

THE AMERICAN WANDERER TAW

The Walking Magazine



AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

The American Wanderer is a national publication of the AVA: Americas Walking Club.



Save the Date!

**AVA: America's Walking Club
2025 Biennial Convention**

April 29-May 2, 2025

Las Cruces, NM
The Real New Mexico
3 Cities, 3 States,
Two Countries



Come Walk WITH US!

For more information and registration visit AVA.org or call (210) 659-2112





Scouts and leaders from BSA Troop 149 from Litz, Pennsylvania, completed the Saturday 21-kilometer trail earning these young walkers their #HikingMeritBadge!



US FREEDOM WALK OCTOBER 18-20, 2024

The 23rd Annual Freedom Walk IML Festival in Washington D.C. and Arlington, VA was a great success this year. There were 13 countries and 23 states represented, with a weekend total of 521 events – 3 trails, 1 swim, and 1 bike. Save the date for the 24th event, October 17-19, 2025.

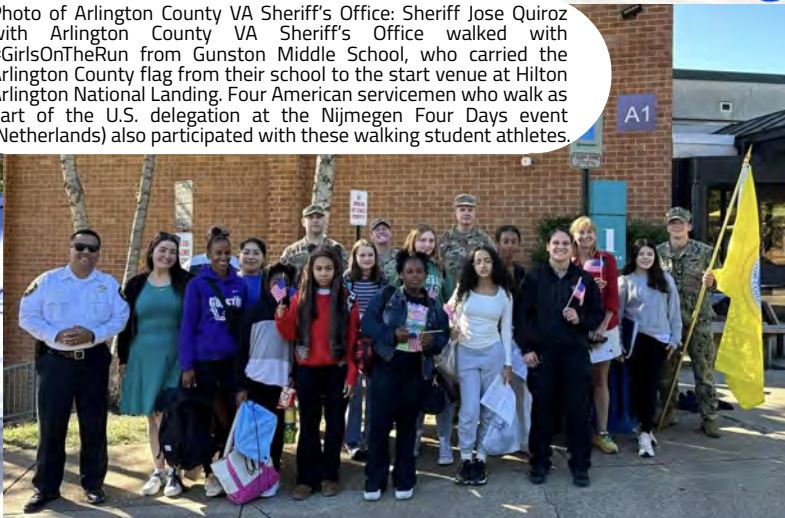
Come and join us for the 24th US Freedom Walk 17-19 October 2025



Walk Arlington USFreedomWalk.org
An International Walking Experience

Volkmarching at its Best

Photo of Arlington County VA Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Jose Quiroz with Arlington County VA Sheriff's Office walked with #GirlsOnTheRun from Gunston Middle School, who carried the Arlington County flag from their school to the start venue at Hilton Arlington National Landing. Four American servicemen who walk as part of the U.S. delegation at the Nijmegen Four Days event (Netherlands) also participated with these walking student athletes.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Kathy Nash is the long-time webmaster for the East Tennessee Wanderers. She's also active in other organizations and is a USA Track and Field official. An avid hiker, Kathy has also completed all 900 miles of trails in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park three times.

Name: Kathy Nash

Club: East Tennessee Wanderers

Year Joined AVA: 2008

KMs walked: 5,019K but walking tomorrow.

Number of events completed: 585 but walking tomorrow

Why did you join AVA? I heard about AVA when commuting to work in Norfolk, VA from military members. I needed to get some exercise so I joined the Gator Club.

What's your favorite walk? The "Walks Across Florida." The scenery is so beautiful.

What's your most memorable walk? The walks offered at the 18th Olympiad in San Antonio, TX. I had so much fun walking with others from all over the world.



On October 5, about 30 walkers calling themselves "AVA for Susan M" walked a mile at San Antonio's Northwest Vista College to support and raise money for the ALS Association. Susan Medlin, a former Southwest Regional Director and Vice President of AVA, was recently diagnosed with ALS. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow and breathe. The group raised \$2,295. It's not too late to donate! ([Walk to Defeat ALS San Antonio: AVA for Susan M - The ALS Association](#))



**HELP US RAISE
MONEY TO FIND
A CURE FOR ALS!**

DONATE TO A TEAM MEMBER



\$2,295

Raised

\$500

Goal

459.2%

Of Goal



NANCY WITTENBERG, BOARD CHAIR

BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

It is cooler where I am, in the Pacific Northwest, so there are many opportunities to walk, even if sometimes we have to walk between raindrops. I hope those of you in the southeast missed most of the hurricanes that came your way, or have been able to recover. I loved the last issue of the TAW, with the many walking opportunities represented there from all over the country. Thanks to all of you who have contributed articles to the TAW so that all of us can see where we can go and what we are missing. I loved the chart of opportunities that were coming up.

The most important opportunity awaits us in April/May – the AVA Biennial Convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico with walks there and in surrounding areas. Please look at the Checkpoint, starting in October for information about walks. Check the link for the Convention on ava.org for information on hotels you can book now. Registration for the convention should be coming out soon.

At the convention we will be electing new officers for the next two-year term. We will be presenting awards, and hearing possible locations for the 2027 convention, along with other opportunities to visit and learn.

Please keep walking and encouraging others to walk with you for the wellness opportunities our sport provides: physical fitness, mental and stress reduction and the social opportunities to walk with others and meet new friends. Take care this winter season.



WALKING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

The AVA National Office in partnership with local club members and Family Service, a nonprofit organization that provides services to underserved communities, hosted a Fall Festival community fundraising walk this past October. Although the net profit was only \$417.00, the non-monetary benefits were phenomenal! Over 125 adults and 95 children under the age of 12 attended! Most of the participants were first time walkers from the surrounding community and 4 participants were former Volkssporters who were excited about reconnecting with the AVA! One of our goals for this event was to outreach to community members, specifically children 12 and under, mission accomplished. The children were sponsored by a local donor who paid for their \$20 registration fee and Family Service provided volunteers, tables, and chairs. Sometimes non-monetary benefits can be equally valuable as net profits by helping to build a stronger foundation for future support and success.

Speaking of future success, the Texas Volkssport Association has agreed to support this event and put it on their 2025 calendar of events. Local clubs and Family Service have committed to partner with the AVA next year to make this a bigger event! Special thanks to Mike and Kathy Schwencke, Pat Gunter, the Texas Volkssport Association and all our volunteers



PRESIDENT'S UPDATES



HENRY ROSALES, PRESIDENT AND CEO





Happy Holidays

Your kindness has truly brightened our days and brought warmth to our hearts.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL INDIVIDUAL DONOR CAMPAIGN IN 2024, THANKS TO YOU! BIG GIVE TOTAL = \$96,109.00

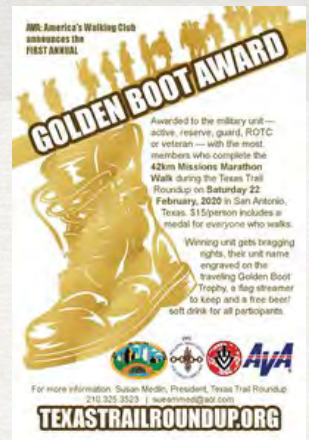
Congratulations to all who supported our annual individual donor campaign, The Big Give. The final donor report for the Big Give will be completed in December and results for all prize winners will be announced during our December 18 online seminar at 7pm Central. You do not want to miss this one! We will have a representative from Fleet Feet share tips on how to buy the perfect walking shoe! To sign up for the online seminar go to ava.org and register.

Thank you to all our donors, we appreciate you!

Happy Holidays!

AVA: AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB PRESENTS THE GOLDEN BOOT AWARD

The Golden Boot Award is awarded to the military unit, active reserve guard, ROTC, or Veteran group with the most members who complete the 42K Missions Marathon Walk, during the Texas Trail Roundup, Saturday February 15, 2025 in San Antonio, Texas. \$20 per person includes medal for everyone who walks. Winning unit gets bragging rights, their unit name engraved on the traveling golden boot trophy, a flag streamer to keep, and a free beer/soft drink for all participants. For more information contact Kathy Schwenke: schkathy@yahoo.com.



APPALACHIAN TRAIL (AT) SPECIAL PROGRAM UPDATE

Despite the extensive damage from Hurricane Helene, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy hopes to have the AT trails in Virginia, Tennessee and North Carolina open by the start of the Spring 2025 season. Be sure to check the Appalachian Trail Conservancy website for the latest trail conditions.

The new point of contact for the Appalachian Trail Special Program is Susan Noonan, susan.noonan@gmail.com. Susan is a colleague of Susan Medlin, the originator of the Appalachian Trail Special Program. As a tribute to Susan Medlin, Susan Noonan will carry on the AT program until its conclusion December 31, 2029. She completed the AT program in October 2024 with Walking Adventures International. Susan is President of the West Texas Trail Walkers, a club that hikes challenging trails in West Texas and New Mexico.

To earn the Appalachian Trail Special Program certification, participants must hike/walk an AVA sanctioned trail in each of the 14 states that the AT passes through. The special event book costs \$10 and the book provides a page for each state for the stamp and for personal comments/pictures. The book is available through December 31, 2028 and must be completed by December 31, 2029. Please send an email to susan.noonan@gmail.com to acquire the book, receive the Appalachian Trail patch and/or for questions.

