBER AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR ORIENTATION DURING CONVENTION

There will be a ninety-minute orientation for all new and return Board Members and Deputy Directors on Friday, May 2, 2025, immediately after the General Membership Meeting at the Convention Center (meeting room to be announced).

AVA STATE ASSOCIATION AND REGIONAL MEETINGS DURING CONVENTION

Although there will be no "scheduled" State Association and Regional Meetings during the convention, a meeting location will be reserved at the convention center in case you would like to meet. We encourage Regions and State Associations to meet as time permits.

PUBLICITY CONTEST SUSPENDED FOR 2025 CONVENTION

Unfortunately, there will be no Photo or other publicity contests for the 2025 Convention. This is a temporary measure to allow the AVA and Publicity Committee time to reinvent this important component of our conventions. We will be back in 2027 with something more exciting and engaging!

Calling All Regions!

Purchase an information table.

For the reduced price of \$20, each Region has the opportunity to have a table in the Vendor's area where their clubs may showcase some of the unique and fun walk brochures, YRE and Seasonal walk schedules, seasonal walking events for their states, i.e. Roundup in Texas, Walking Around Florida, etc., give out candy to people who stop by your table, make friends, good conversation, etc.



AVA WEDNESDAYS WEBINARS– FEBRUARY 19, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M. CENTRAL

The next AVA online seminar will be Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 7:00-8:00 pm Central. The registration link is 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: Andy Thomas, Southwest Region, AVA Board Member

February online seminar presenters include:

Tammy Cantu, LPC, NCC, LCDC, LMT

Building Stronger Relationships for a Healthier Community

Join us for an insightful session with Tammy Cantu, a clinical psychotherapist and leader in personal development. Tammy specializes in helping individuals become, "The Complete Person" mentally, emotionally, physically, and socially.

In this session, Tammy will share practical ways to build stronger relationships within our communities, using AVA walking clubs as a powerful tool for connection and well-being. Discover how fostering meaningful connections can improve mental health, strengthen support systems, and create lasting change. Together, we can take steps toward a healthier, more connected future.

TO ALL REGIONAL DIRECTORS

We are compiling the Necrology List for all of our AVA friends who have passed since March 1, 2023. Please contact each of your club Presidents or POC's and ask them to provide this information to you and/or the National Office. Please send all emails to Karen@ava.org and copy Hector@ava.org by March 1, 2025. These names will be included in a tribute during the upcoming 2025 Convention in Las Cruces, NM. Please contact Karen Winkle with any questions or concerns.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP SUNSETTING MARCH 31, 2025

Many years ago, AVA Lifetime Membership was one of the best deals in town for members and the AVA. However, due to lack of interest, sustainability, and restructuring of our membership programs, the Lifetime Membership program will sunset March 31, 2025.

All Lifetime Members and those who sign up before March 31, 2025, will retain their current Lifetime Membership benefits in perpetuity. There is still time to sign up for a Lifetime Membership to take advantage of the convention discount. For more information, please contact Marian at marian@ava.org.

GROUPER STRIDER PROGRAM

The Strider program was a walk referral participation program sponsored by our partner, Grouper. The walk fees for these participants were paid by Grouper and the AVA reimbursed clubs \$2.00 for these participants. This program has been discontinued effective January 2, 2025. Strider participants must now pay for all fees to include walks, awards, park fees, and special events fees.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR

2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION – SILENT AUCTION

A way to help AVA is to donate a Silent Auction (SA) item to be auctioned off during convention. Donations are your option. They can be single items or a basket of items. All donations are welcome. We regret we cannot accept any items that require refrigeration. Besides SA items, gift cards are a popular auction item, and cash donations may also be given, made payable to AVA and sent in to the National Office in advance, or hand delivered with "AVA Silent Auction" entered on the memo line.

Clubs are encouraged to bring Silent Auction donations to Las Cruces!

A sub-system to register silent auction donations is available. Registering items in advance helps volunteers to plan display space and have display details prepared in advance. Walkers can access the sub-system through the registration system, or directly from the AVA webpage. We encourage convention attendees to bring donation items to the Las Cruces Convention Center as early as possible, beginning Monday, April 28. Items may also be shipped to Las Cruces, see the FAQ on the AVA webpage to determine where to send items based on the arrival date.

We also want to announce that the AVA Southwest Regional Director, Andy Thomas has volunteered to be the Silent Auction Coordinator in 2025.