So far, 315 people have registered for the program and 50 people have completed the program to earn the Appalachian Trail Patch. The most recent person to complete the AT program is Margaret O'Brien, 85, from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, proving that you are never too old to hike the Appalachian Trail. Congratulations Margaret!



AVA NATIONAL OFFICE NEW ADDRESS AND HOLIDAY HOURS

Please note the AVA National Office has moved to a new building that is in the same area (3 houses down) and less expensive. The new address is:

American Volkssport Association
1032 South Alamo Street
San Antonio, Texas 78210

The National Office will be closed for the holidays from December 23 – December 27, 2024. However, someone will be on call to manage any emergencies on non-holidays. Please advise clubs to make sure they have received event stamps before December 17th for events that occur during the last two weeks in December and first week of January. If they have not received these stamps or need help with sanctioning, please contact Hector at hector@ava.org.

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

AVA NATIONAL OFFICER ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE FOR AVA BOARD CHAIR: CARL CORDES



Hello, I'm Carl Cordes and I am seeking your vote to be the next AVA Board Chair. Having been involved with our sport since 1982 I have amassed over 2300 events and 22,000 kilometers across 50 states and 16 countries. So like many of you I remember the good old days when all clubs held weekend events several times a year, club members stepped up to volunteer at checkpoints, local newspapers publicized the events, and new members joined the club at most events. Very little of that happens anymore. That's why we implemented strategic planning role for the Board several; terms ago to position the AVA not just to survive but to thrive in the new realities of public engagement and participation.

I've held club positions in the Atlantic, Southeast and Pacific regions as well as State officer positions in Florida and Maryland. Previously the Pacific Region Deputy Director and Director, I currently serve as AVA Vice Chair. Through these experiences I see opportunity to shift America's Walking Club into a true national membership organization like AARP, VFW and others rather than isolated clubs that are having difficulty attracting and keeping members to host events and remain in business. I see this as a joint effort in my term between the membership and governance committees. It will open the possibility of AVA members in areas that are not served by clubs presently without the need to form a club and the associated bureaucracy to fill officer positions and more. The club model will continue to exist, but we need to get creative to operate in new ways that relate to the people we want to join and participate.

In addition to bringing AVA into a true membership organization model, the development of an AVA walk app will further support and encourage participation by our national membership base regardless of where they are in the USA. I support this extension of our outreach and along those lines we need to standardize walk directions to present a unified look and feel to our event information whether you are walking in California, Florida or anywhere in between. What happens at the club level reflects on the national level.

Those are some of the things I believe are in our grasp to make a difference and put AVA on a path to success as we approach our 50th anniversary and beyond. If we collaborate with open minds on changes that will be necessary and trust everyone has the AVA's best interests at heart, then I see some good new days on the horizon. Thank you for your support.

CANDIDATE FOR AVA BOARD VICE-CHAIR: ED MCCABE



I am excited to submit my nomination as Vice Chair of the AVA board. I have served the last four years as the Finance Chair of America's Walking Club. I am a CPA and currently the Chief Executive Officer of an independent Christian school in San Antonio. I previously spent 30 years as a high school football coach, 25 years as a head coach and 22 years as an athletic director. I also have extensive experience in not-for-profit management and tax accounting. My primary form of exercise and relaxation is to take long walks on weekends.

I first got involved with the AVA as I brought my school's performing bands, cheerleaders, and mariachi dancers to local AVA events, including the Texas Trail Round-Ups. I participated and volunteered in walks, and continued to volunteer prior to serving on the board. I have sat on numerous AVA committees and look forward to working with the national office and the AVA board to better position this important organization to thrive moving forward.

CANDIDATE FOR AVA BOARD FINANCE CHAIR: CHRIS MELLEN



I am Christopher (Chris) Mellen and am volunteering to run for the office of Treasurer for AVA: America's Walking Club. My desire to run for this office is to actively participate as Treasurer and offer my thirty two years of AVA current and past knowledge of our organization. My feelings go and participation go beyond the club level as a past President to participating actively with AVA Headquarters monthly with the Checkpoint and quarterly with the TAW.

I have proof read and assisted to compile every Start Point Book from the beginning providing what is on the AVA Website informative information regarding every year round and seasonal event offered by our organization and dedicated POCs.

I owned a Computer Service company provided accounts payable/receivables, inventory and payroll for twenty seven years sold it and retired twenty five years ago. I was elected three terms of nine years on the Finance Committee in my town Tyngsboro Massachusetts.

I volunteered for over twenty years on various committees.

I enjoy constantly meeting people who walk and have walked in forty six Capitals and States. Had I not been with AVA for all these years I would not have seen the best areas offered by POCs in each State.

I would bring thirty two years of first hand knowledge and share experiences to the AVA: America's Walking Club Board of Trustees. This includes:

- Holding club offices and president in my Massachusetts club Walk n Mass.
- Delegate or volunteer for twelve conventions with IT.
- I have served on the recent Strategic Planning Committee with Nancy and David.
- Currently serve on the IT Committee from inception.
- Currently and past years served on the Awards Committee.
- Currently serve on the Special Events Committee
- Chairman 2022 year's Election Committee.
- Provided the Special Event College Program.

AVA NATIONAL OFFICER ELECTIONS

I bring many years of business experience to include technical support, customer service, and project management. I am certain the major challenge for our organization is increasing participation and club growth for our future. Increased participation would bring in needed revenue. Revenue growth is always a major challenge.

If elected, I will continue my years of involvement serving this organization and to see the goals of AVA: America's Walking Club are achieved.

CANDIDATE FOR AVA BOARD SECRETARY: LESLIE STONE



My name is Leslie Stone (some may remember me as Leslie Penton), and it has been my pleasure to serve as Secretary of the AVA since June 2023. I would like to continue as the AVA Secretary, and I am asking for your support. The office of Secretary is the best way I can give back to an organization which has brought me enjoyment and excitement.

Like other volkssporters of my era, I participated in my first volksmarch in Germany, in 1978. My first USA event was at Ft. Sill, OK with the Oklahoma Striders in 1981.

I worked for AT&T for 24 years and moved every few years to a new location. Each time I moved, I picked up the TAW, found a local volkssporting club and started participating with that club. What better way to learn about an area or make new friends than volkssporting?

I like to walk. I enjoy the socializing and camaraderie that volkssporting presents. During the last 41 years, I have met wonderful walking friends. I have walked in all fifty states and have seen so many new areas – which is something I would not have done without volkssporting.

I would bring 41 years of firsthand volkssport knowledge and experience to the AVA: America's Walking Club Board of Directors. This includes:

- Holding club offices and presidencies (1986 in Oklahoma City & 1994/1995 in Largo, FL)
- Living and walking in 5 regions (Southwest, South Central, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic and Northeast).
- I have been a delegate or a volunteer (Credentialing and/or Teller) at 16 AVA Conventions.
- I have served on the Strategic Planning Committee (1999 to 2001).
- I have developed and maintained websites for two clubs and the Northeast Region 1998-2010.
- I served as the Northeast Region Director from 2003 to 2004. During this time, I trained the NE Region clubs on the "new" on-line sanctioning system.
- I served as Secretary of the Texas Volkssport Association from 2007 to 2010.
- I served on the 2009 Richardson, Texas Convention Committee.
- I currently serve as Treasurer for The Happy Wanderers, AVA 0717 and belong to four Florida clubs.
- I have participated in almost 1,400 events and I have been involved in the planning and operation of numerous events.

I bring 45 years of business work experience including customer service, training, project management and technical support. I hold a BA in Business Management, and an MBA.

I believe the major challenge for the AVA is increasing participation and club growth for the long term. Increased participation would bring in additional revenue. Increased revenue will help the financial hurdles and move toward national recognition outside of the walking community. Revenue growth is a major challenge. Grants or additional corporate sponsorship could help fill the gap when sanction and participation fees are not enough.

If elected, I will work hard to serve this organization, to realize an increase in participation and to see the goals of AVA: America's Walking Club are achieved.

I ask for your consideration in this matter.



CALL TO CONVENTION

LESLIE STONE, AVA SECRETARY

To All National Officers, Regional Directors, State Organizations, AVA Member Clubs

I hereby notify all AVA National Officers, Regional Directors, State Organizations, and AVA Member Clubs of the 2025 American Volkssport Association 23rd Biennial Convention and invite you to participate. The AVA will hold the convention at the Las Cruces Convention Center, 680 E University Ave, Las Cruces, NM 88001, from Tuesday, April 29 through Friday, May 2, 2025, to elect officers, to receive reports of officers and committees, and to conduct other business that may arise.

Voting Privileges: Each National Officer, Regional Director, State Organization, and Regular Member Club in good standing forty-five days (March 15, 2025) before the opening general session is entitled to one vote in each election and on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The CEO shall have no vote.