Information you will need to have handy when registering Silent Auction items are:

Type of Donation: "Personal", "Club" or "Business"

Name of donor and mailing address

Name of Item

Description of Item

Value (USD)

Minimum Bid Amount

Bid Increment

Delivery Type: By Hand or By Shipping

AVA CONVENTION APRIL 29-MAY 2, 2025

The 2025 Biennial Convention Registration is open! Special thanks to Jeff Giddings, Atlantic Regional Director, who has worked many hours creating and editing the registration system for the AVA.

Registrants have the option to pay online or send a check to the AVA. Should you need help registering or have questions about payments, please contact Marian at marian@ava.org or feel free to call the office at 210-659-2112.



LESLIE STONE - AVA BOARD SECRETARY**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR TELLERS AND CREDENTIALING**

The AVA Secretary is looking for volunteers to serve as Tellers and in Credentialing.

What are tellers you ask? Tellers will assist in vote counting during the AVA's Biennial Convention in Las Cruces. Tellers would need to be available during the business meetings.

What is Credentialing? Credentialing is the process of confirming the delegates, alternates, and proxies, representing each club at the convention and providing them with their credentials to be able to vote in the business meetings. Credentialing also determines if a quorum has been met. Credentialing takes place at various times, such as during convention registration and immediately prior to business meetings. Voting delegates and alternates cannot be Tellers.

Both these positions are necessary for conducting business at the AVA Biennial Convention. Tellers and Credentialing work with the AVA Secretary to ensure that everyone who is eligible to vote is able to and that all votes are counted accurately.

The Business Meetings are tentatively scheduled for:

- Wednesday April 30, 2025, from 3:30 P.M. through 5:30 P.M.
- Friday May 2, 2025, 2:30 P.M. through 4:30 P.M.

Credentialing is tentatively scheduled for:

- Tuesday April 29, 2025, from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- Wednesday April 30, 2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 3:15 P.M.
- Friday May 2, 2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 2:15 P.M.

If you are interested in serving as a Teller or in Credentialing, please email Leslie Stone at Secretary@ava.org. Please advise which position(s) and time(s) you would be interested in serving.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - HELEN HULL, TRAILMASTER**GETTING READY FOR THE 2025 CONVENTION WALKS**

The Las Cruces Convention is fast approaching, registration is open, and now people are planning their trips and have a few questions. You may have been following our planning and information about all the walks, not only the convention walks, but other area walks. And you may have some questions about what's going on with registration. Many of your questions can be answered by checking the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about hotels, general walk information, and many other questions.

I know that some people are just interested in the walks. So the question: Will there be a walkup registration table? - Yes, we will have a manned table for the walks on their 'featured' day (except for White Sands and Juarez Border Crossing) where you may register, pay, stamp, and pickup directions. These tables will be manned from 8:30-11:30 for registration and will remain open until all walkers have returned. You may also register for walks at the Las Cruces Convention Center from Mon, Apr 28 afternoon thru Fri, May 2 morning and pick up the directions and stamp your books at that time, just like a YRE. You may do the walks in any order and at any time after you have registered.

Are the walks available via OSB? - Only 3 walks are available via OSB, the 2 pre-walks (City of Rocks and Silver City) and 1 post-walk (Socorro). You cannot register or download the directions for an OSB walk until 2-weeks before the event opens. And remember, if you register via OSB, you are charged \$2 at the time of registration and then \$2 when you go back to the finish table. You may also register on site on the designated day and during the week at the convention center.

BUT.... If you register for the full convention package, these walks are included with the registration. Shortly before the convention starts, registrants will receive an email with a special link to a site where they can download the directions. Registrants should NOT register via OSB or else they will end up paying an extra \$2 for the walk.

[Click here to continue reading the full article and get more on walks.](#)

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

PUBLICITY UPDATE

I recently had someone ask me if they needed to attend meetings at the 2025 Convention in Las Cruces. No. This is also a Walking Festival Week! Everyone is invited to come out for 9 traditional walks plus there are several YREs, swim event and bike event, along with social events. Please remind members, families and friends to join us for these walks in a beautiful part of southern New Mexico. Schedule of events and registration can be [found here](#). The full walking events are April 26 – May 4, or join us for the convention dates April 29 – May 3.