Delegates: A delegate normally represents each State Organization and Regular Member Club at the General Sessions. Each State Organization and Regular Member Club designates its delegate by completing AVA Form 500, Delegate Selection and Proxy Designation, and ensures the designated delegate registers for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention. The AVA National Headquarters will mail AVA Form 500 to National Officers, State Organizations, and Regular Member Clubs. Alternates: State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may designate an alternate by completing AVA Form 500 and ensuring the designated alternate registers for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention.

Proxies: State Organizations and Regular Member Clubs in good standing may vote by proxy by designating a proxy on AVA Form 500. A proxy can only be given to a person certified as a delegate for the 23rd AVA Biennial Convention. Candidates for AVA National Office or candidates for Regional Director may not carry proxies.

Responsibilities: Delegates, alternates, and proxies will present their copy of AVA Form 500 to the Credential Committee at the convention, attend the convention, participate in all general sessions, and attend workshops. A club may transfer voting privileges to an alternate only in an emergency. The club should advise the delegate, alternate or proxy on voting positions for elections and other business upon which the membership might vote. Delegates should report back to the club they represent on the general sessions and workshops.



ARTICLE 14 MEETINGS

14.01. Regular Membership Meetings. A regular membership meeting of the Corporation shall be held in April, May or June of every odd-numbered year unless otherwise ordered by the Board of Directors. The meeting shall be to elect National Officers, receive reports of National Officers and committees and for such other business as may be identified in the notice of the meeting.

14.02. Special Membership Meetings. A special membership meeting may be called by the CEO or by the Board of Directors and must be called upon the written request of at least forty regular member clubs, at least twenty of which are not from the same Region and at least one-half of the Regions must be represented. The purpose of the special membership meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least sixty days notice shall be given.

14.03. Meeting by Electronic Means. The Board of Directors and any committee of the Corporation, may hold a meeting by telephone conference call or any other electronic means, if: (a) each person entitled to participate in the meeting consents to the meeting being held by means of that system; and (b) the system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which each person participating in the meeting can communicate concurrently with each other participant. The notice of a meeting by electronic means must state the fact that the meeting will be held by electronic means as well as all other matters required to be included in the notice. Participation of a person in a meeting by electronic means constitutes the presence of that person at the meeting.

14.04. Voting Rights. Each elected National Officer, Regional Director, and Member that is in good standing forty-five days before the opening of the membership meeting will be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. The CEO shall have no vote.

14.05. Voting by Mail. A Member is entitled to vote by mail, electronically, or email on any matter that may be voted on by the membership. For this Section, the transmission of votes by fax or email shall be considered mail.

14.06. Voting by Proxy. A Member entitled to vote may vote by proxy executed in writing by the Member. No proxy shall be valid after the close of the session for which it is issued. No candidate for National Office or Regional Director may carry proxies.

ARTICLE 16 AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

16.01 Amendments. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the AVA by a majority vote of the eligible delegates represented in person or by proxy, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted to the Board of Directors and submitted, in writing, to all Members at least sixty days prior to the regular or special membership meeting at which vote shall be taken. BYLAWS OF AMERICAN VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION, INC. - Page 28 Posting Date 5/3/21 **16.02 Waiver of Notice.** The requirement for sixty days notice to all Members of the AVA can be waived by two-thirds vote of the eligible voters represented in person or by proxy at a regular or special membership meeting of the AVA. **16.03 Waiver Process.** If Section 16.02 of this Article is used in a regular or special membership meeting of the AVA so as to waive the requirements of Section 16.01 of this Article, then any such amendment must be submitted to the Board Secretary in writing.



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION – SILENT AUCTION

JERRY WILSON, CHAIR, AVA CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Watch the monthly AVA Checkpoint articles and the AVA webpage for convention updates!

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CONVENTION 2025

SUSAN PINNEKE,
2025 CONVENTION VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The 2025 AVA Convention in Las Cruces, NM is going to be a very special event, with awesome walking experiences, fun socials and generally exciting experiences. BUT Yes, there's always a "BUT". This very special event is being hosted by some very small Volkssport clubs. They are going to need help with everything from trail marking and checkpoints, to silent auction, to registration and much more. Volunteering is a great way to make new friends and have some extra fun along the way!! Hi, I'm Susan Pinneke, volunteer coordinator for the 2025 convention. I'm asking you, please, when you register for the convention, check the box "I'd like to volunteer" or email me at volunteers@ava.org and let me know you'd be willing to help out a bit. You don't have to specify a job, day or time right now. I'm just putting together a list of volunteers at this point. We will be using SignUpGenius again for this convention, as we did for the Olympiad. Once we have jobs and shifts figured out, we'll send out the link to the SignUpGenius and you can choose the job you'd like and the shifts that work into your schedule. Shifts will be designed so you can volunteer and participate in the day's activity. The SignUpGenius is scheduled to be available around the first of the year, once we know more about our volunteer needs. I know from being volunteer coordinator for the Olympiad, volkssporters are the best volunteers around. Generous with their time, friendly, helpful and flexible, the volunteers made the event a success!! If you have questions, contact me, Susan Pinneke at volunteers@AVA.org.



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION HOTELS

Book your stay through Playeasy for unbeatable hotel deals near our convention. Our collaboration ensures the widest variety and lowest rates from over 40 top booking sites, plus exclusive hotel special discounts for our convention attendees. Find your ideal accommodation, earn rewards and collect points for your loyalty program with each stay.

Click below and book hotels that the AVA has negotiated special rates with for convention attendees. The AVA may provide scheduled bus transportation to and from these hotels only for most convention activities on April 28-May 2, 2025.

Convention Hotels

Nearby Hotels





2025 LAS CRUCES WALK PLANS

HELEN HULL

We have finalized our walks for the 2025 convention in Las Cruces. Those of you who read the monthly Checkpoint have already heard about the walk schedule and information about the pre and post walks. The November Checkpoint included more information about the walks near Las Cruces. As mentioned in the October Checkpoint, all walks will be available for the entire Apr 26 thru May 4 week except for the International Friendship walk from El Paso to Juarez. We will be featuring a walk each day with a manned start/finish table, directions, and stamps.

So repeating the information from the October Checkpoint:

- Sat, Apr 26 – City of Rocks State Park – Faywood, NM
- Sun, Apr 27 – Silver City, NM
- Mon, Apr 28 – free day for area walks including the University Campus walk in Las Cruces
- Tues, Apr 29 – Organ Mountains Dripping Springs – Las Cruces, NM
- Wed, Apr 30 – El Paso International Walk to Juarez
- or
- El Paso Municipal Rose Garden.
- Thurs, May 1 – Choice of White Sands National Park – Alamogordo
Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park – Mesilla (Las Cruces)
- Fri, May 2 – Reverse of Thurs (Mesilla Valley SP or White Sands)
- Sat, May 3 – Historic Downtown Las Cruces
- Sun, May 4 – Socorro, NM

Now let's look at the Las Cruces area walks:

Tuesday's featured walk at Dripping Springs in the Organ Mountains is just 12 miles from the convention center in Las Cruces, a quick 20 minute drive. Dripping Springs was the site of a 'resort' and still has some ruins of the old hotel. This site is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park system. Don't forget your National Park Passport and pass. There is a vehicle fee (free for National Park Pass holders). The 5k route is an easy, fairly level walk to the ruins and back to the visitor center. The 10k route continues around a rock outcropping close to the visitor center and visits 'hermit cave' which was inhabited by a hermit for many years. The walk (not really a hike) does not require hiking boots, just sturdy walking shoes, hiking poles can be useful.

Wednesday, we will be heading to El Paso which is about an hour away. Bus transportation will be provided for those who have pre-registered. Walkup registration will be available at the convention center and on-site, but will not guarantee you a seat on the bus. You might have to provide your own transportation. The buses will go to either the Juarez border crossing walk (bring your passport) or the El Paso Municipal Rose Garden. The Juarez walk will be sanctioned as a 5k only due to travel constraints while the Rose Garden will offer both 5 and 10k routes.

The Juarez buses will drop walkers at the Del Norte Bridge where they will deposited their \$.50 (exact change only) into the turnstile and then cross the bridge over the Rio Grande. The walk continues about 1 mile to the city plaza area and passes the first church affiliated with the Baptist in Juarez, the Tim Tam Museum, the Kentucky Bar (check out its prohibition era connection), shops, and eateries. The walk continues to the historic Customs House, Our Lady of Guadalupe Cathedral and the old city hall. The city hall, now an art museum, is the checkpoint where walkers will be greeted by Juarez officials and offered refreshments. The walk then returns back to El Paso via the Del Norte Bridge. An official will check your passport (just to verify that you have it) before you deposit your \$.40 (exact change) into the turnstile. At mid-bridge, officials will check your passport and ask a few questions. This took a couple of minutes when I did the walk in mid-Sept on a weekday, but it could take longer depending on the number of people crossing and possibly other situations.

For those who do not have passports or who do not wish to walk into Juarez, we have a separate walk at the El Paso Municipal Rose Garden. The garden was in full bloom when I visited there last April. After strolling thru the gardens, the walk continues thru the Manhattan Heights Historic District. The area was the site of a copper smelter in the late 1800's which was demolished by 1912 to make room for a residential area with wealthy buyers in mind. The walk has 2 separate 5k loops originating from the Rose Garden.

Now for the Thursday and Friday walks. Because of the size of the White Sands National Monument and their restrooms and parking areas, the rangers have requested that we divide our walkers over the 2 days. Walkers who pre-register will be able to select either Thurs or Fri for their visit to the Sands. However, due to bus capacity, you might not be able to get your desired date. Preference will be given to first-register, first-on-the-bus. Again due to distance and park facilities, the White Sands walk will be sanctioned for 5k only. After a quick stop at the visitor center (potty break), the bus will stop for 2 short hikes of .5k and 1.6k before heading to the end of the road and the Alkali Flat. Although this has a 5 mile hike, it takes 4+ hours to do the whole loop. The 'bus host(ess)' will give you time to explore the dunes with a 'return time'. The trail is marked by posts due to the 'shifting sand' and offers the '2-steps forward, 1-step back' loose sand hiking experience. The bus will make one more stop at the visitor center before heading back to Las Cruces. Please bring snacks and water with you as food is not available at the park and buses may not get back to Las Cruces until 1:00 or 2:00.

So on the Thurs/Fri when you don't go to White Sands, you can explore the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, just 5 miles from the convention center. We will have a shuttle bus circling about every 20-30 minutes to take walkers to the park and bring them back to the convention center. The park offers 2.5 miles of trails along well-groomed wide trails, a bit sandy, but very flat. The 10k walk will continue out of the park and connect to a hike-n-bike paved trail along the Rio Grande which runs from the park to Las Cruces. No, you don't walk back to the convention center, the bus will pick you up and deliver you back to the convention center.

Saturday, our featured walk is in historic downtown Las Cruces, about 3 miles from the convention center. The walk goes thru the downtown plaza, site of the Saturday Market featuring arts and crafts, farmers' market, and food booths. We will have a table set up in the plaza and hope to talk the locals into joining us for the walk. We are looking for people willing to meet and walk with them.

Did I mention that Las Cruces offers FREE bus service all around town including a route from the convention center to the downtown area. So join us for a mini-tour of New Mexico, its deserts, mountains, National Parks, history, and its unique culture. Be sure and check the Checkpoints and future TAWs for specific requirements for the walks.



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION - MEET YOU IN NEW MEXICO

JERRY WILSON, CHAIR, AVA CONVENTION COMMITTEE

It's more than time to get together again with fellow walkers! Let's all meet in Las Cruces New Mexico in 2025!

National Office staff, as well as the Convention Committee, are working to plan a convention not to be missed. There may be changes to the following:

Dates of Interest (Highlights):

- **Already Open** - **Lodging Reservations**
Accessible through the AVA Website
- **Already Identified** - **RV Park - Recommended**
Identified on the AVA Website
- **FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**
Loaded to the AVA Website. Watch for updates!
- **Convention Registration System**
Accessible through the AVA Website
- **Convention Volunteering**
Check Box on Registration System to Volunteer
- Those checking the box will be contacted for details.
- **Silent Auction Donations**
Registrants can choose to go to a separate system to register donation items
- **Saturday, April 26, 2025**
Pre-Convention Walk - City of Rocks State Park
90 miles from Las Cruces
Las Cruces iMIRA! - Spring Festival
- **Sunday, April 27, 2025**
Pre-Convention Walk - Silver City
120 miles from Las Cruces
- **Monday, April 28, 2025**
Soft-Opening of Registration and Merchandise Counter
University Walk, Swim and Bike Events Open in Las Cruces
- **Convention Dates: Tuesday, April 29 – Friday, May 2**
- **Tuesday, April 29**
Convention Walk - Organ Mountain Dripping Springs (Busing)
AVA Board Meeting
Evening Meet and Greet (Paid Event) (Busing)
- **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**
Convention Walk - El Paso International Walk-Only Day (Busing)
or Convention Walk - Rose Garden/ Manhattan Heights District Walk (Busing)
AVA Regular Membership Meeting
- **Thursday, May 1, 2025**
Convention Walk - White Sands National Park (Busing)
or Mesilla Valley State Park (Busing)
Seminars & Booths
Gala and HOF Inductions
- **Friday, May 2, 2025**
Convention Walk - White Sands National Park (Busing)
or Mesilla Valley State Park (Busing)
Booths
AVA Regular Membership Meeting
- **Saturday, May 3, 2025**
Post-Convention Walk - Las Cruces Downtown
- **Sunday, May 4, 2025**
Post-Convention Walk - Socorro - 150 miles from Las Cruces

Note: Beginning Monday, May 5 local clubs in New Mexico are hosting county walks in Northwest New Mexico. Local club walks are available all over New Mexico and Northern Texas for you to access. Pre-convention, Post-convention, Convention, Bike and Swim Events will be available as seasonal events for dates beyond the Main date for each. The exception will be the International Walk which is available only on Wednesday, April 30.

Watch the monthly AVA Checkpoint articles and the AVA webpage for convention updates.

LAS CRUCES PRE AND POST CONVENTION WALKS

HELEN HULL



Sat, Apr 26 - City of Rocks State Park is located halfway between Deming and Silver City and is the home of giant rocks just begging to be scrambled over and wandered thru. The park is small and has limited parking available. So we will be working closely with the rangers for parking and carpooling options. The park features a flat loop around the park with options to hike to an overlook or to hike to the top of Table Mountain. Then the walk passes thru the campground and the giant rocks. Hiking boots and poles are recommended for the 10k option to Table Mountain while the rest of walk is fine with your regular walking shoes. If you're camping, then this park has great camp sites and RV sites available.



Mon, Apr 29 is a free day to check out other area walks, either around Silver City or Las Cruces including the University Campus walk in Las Cruces. There will be a person available at the Las Cruces convention center to register and hand out campus directions if you chose to do it on Monday. We will be setting up for the convention, but hope to allow people to start picking up their registration package later in the afternoon.

The New Mexico State University Campus walk is not actually a pre-walk as it will be available the entire week to help you fill a void in your schedule. The campus walk starts at the Las Cruces Convention Center and ambles thru the campus passing historic buildings, outdoor sculptures, several museums, and the Zuhl Library. Although small (there is another library on campus), the library contains many large polished samples of petrified wood and is worth a quick visit.



Sun, Apr 27 - Silver City is 30 miles north of City of Rocks State Park and is an old mining town. Our walk will start at Western New Mexico University at 1000 W College Ave in the college plaza. The walk continues to the historic downtown area passing historic sites and charming shops. Be sure and stop at the Silver City Visitor Center and check out the Billy the Kid replicate cabin used in the movie by Ron Howard. After completing the movie, Howard donated the cabin to the city. The University has a big event scheduled for Sat, Apr 26, so if planning to do the walk on that date, pay close attention to the OSB directions about an alternate start point.



Sun, May 4 - Socorro is about 150 miles north of Las Cruces and the walk will start at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology campus close to Baca Hall on Neel St. The walk goes thru the campus and to the historic downtown. It features 2 intersecting plazas and the San Miguel de Socorro Catholic Church. The church was established in 1598, although the present church was completed about 1821. Of major interest is the college's Mineral Museum which features minerals and gemstones from all over the world, something not to be missed.

Check our other article about the rest of the convention walks.

BEAUTY, CULTURE AND ADVENTURE AWAIT YOU IN LAS CRUCES FOR THE AVA CONVENTION

SUSAN FINE



Las Cruces, New Mexico is a unique city with a vibrant culture, music and arts, rich history, unique culinary experiences, and various types of outdoor adventures. Located in the Chihuahuan Desert, in the heart of the fertile Mesilla Valley, Las Cruces is between the Organ Mountains and the Rio Grande River. Founded in 1849, this city of almost 113,000 is a beautiful oasis that you will enjoy. See the [visitors guide here](#) to make your visit the best it can be.



AVA: America's Walking Club is proud to work with [Visit Las Cruces](#) to create walks and social activities during the biannual convention April 29-May 2, 2025; or come for the pre and post events for a total of 9 days April 26 – May 4. In fact, there are two festivals during our visit, which can be enjoyed after your daily walks. Saturday, April 26, is the annual ¡Mira! Las Cruces downtown festival. Saturday May 3 are 2 events: the Farmer's Market (which is part of our post walk that day) and the Cinco de Mayo festival in historic Mesilla (where there is a YRE in Mesilla).

There are a total of 10 planned walks over the 9 days, plus many YREs, all within a two-hour drive of the city. If you don't plan to attend the membership meetings in the afternoons, you can enjoy additional walks, along with swim and bike events.

So how do you plan your visit to Las Cruces? It depends on your time.

First, for those of you new to an AVA convention, let me explain the pre walks (April 26-27) and the post walks (May 3-4). Pre and post events are for walkers who want to spend more time to experience the area. For many people driving into New Mexico, they will plan to attend these walks first, without going into Las Cruces, and they will stay at nearby hotels. (However, all these events are within 2 hours of Las Cruces, so you could stay in the city). There will be a sign-in table at each location for directions. Pre and post events are not part of the actual convention, but certainly enhance the experience. Also, these walks will be OSB (online start box) walks, so if you don't have time during the group walks as listed, you can do them on your own.