There are several multi-day events this spring. Please encourage members to attend, and support the hard work clubs are doing to create great walking weekends:

- February 14-16 – [Texas Trail Roundup](#) – San Antonio, TX
- March 8-2 – [Tx Volkssport Assoc](#) – Junction, TX
- April 10-11 – [Ozark Hill Hikers 2 new counties](#) – Clarksville and Ozark, Arkansas
- April 12-13 – [Indiana Spring Fling](#) – Madison, Indiana
- April 26-May 4 – [AVA Biennial Convention](#) – Las Cruces, NM
- May 5-8 – [NW Counties in New Mexico](#) – Gallup, Farmington and more, NM
- May 7-11 – [Huffin & Puffin on High Plains of Kansas](#) – Dodge City, Cimarron and more, KS
- May 16-18 – [Tri-State Lighthouse Weekend](#) – NH, ME, MA
- May 23-26 – [Triangle of Fire](#) – Port Townsend, WA



ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

2025 DELEGATE SELECTION AND PROXY DESIGNATION (AVA FORM 500)

The 2025 Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation (AVA Form 500) has been e-mailed to club POC's. Please complete the form, ensure all required signatures are obtained, and retain a copy for your records. Submit the executed form to AVA for credentialing at the Convention. The form must be postmarked or emailed no later than March 15, 2025. If the deadline for returning this form to the National Office is missed, the form must accompany the Delegate, Alternate, or Proxy to the Credentials Booth at the Convention. The form should be mailed or e-mailed to:

American Volkssport Association, Inc.
Attn: Marian DeVaul
1032 S. Alamo Street
San Antonio, TX 78210

email: marian@ava.org

Please do not forget that clubs must be in "good standing" forty-five days before the opening of the membership meeting to be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The final date for clubs to meet the criteria of being in "good standing" to vote is midnight of March 15, 2025.

[Click here for Credentialing FORM 500](#)

DIANE HOWELL EVANS - PROGRAMS COMMITTEE, CHAIR

SPECIAL PROGRAMS - SIGHTINGS SEEN ALONG THE TRAIL...

In our family road trip that began this past November I have seen some sightings of qualifiers for the new 2025 Special Programs, "Walking With the Wild Things", and "Grain Elevators: Monarchs of the Plains." Unfortunately, they were sighted in 2024 so they were not applicable at the time, but if you live in these areas please walk the trails and collect the qualifiers. If you haven't purchased these two new Special Program booklets, or any of the other wonderful special program books, please check out the AVA webpage for more information at: cb.ava.org/specprog.php.



The first sighting was an abandoned grain elevator in Murrieta CA on the Low Desert Roadrunners' YRE-2011 trail. The Murrieta Valley Historical Society has placed a very informative sign about the history, timeline and community teamwork involved in the building of the grain elevator during WWI. Construction started in May 1918 and finished in September 1918 with the installation of the necessary machinery completed one month later. The Great War ended on November 11, 1918, eclipsing the news of the completion of the grain elevator which had its opening ceremony nine days later. The elevator closed in 1983 as dry farming operations declined and housing developments took hold in the area. This 100+ year old monarch still stands as a tribute to the tenacity of area farmers, community teamwork and the great American spirit.

The second sighting was of "Tinkerbell" in Boulder City NV on the Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers' YRE-1880 historic district trail. Boulder City has an amazing display of artwork and murals along the streets of the historic district. There is also an antique/thrift shop area that includes a variety of garden gnomes. A wonderful walking/audio guide can be found at: ArtWalkingGuide.v5.pdf.



So, what qualifiers have you discovered on your travels or local walks?

SPECIAL PROGRAM DEADLINES

If you are still considering participating in Special Programs, the following Special Programs have a 12/31/25 deadline for the PURCHASE of the current program book:

The last date to REDEEM the following Special Programs challenge books is 12/31/25:



For information on these Special Programs, as well as all the other current programs, please review the Special Programs website at: cb.ava.org/specprog.php



THE SEARCH IS ON! SPECIAL PROGRAMS NEEDED FOR 2027

Does your club have an idea for a new AVA Special Program they would like to sponsor beginning in 2027? Three current Special Programs (Lighthouses II, Par For the Course, and Rails-to-Trails) will end on 12/31/26, so the Programs Committee will be looking for three new Special Programs to begin on January 1, 2027.

Do you know of a theme that would generate interest from a historical, cultural, educational, or scenic beauty perspective that has not previously been a Special Program? Are there major or intriguing American anniversaries occurring in 2027? Now would be the time to put your creative ideas and imagination to work. Talk with club members on walks as some have additional interests outside walking (yes, it does happen), and those other activities may generate ideas. Check your community calendars for local celebrations that are applicable across all states. Add "Brainstorming Special Programs" to the club's meeting agenda and solicit ideas at the meetings.

The AVA Special Program Policy limits new Programs Committee recommendations to just one AVA Board of Directors (BOD) meeting per year, which is typically the first meeting of the calendar year (i.e. 2026). The Special Program begins January 1st of the following year (i.e. 2027). Committee recommendations at the first BOD meeting of the calendar year provides sufficient time in the remaining year for the sponsoring club to submit articles to TAW and the Checkpoint describing the new program, obtain booklets/awards, and create program information for the AVA webpage and OSB. Plus, it allows the clubs across the country to understand the details of the new Special Program, review/modify their current YRE/Seasonal trails, or develop new routes or traditional events to include the qualifiers of the new program.