Walks during the actual convention time (April 29-May 2) will include transportation to and from the walks and to the social events. All events will start at the Las Cruces Convention Center, where the buses will take you to the walk. (Remember to bring your passport if you want to walk in Juarez, Mexico April 30th; if not, you can choose to do the Rose Garden walk in El Paso). There are several hotels within walking distance to the Las Cruces Convention Center. There is also a city bus if you want additional trips to museums, shopping centers, etc.

How to register:

- If you want to experience all 9 days of events, workshops and socials April 26 – May 4, register for the full convention package. For the pre and post walks, you will need transportation to those sites. Buses are included for the convention walk events and socials April 29-May 2. All walk fees are included with this package.
- If you are only attending the convention and the walks and workshops, you can register for the 4-day package. All transportation is included, as are walk fees.
- Hotel rates and RV park rates should be booked asap: ava.org/2025-convention.

We will have a Q&A session at the January 15, 2025 webinar, so you can ask questions of the Convention Committee, to understand more about this beautiful city, and the walks and social events planned.

More information and registration are available here on our [AVA 2025 Convention page](#).

We hope to see you April 26 – May 4, 2025 in exquisite Las Cruces.



DID YOU KNOW LAS CRUCES:

- Was voted one of the best places to live and retire (Forbes 2024)
- Is listed as one of the best-performing cities (2024: MilkenInstitute.org)
- Was voted as 11 Best Ale Trails in the U.S. (Seeker)
- From mountains to desert, Las Cruces is filled with natural wonders for outdoor fun
- It's Farmer's Market is ranked one of the top-rated in the U.S. (America's Farmland Trust)
- Boasts 320 days of sunshine each year, and is 3,900 feet about sea level
- Is the midpoint between Los Angeles and Dallas
- Is home to New Mexico State University with over 21,000 students
- The area has a huge business in the Space field: with SpacePort America, the world's first commercial space sport; national solar observatory near Cloudcroft, NM; space murals; New Mexico Museum of Space History in Alamogordo, NM (all in driving distance). And of course, White Sands Missile Range (not open to the public, as it's an active military base), where Oppenheimer launched the first atom bomb.
- Will have its annual ¡Mira! Las Cruces downtown festival Saturday April 26 after our pre-walk event
- Will have its Cinco de Mayo festival in historic Mesilla Saturday May 3 after our post-walk event (plus there is a YRE in Mesilla).



MULTI-DAY EVENTS (FESTS)

DIANE HOWELL EVANS, AVA PROGRAMS COMMITTEE, CHAIR

Many fellow walkers use the Multi-Day Events Calendar to plan their vacations/walking trips. The earlier a club can enter information about their upcoming festivals the greater the lead time to prospective attendees for planning travel dates, transportation, accommodations and daily schedules.

To create a new Fest or edit an existing one you must be logged into my.ava.org and have club management privileges. The IT Committee has developed an online data entry form for you to use when creating your club's fest. The first 5 data fields are required when creating the fest entry: start date, end date, name of the fest, city or town where the fest will take place, and the 2-character state abbreviation. The remaining data fields (registration location, POC name and email, and website) can be entered later. If you have an approved save-the-date flyer or brochure you can upload it at this time or later. The next step is to enter the sanction numbers of the events if known at the time. Any of the non-required data fields can be entered later by editing the fest. And finally, be sure and click on the "Save" button!

During the entire data entry or edit process there is a "Help" function available to assist you with the necessary steps. If you have any questions during the process, please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Director or programs@ava.org for assistance. So please take advantage of adding your festivals to the Multi-Day Event Calendar to promote your events to both local walkers as well as travelers interested in seeing new areas of our country!



NEW SPECIAL PROGRAM BEGINNING IN 2025



WALKING WITH THE WILD THINGS (TROLLS, GARGOYLES, FAIRIES AND GNOMES)

The new Walking with the Wild Things special program, inspired by Thomas Dambo's Way of the Bird King Trolls, runs from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027. Redeem completed books by December 31, 2028.

Originating from mythology, folklore and gothic architecture, one can find trolls, fairies, gnomes and gargoyles as you walk along many AVA trails. Be on the lookout for these wild things in gardens, front yards, parks, storefront windows, church spires, t-shirts, car decals, posters, etc.

Trolls and gnomes, both from Norse mythology, are very different when it comes to their appearance, powers and temperament. Trolls are usually seen as giant, ugly and sometimes scaled creatures. Gnomes on the other hand are seen as small, with flowing beards and round cheeks. Trolls have superhuman powers and can toss huge boulders or yank trees from the ground. Whereas gnomes can communicate with animals, flowers, and all mother nature's children. Trolls keep to themselves far away from humans and are known to lie in wait to rob travelers of their possessions. Gnomes are friendly to humans, but some can also be mischievous.

Fairies are magical and captivate us! Fairies can be mischievous, malicious, or good. As magical creatures they can fly, cast spells, appear and vanish on a whim.

Gargoyles, those scary figures found up near roofs of old buildings – especially very old churches! Believe it or not they originally served as waterspouts to divert water away from buildings to protect the structure from erosion. Later they were used to repel evil spirits or to warn church goers of straying off the faithful path.

Complete 15 AVA/IWV sanctioned events (either YRE or traditional event in the US or Canada) where the route goes by a troll, gargoyle, fairy or gnome. In addition to the event stamp, you will need to specify the type of Wild Thing you encountered on the route. You may use the same walk once per year per book. You are encouraged to complete qualifying walks in or out of your own regional area.

The cost of the book is \$12. Successful participants will earn a full color embroidered 4" patch, as shown, designed by Dorm Batson. To purchase a Special Program booklet, send your mailing address, e-mail address and a check for \$12 made out to Capitol Volkssport Club (CVC) and mail to: Pamela Greig-Davis, 6623 Riviera Ct SE, Lacey WA 98513. Direct all questions to Pam Greig-Davis via e-mail at greigenterprises@msn.com or by phone at (360)790-9733.



AVA SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The last date to complete any purchased challenge books and redeem for the AVA Special Program "Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness and Great Friendships" is **12/31/2024**.

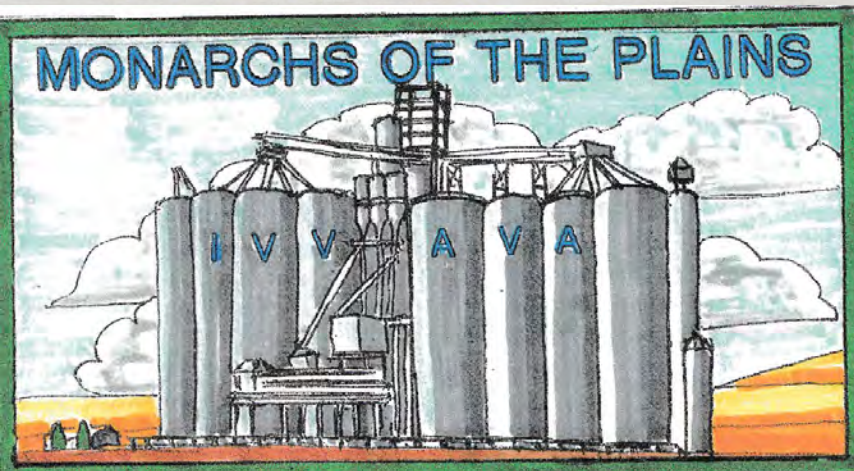


The last date to purchase a challenge book for the AVA Special Program "Town Hall/City Hall" is **12/31/2024**.



EXTENDED - The redemption of already purchased books for the Border Crossing Special Program has been extended to **12/31/2025**. Look for an international walk at the 2025 AVA Convention in Las Cruces, NM.

NEW SPECIAL PROGRAM BEGINNING IN 2025



GRAIN ELEVATORS: MONARCHS OF THE PLAINS

BY TERRI TYLER, AND FRANK AND SHERRY SAYERS

The program, inspired by Terri Tyler and the Sunflower Sod Stompers in Topeka KS, runs from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027. Redeem completed books by December 31, 2028.

Grain elevators are found throughout the US and Canada. Usually located near railway lines and rivers, most grain elevators were, until the 1930s, owned by railroad companies; ownership today is generally cooperative or private. The grain-storage facility on a farm is usually called the granary, or crib. They serve a useful purpose for storing grain until it can be moved to the appropriate processing facility. A grain elevator is usually a tall frame, metal, or concrete structure with a compartmented interior. They come in many different shapes and sizes. For more information and pictures, go to our website: <https://WoodlandWanderers.org/Grain/>.

Excerpt from <https://www.american-historama.org/1881-1913-maturation-era/grain-elevators.htm>

Definition and Summary of Grain Elevators were invented in 1842 by Joseph Dart and Robert Dunbar in Buffalo, New York to address the problem of unloading and storing grain transported via the Erie Canal. Grain Elevators were adapted to suit the loading and storage requirements of grains transported from farmland via the railroad. The 'Country Elevators' became known as the "Sentinels of the Prairie," "Prairie Cathedrals" and "Prairie Skyscrapers." These tall, house-like structures became common features of the railroads and dotted the Great Plains landscape in the latter half of the nineteenth century during the Industrial Revolution in America.

The need for Grain elevators emerged in the mid 1800's in North America when agriculture moved to a cash crop economy following the invention of the Cyrus McCormick Mechanical Reaper. The McCormick reaper machine revolutionized farming methods enabling wheat farmers to begin mass production of grain crops. Their problem was getting their products to market that required long-distance distribution of their produce. The storage of grain and its transportation was both labor intensive and time consuming.

Any sanctioned YRE, seasonal or traditional event in the US or Canada that walks/bikes where the participant can view a grain elevator, silo, mill, grain loading facility, granary, or grain crib, or one that has been repurposed or re-utilized qualifies. As mentioned above, many of these grain storage facilities are located on private property, which means we cannot easily make the route go directly past the elevator. Thus, if you can see it, that qualifies.

One stamp per event per year. The Special Program booklet contains 14 spaces for the stamp and additional information regarding the ownership or use of the elevator, such as a logo or a company name. The cost of the book is \$12. Successful participants will earn a full color embroidered 3x5" patch, as shown, designed by Dorm Batson. For more information, contact Frank Sayers at grain@WoodlandWanderers.org. To purchase a Special Program booklet, send your mailing address, e-mail address and a check for \$12 made out to Woodland Wanderers and mail to: Woodland Wanderers, c/o Sherry Sayers, 3524 N Cascade Ave, Lot #58, Colorado Springs CO 80907.

Grain Elevator Fact#1: The initial use of the invention changed the speed at which a barge could be unloaded, from a rate of 1,800 bushels per day by manual labor, to 1,000 bushels per hour using the mechanical elevator. See additional facts about these amazing "Monarchs of the Plains" in future issues of TAW and the Checkpoint.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH WALKING FEDERATION (BWF)

BY HELEN ELLIOTT

Two Special Programmes with different themes are being launched for BWF IIV walks completed during 2025-2026-2027. Main and Series events plus Permanent Trails (PT's) (Year Round Events) as well as National Trails (NT) and Long/Medium Distance Walks (LDW/MDW) can be used. Entry and redemption is possible by email. The entry fee includes a Woven Cloth Badge and Certificate on completion of 15 walks/stamps and includes UK postage to send the badge/certificate on redemption.

Overseas postage will be extra and will be quoted based on mailing costs- please email or see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) on our website.

Royal Connection

In order to complete this special programme you will need to walk 15 different BWF registered walks that have a connection to either a King, Queen, Prince or Princess (UK Royal Family only) on the route. You will need to have at least 1 King, 1 Queen, 1 Prince and 1 Princess across the 15 stamps. A PT/NT/LDW/MDW may be used once per calendar year but must have a different Royal Connection for each year it is used. Main and Series events can be used once per stamp number/year.

Rivers

In order to complete this special programme you will need to walk 15 different BWF registered walks where the route either goes along a River-side path or goes on a bridge across a river. A PT/NT/LDW/MDW may be used once per calendar year but the same river cannot be used more than 3 times across the 15 stamps. Where a river name is repeated in the UK e.g. River Avon but is unique and unconnected, then these can be used 3 times for each unique river with the additional descriptive ie Bristol Avon, Shakespeare's Avon, Salisbury Avon. Main and Series events can be used once per stamp number/year.

The entry forms are available on the BWF Website <https://www.bwf-ivv.org.uk/sp-royal-connections> and <https://www.bwf-ivv.org.uk/sp-rivers/> and will provide full details of the requirements for each special programme. See also the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's). Contact: projects@bwf-ivv.org.uk.

TIP: Please visit the websites listed at the end of the article for additional guidelines and information on the qualifiers for each new special program. Any questions should be sent directly to: projects@bwf-ivv.org.uk.

WALK MORE IN '24

CARL CORDES, AVA VICE-CHAIR

Most of us understand the many benefits of walking from our own experience and the many studies on the subject.

"Physical activity (especially walking) can help with a wide range of issues, from relieving stress and improving your mood to reducing depressive and anxious symptoms and adding quality to your life. Add a social aspect by walking with your spouse, friend, or group for an even stronger source of mood enhancement!"

"Research shows that two and a half to five hours of moderate-intensity exercise per week — which includes walking — can help reduce your risk of certain cancers like colon, breast, endometrial, kidney, liver, multiple myeloma and non-Hodgkin lymphoma."

"Regular walkers have fewer heart attacks and strokes, lower blood pressure and higher levels of HDL ("good" cholesterol) than non-exercisers. Walking can also improve blood sugars and either improve the management of diabetes or help prevent it altogether."

"People who walk for exercise are more likely to stick with their walking regimen if they walk in groups. Group walking plays an important part in both improved physical activity and better quality of life"

Group walking? Who does that? We do! So, I challenge each of you to Walk More in '24 and beyond. But more than that recruit more walkers, too.

1. Invite friends and family to the next walk.
2. Promote your walks to the community by any means necessary.
3. Put out flyers at places where active people gather.
4. Visit a senior recreation center and ask to do a talk about walking.
5. Partner with your local Parks and Recreation Department for a community walk.

Don't be discouraged if some of these don't work first time. Keep promoting our mission of Fun, Fitness and Friendship until you succeed. And when you succeed, AVA - America's Walking Club succeeds!

NATIONAL WALKING MONTH

SUSAN FINE



National Walking Month is May 2025, and AVA: America's Walking Club encourages you to plan a group walk sometime during the month to enjoy the outdoors and celebrate our sport of walking.

This annual event was moved to the entire month of May rather than one week in April for several reasons: 1) clubs have more flexibility to schedule events over a month, rather than a week; 2) clubs in colder climates can participate, since the beginning of April may still experience bad weather for some clubs; 3) multi-day events may be hosted with a possible increase in participation; 4) walkers can experience various events throughout the month from different clubs; and 5) there are more publicity options over a month rather than limited to one week.

As most of you know, walking improves health, both physically and mentally. It is the oldest form of exercise and is the one exercise that everyone can do. Hippocrates said around 300 B.C. "Walking is the best medicine."

And volkswalking with America's Walking Club and fellow volkswalkers helps people find fellowship and lasting friendships, and reduces the feeling of isolation and loneliness that some people may feel.

As you plan your walks in May, please invite someone new in your neighborhood or from the office. They will discover that walking with friends, with organized directions that showcase the best of your city or park, truly means fun, fitness and friendship (along with food after!).



TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP IML FESTIVAL HONORS SUSAN MEDLIN

SUSAN FINE

The annual 3-day IML event, Texas Trail Roundup, will welcome volkswalkers from around the world to San Antonio, Texas February 14-16, 2025. The event will be in honor of Susan Medlin, the founder of the event and president of TTR. She was also co-chair of the 2023 Olympiad, was past vice-president of AVA, past Southwest RD, and much more. Susan was recently diagnosed with ALS, so volunteers have stepped up to carry on this IML tradition.

The event starts and finishes each day at the Beethoven Mannerchor Halle und Garten in the historic King William District of San Antonio. The Hall is one of the oldest German singing societies in Texas, since 1867. Registration is now open. You can also download the brochure here.

Here is the 3 day schedule of events

- Friday, February 14: the 5K and 10K walks will include the theme "Stars over San Antonio Friendship Walk" through the downtown area, including famous landmarks and locations used for filming several movies and TV shows, or visited by celebrities. The trail includes the River Walk, the Alamo, La Villita Arts Village, Main Plaza, and the famous El Mercado. An opening ceremony with the flags of all the IML countries will take place Friday afternoon. You can also enjoy food and beer in the Beethoven Hall's Beer Garden.
- Saturday, February 15: walk events include a 42K (marathon) and 21K (half-marathon) for IML credit, plus a 13K and 5K. All walks except the 5K include the River Walk, UNESCO World Heritage Missions, plus the neighborhood in the historic King William district. The 5K walk will include the River Walk and the King William area. The Beethoven Beer Garden will again be open for refreshments.
- Sunday, February 16: events include a 21K (for IML credit), 12K and 5K events along the famous River Walk to the Pearl district. The 21K includes walks to Brackenridge Park and the historic Japanese Tea Garden. Afterwards, enjoy the closing awards ceremony.

Registration and information for the festival is available at texastrailroundup.org. When you register, please consider a "round-up" donation of \$2 to benefit ALS in honor of Susan Medlin. ALS (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease) is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease that slowly robs the body of its ability to walk, speak, swallow, and breathe. We want to honor Susan's work with the Texas Trail Roundup, and the passionate volunteer work she has done for America's Walking Club.

We also need volunteers during the three days, especially to mark and strip trails. Please help if you can: schkathy@yahoo.com 

While in San Antonio, you can also enjoy the world-famous San Antonio Rodeo. Most nights include a live concert. Tickets are available at sarodeo.com.

We hope you can join us February 14-16, 2025 for the annual IML Texas Trail Roundup in San Antonio.