The deadline for new 2027 Special Program proposals is November 1, 2025. For a copy of the information required in the new Special Program proposal package, please contact Diane Howell Evans at Programs@ava.org.

MIKE GREEN - IT COMMITTEE, CHAIR

HOW TO GET THE EMAIL ADDRESS FOR AN GROUPER MEMBER WHO HAS RSVP'D

To get the email address for a Grouper participant who has RSVP'd for a Club's event, the club must have a grouper club account.

In the March 2024 Checkpoint the following link was provided for an AVA club to apply for a Grouper club account.

[AVA Club Leader Interest Form](#)

You may also call: (844) 974-0493 for Grouper Club support.

Once you have a Grouper Club account (including an email and password for accessing the account), you can login to your club's Grouper account to see a listing of Grouper Events created from a listing of AVA YRE/SEs (that are not OSB only) and TEs for the current year. (This listing of AVA events is typically updated once a month from the latest event data on my.ava.org.)

By scrolling down this list you will be able discover those events that have an active RSVP, then viewing the details of this event will provide a page to determine who has RSVP'd and their email address.

Note the Grouper Club account web interface also supports clubs entering their Club Activities (Group Walks, Club Meetings, etc) as Grouper events for which a Grouper member may RSVP. Club activity data entry is supported for one activity at a time or using an EXCEL spreadsheet with multiple activities (based on a supplied EXCEL Template).



Walking with the Angels.



BETTY LEE GREEN

It is with great sorrow that the family of Betty Lee (Knott) Green, 72, announce her passing on February 5, 2025, at Grand View Hospital in Sellersville, PA. Betty was a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend.

Betty was born to Hayden Knott and Margaret (Horsely) Knott on February 17, 1952, in Anderson, IN as the younger sister to Peggy. The two were easy to identify as sisters, often dressed in matching outfits, blond bangs and cat-eye rimmed glasses, though most would guess their birth order wrong after Betty's 3rd grade growth spurt put her a few inches taller than Peggy. As adults they shared fond memories growing up in Indiana and visiting their grandparents' farm in Kentucky.

In her teenage years at Highland High School in Anderson, IN, you would be hard-pressed to find a club that Betty didn't belong to. She participated in every club from Math, Science, Latin, Drama and the 'Quiz Bowl Team'. She also played the clarinet, while dressed in a plaid kilt, in the Highlander Marching Band where she had the honor of playing for two sitting US Presidents.

[Click here to see full Obituary](#)

PAUL CHESTER CHASTEEN

Paul Chester Chasteen, age 96, of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida passed away peacefully on January 27, 2025.

He held graduate and postgraduate degrees from Stanford and Purdue Universities. After a 22 year military career, Paul went on to share his love of education as a teacher, an insurance salesperson, a gentleman farmer, bee keeper, winemaker and recreational walker.

After a successful business in personal computers, they moved to North Carolina where he and Loretta joined the Winston Wanderers, a Volksmarching Walking Club. During his tenure as president, in addition to adding numerous walks in and around Winston-Salem, they helped to organize a state Volksmarching association. They are fondly remembered by many across the country as they made it a mission to walk in every state in the US at least twice.

[Click here to see full Obituary](#)



**INTERNATIONAL
&
NATIONAL EVENTS**

INDIANA VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION - BOB BUZOLICH

CELEBRATES WITH A SPRING FLING FEST IN SOUTHERN INDIANA

The Indiana Volkssport Association (INVA) will celebrate the beckoning days of outstanding Spring weather with two walking events in Southern Indiana on Saturday, April 12, at Clifty Falls State Park, and on Sunday, April 13, in Historic Madison on the banks and bluffs overlooking the majestic Ohio River.

On Saturday walkers will experience the tranquility and exhilaration for Clifty Creek, its water falls and fossil remnants, as it flows into the Ohio River. For specific information on this event, please use the following link: <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=129289>.

On Sunday walkers will The Historic Madison Guided Walk will acquaint Volksmarchers with the historical and cultural aspects of an Ohio River town with its origins preceding Indiana's statehood. . For specific information on this event, please use the following link: <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=129309>.

The Points-of-Contact for these events are Bob Buzolich, who may be contacted via email at sonofbuzz@prodigy.net or via phone at 574-339-9140, and Teena Ligman, who may be contacted via email at tdligman@att.net or via phone 812-278-0139.

**BRITISH WALKING FEDERATION
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES**



CLICK TO VIEW PDF



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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