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB

AWC

JOIN: AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
VETERANS DAY

INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING CRUISE - EASTERN CARIBBEANS
FROM NEW ORLEANS - NORWEGIAN EPIC

EVERY DAY IS A WALK

CRUISE WALKS



PRE-CRUISE WALKS

CRUISE WALKS

NEW ORLEANS
GARDEN DISTRICT
NOV 13, 2025
FRENCH QUARTERS DISTRICT
NOV 14, 2025
MEET & GREET
NOV 14, 2025

NEW ORLEANS
COZUMEL, MEXICO
DAY AT SEA - FUN WALK
ROATAN, HONDURAS
HARVEST CAYE, BELIZE
COSTA MAYA, MEXICO
DAY AT SEA - FUN WALK



Eastern Caribbeans
November 15-22, 2025
contact Rob McDaniel
(864)365-6330
rob@newvistaenterprise.com

**Prices based on Double-Occupancy
Club Balcony \$2694.05
Balcony \$2478.10
Interior Cabin \$950.00
Deposit \$125 pp - NLT Jan 20, 2025





REGIONAL TALES FROM THE TRAILS



ATLANTIC REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



SUGARLOAFERS WEDNESDAY WALKS

BY ANTHONY (TONY) LAING

As a benefit of belonging to the Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club of Montgomery County Maryland, we offer a 5k walk on each and every Wednesday morning. In the warmer months, we start at 9:00 am and in the cooler months we start at 10:00 am. Usually it takes about an hour and a half to complete the walk. Since this is close to lunch time, sometimes we partake in a group lunch.



We successfully incorporate the various holiday themes into our walks. In the fall, we walk in parks or neighborhoods such as Garrett Park that is famous for its trees and colorful fall leaves. Then around Halloween, we schedule a can't miss walk in the award winning Kentlands neighborhood that is famous for its Halloween decorations.

In December, we usually take a walk in another area of the Kentlands famous for its holiday decorations that are beautiful in both day and night. Then we take advantage of two of Montgomery County's holiday landmarks – Brookside Gardens in Wheaton and the Mormon Temple in Kensington. Brookside Gardens offers colorful shrubs and trees on various trails and then a large hothouse showcases unusual and brightly colored poinsettias as well as a renowned miniature train exhibit.

We conclude the year by walking in late December in historic Kensington with a stop at the magnificent Mormon Temple with its thousands of lights and one of the largest Christmas creche displays in the country. We also offer a nighttime group walk on the same trail that captures the view of the lights after dark. These various walks ensure that we more than meet our mission of fun, fitness and friendship that are enjoyed by one and all.

Checkout our YRE offerings at sugarloafers.org and come join us.



FIRST STATE WEBFOOTERS 34TH ANNUAL SEA WITCH TRIATHLON

BY KATHY KRESKO

On October 26th, the First State Webfooters hosted the 34th Sea Witch Triathlon at the Sussex Family YMCA in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. It was a great sunny day to walk the 5K and 10K routes and stop to see the Sea Witch parade along the way, as well as, all the other scheduled activities going on throughout the day. The 10K to 43K bike trails were easy rides with many things to see along the trail. The Sussex Family YMCA opened their indoor pool for the Sea Witch participants to complete their 300-meter swim.

Thank all the participants for joining us in our annual event. Hope to see you next year!



HEALTHY AGING FAIR YMCA

BY KATHY KRESKO

The First State Webfooters joined the Sussex Family YMCA, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware on September 23rd and on September 25th joined the Dover YMCA, Dover Delaware for their first Healthy Aging Fair. September is the Healthy Aging month.

During the Fair there were opportunities for guests to talk, interact with many health care agencies and businesses where they could explore innovative ideas and opportunities for aging well. Activities were designed to motivate guest to get active and establish routines that enhance mental and physical health at home and in the community.

This event gave the First State Webfooters the opportunity to talk with many people in order to promote our local walking club, as well as, the AVA America's Walking Club. We were able to discuss our many scheduled walks and our special annual events. In addition, we were able show the opportunities for many upcoming walking events in other states throughout the country. Many people stopped by our table looking to enhance their physical activity and making lifestyle changes. There is no better way than the power of walking for mental and physical wellness. Come walk with us!



**COME JOIN US IN SAVAGE, MARYLAND
NEW YEAR'S EVE AND NEW YEAR'S DAY**

BY LINDA HASSELL

Come walk and finish 2024 at the Freestate Happy Wanderers annual walk events on New Year's Eve, December 31 and begin 2025 at our New Year's Day, January 1 walks at the Savage United Methodist Church, 9050 Baltimore St. in Savage, MD. The walk events will feature four 5km trails loops with credit stamps for two 10km trails for walkers to enjoy each day. The trails are on paved paths and natural wooded areas in and near the Savage Mill Historic District and Savage Park. The Savage YRE 0575 can be walked both days and Centurion Challenge Walkers may earn six IVV Credit stamps at our two day events.

Start between 9 a.m. and 12 noon and finish by 3 p.m. Enjoy the friendly walking atmosphere of fun and fellowship. For complete brochure information checkout our website: <https://sites.google.com/svsvc.org/fhw/home> or email wahasse1798@verizon.net.



Freestate Members invite you to come walk the trails in Savage, Maryland. - Picture by Bill Hassell



WALK THRU A NEW UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN BETHLEHEM, PA.

BY GAYLE F. HENDRICKS, LIBERTY BELL WANDERERS

Liberty Bell Wanderers sponsor two walks in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: Bethlehem-North and Bethlehem-South. The Bethlehem-North walk takes walkers thru 300 years of American history where the Moravians meet the Industrial Revolution.

In 1741, Moravian missionaries founded Bethlehem as part of an international religious and social experiment. Bethlehem received its name from a carol, "Jesus Call Thou Me" by Author Drese, (1620-1701), sung at Christmas Eve services that year (and every year since!) by the settlers and their German patron, Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf. Many Moravian buildings, still standing today, reflect the ingenuity, creativity, and universality of Moravian thinking and philosophy.

On Friday, July 26, 2024, the historic Moravian Church Settlements of Bethlehem, USA; Gracehill, Northern Ireland; and Herrnhut, Germany, were inscribed on the prestigious list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

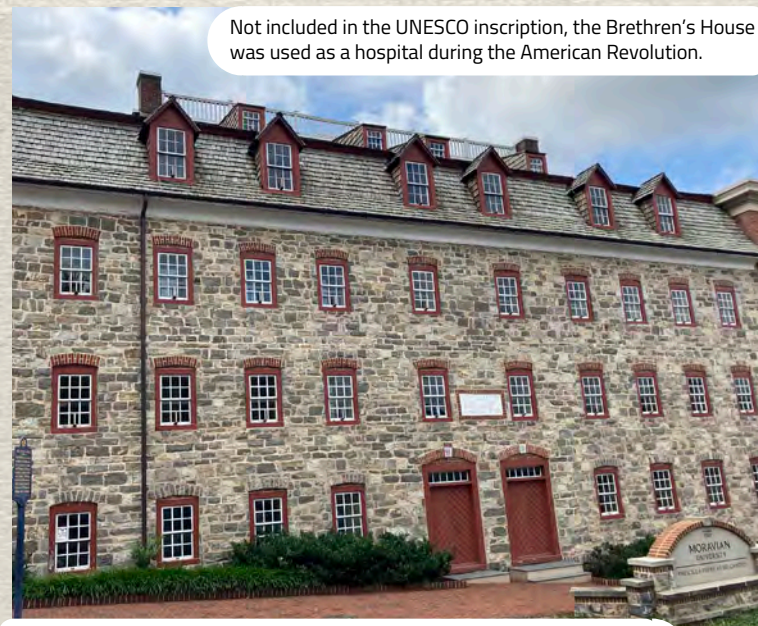
For about a quarter century, the Moravians in Bethlehem succeeded as a communal society organized by age, sex, and marital status into groups called "choirs" where they lived together under a general economy. They believed that all people — both men and women — should receive the same education, have access to health care, have equal rights, and work together for the good of the community without prejudice regarding race, gender, or ethnicity. Outside influences, including the American Revolution, resulted in the influx of strangers, which slowly eroded Bethlehem's founding ideals leading to it becoming a more mainstream American settlement. Today, Bethlehem is the sixth largest city in Pennsylvania.

The UNESCO inscription site spans 10 acres and includes nine structures, four ruins and God's Acre cemetery, all within the already designated Historic Moravian Bethlehem National Historic Landmark District. If you complete both 5K loops you will pass them all. And then some.

As you begin your walk, you'll see the reconstructed Smithy (1750), the Apothecary (1752), the remaining wall of a Pottery, and Central Moravian Church (1806). The Brethren's House (1748)—a hospital during the Revolution—does not qualify because the west wall was altered when it was adjoined with another building. As you enter the Colonial Industrial Quarter—the earliest Industrial Park of the original 13 colonies—you'll see the 1762 Waterworks, America's first pumped municipal water system. You'll also see the ruins of the Linseed Oil Mill (1752), the Tannery (1761), a reconstructed first log cabin, ruins of the dye house, and the Luckenbach Mill (1869). Later you'll walk through Moravian University's (1742) main campus. You'll finish the first 5K Loop walking past God's Acre cemetery (1742-1911) where everyone — White, Black, Indigenous, rich, poor, etc. — are buried with similar flat stones.

Complete the second 5K loop to finish the tour. You'll see the Bell House (1746-49), Widow's House (1768), the last building built by the Moravians; Single Sister's House (1744) and the Old Chapel (1751). The 1741 Gemeinhaus is the largest, and oldest, 18th-century log building in continuous use in America. The Gemeinhaus housed the original saal or meetinghouse.

Not included in the UNESCO inscription, the Brethren's House was used as a hospital during the American Revolution.



The 1741 Gemeinhaus is the largest, and oldest, 18th-century log building in continuous use in America housed the original saal or meetinghouse



(L-R) Ruins of Pottery, Tannery below the fence, and working Blacksmith shop.



PAR FOR THE COURSE OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY ON THE PATH!

BY KATHY KRESKO

The First State Webfooters walking club is hosting the Par for the Course special program. The program began January 1, 2023, and ends December 31, 2025. Book sales end December 31, 2025. Books may be redeemed until December 31, 2026.

Par for the Course, also know as, Jouez Sur Le Parcours (Play on the Path) is a fun interactive special program. Participants don't just identify ways you can play while on the trail, but are encouraged to play themselves. Books have space for 14 events. After completing the first book and submitting it by mail or a photo by email, you receive a magnet piece, the bronze piece. Book 2 nets the walker the silver piece and book 3 the final, gold piece. We have participants completing two sets of books. It's just that much fun!

The last year for the program is upon us and there are still opportunities to complete the books for three awards. Why not join in and play on the path? Discover your inner child and swing on the swing set, throw a frisbee, hop scotch, soccer and so much more. Send a check for \$12 for your first book, made out to First State Webfooters, and mail to First State Webfooters, PO Box 2041, Dover AFB, DE 19902. For more information, contact us by email at fswpcsp@gmail.com or call or text 302-233-6615.

To be considered for World Heritage, all sites must meet at least one of 10 selection criteria. Historic Moravian Bethlehem met two selection criteria. The first is its "exceptional testimony" to the Moravian Church's principles, and the community's way of life, architecture, and craftsmanship. Historic Moravian Bethlehem also is an example of innovative town planning, influential architectural style, and enhanced community life. There are only 25 UNESCO sites in America with Pennsylvania having three. Liberty Bell Wanderers host the Philadelphia-East walk which passes Independence Hall, another UNESCO site.

The second 5K loop also uses the D&L Canal towpath which hauled goods and coal by mule and boat from Jim Thorpe to Bristol, Pa. You can also see the ruins of the Bethlehem Steel Mill from across the river, and the city center complex for those doing the Town Hall Special Program. Other special programs include Rails to Trails, Step to the Beat, Walking with America's Veterans, A-MAZE-ing Labrynthins.

The Bethlehem-South walk focuses on the arts, education, and the ruins of 19th- and 20th-century industry. It is the intersection of the past and the present.



The Single Sister's House, constructed 1744 in the German colonial style.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

GREETINGS FROM THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

BY SUSAN PINNEKE

As the beautiful fall weather drifts into colder winter weather, things slow down around the North Central Region. We do have a couple of Christmas celebrations in the region that will definitely get you into the holiday mood. The Black Hills Volkssporters are holding a holiday walk in Spearfish, SD on December 7. It promises Santa, s'mores, cider, cookies and carols. What fun!!! The Nebraska Trailblazers are hosting a Christmas lights walk on December 14. The route takes you around the amazing downtown Omaha lights displays. As a present to you, the walk is free, all walk fees are paid by the walk sponsors. The Twin Cities, Des Moines and Madison are all ringing in the new year with indoor mall walking events. Just because it's cold and miserable, we'll start the year walking in the climate-controlled comfort of a mall. You have no reason to break that New Year's resolution to walk more now!! Happy Holidays from all your volkswalking buddies in the North Central Region.

NORTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



Some walkers gathering at the start point for the Kent Village, CT walk, located in the Housatonic Valley about 30 miles east of Poughkeepsie.



Volkssporters from Connecticut, Massachusetts and Maine "meeting and greeting" after a delicious German dinner at Germania of Poughkeepsie's Oktoberfest

NORTHEAST REGION WEEKEND FELT LIKE A FAMILY REUNION
BY CAROL ENDRISS WEST

Initial Worries

Last winter as I drafted the article "Hudson to Housatonic Walking Weekend, Sept. 6-8," for the April TAW E-magazine, I was hopeful-but-hesitant about how our regional walking weekend would work out. Will walkers be drawn to Poughkeepsie, NY and Kent, CT? Will we have enough attendees to break even? How can we budget without knowing our anticipated income or expenses? Will our choices of hotel, social venues, walk start points, email/website communications, etc. pan out? Will we find enough volunteers to staff the event? How can we divvy up all the planning tasks between our two small host clubs, Volkssport Club at West Point (with Andrew Schmidt as point person) and Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club (with me as point person). Some of the concerns reminded me of the challenges of organizing a family reunion, when you really, really want things to go well!

Participation Numbers

And come they did. A year ago, we hoped for about 40 attendees. In fact, 60 had registered by mid-summer, and then the final number jumped to 99. We thought we'd have a handful of people from other regions; actually, 30% of attendees were from eight states outside the Northeast. Twenty-one Volkssport clubs from five AVA regions were represented among attendees.

We expected that many people wouldn't do all three walks. Again, we underestimated enthusiasm: 92 Hyde Park walkers, 97 Walkway Over The Hudson walkers, and 94 Kent walkers. Social events were equally popular. A majority of participants showed up at Friday's Meet and Greet at Germania of Poughkeepsie's Oktoberfest, and 85 people joined us at our Saturday Italian buffet and program at Longobardi's, a restaurant in the Poughkeepsie suburb of Wappingers Falls.



Lots of laughter and lively chatter over Italian food at Longobardi's on Saturday night.

Walking by the birthplace and lifelong home of the 32nd president of the U.S. at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park, NY, where both FDR and his wife Eleanor are buried.

With Help From Our Team

While our questions may have been legitimate, everything came together and the event went exceedingly well. One factor critical to our success was an advisory group we formed, who teamed with us on Zoom every month to offer feedback on our plans, promote our event through their clubs and on social media, and encourage us along the way. The team included the 2023 NE Region's Cape Cod walking weekend host (Bea Hait, Walk 'n Mass), our NE Regional Director (Carol Giesecke), two leaders from Empire State Capital Volkssporters (Wayne Knapp, Kathy Mack), and our spouses (Carol Schmidt, Lee West). It also helped enormously that Chris Yost (ESCV) offered to coordinate volunteers, Bob McDougall (CVC) delivered the dinner program, and Wayne and Kathy ran the 50/50 raffle. Everyone's reassuring message to Andrew and me during the year and a half of planning the weekend was, "Build it and they will come."

Enjoying Friendship

The evaluation forms participants completed and their comments offered throughout the weekend were very positive. Likewise, the suggestions for future regional walking weekends were thoughtful and helpful. What stood out were consistent comments that the opportunity to explore new territory and socialize with friends, old and new, was a highlight of their weekend. A surprising number of participants told us that their friendships with other Volkssporters went back not years, but decades.

So, organizing a volkssporting weekend felt a lot like holding a family reunion -- tending to the myriad of details for months on end, providing flexible options for participants, leveraging technology to keep track of participation/finances/communications ... and then the satisfaction (and sigh of relief) of seeing lots of people having a great time together.

We all look forward to a reprise in 2025: the Northeast Region's Tri-State Lighthouse Walking Weekend on May 16-18.

For more photos, link to our event website: <https://nodegreen.com/hudtohou/>



Portland Head Light - Cape Elizabeth, Maine



Ten Pound Island Lighthouse - Gloucester, Massachusetts

TRI-STATE LIGHTHOUSE WALKING WEEKEND 2025

BY DENISE MACARONAS

Mark your calendars! The 2025 AVA Northeast TriState Lighthouse Walking Weekend will take place from May 16- 18, 2025. Hosted by Southern Maine Volkssport Association (SMVA), Twin State Volkssport Association (TSVA) and Two Town Walking Club (TTWC), this weekend will offer plenty of opportunities for Fun, Fitness and Friendship! The focus of this weekend is Lighthouses. These walks qualify for the following AVA Special Program: Lighthouse II.

On Friday, May 16, enjoy a morning walk with TTWC in the Massachusetts coastal city of Gloucester, America's oldest seaport and still an authentic working waterfront community. Along the new route (without the big hill!), you will enjoy many scenic vistas, three lighthouses (Ten Pound Island Lighthouse, Eastern Point Lighthouse, and Dog Bar Breakwater Lighthouse), the Gloucester Fishermen's Memorial, the Gloucester Fishermen's Wives' Memorial, shops and restaurants, and a view of the famous Hammond Castle, built by eccentric inventor John Hays Hammond, the "Father of Radio Control."

On Saturday, May 17, travel to Cape Elizabeth, Maine, which is home to Portland Head Light and Fort Williams Park. Maine's oldest lighthouse and one of the most photographed, Portland Head Light was commissioned by George Washington and first lit in 1791; the original fuel was whale oil. From Portland Head Light, you can see the Ram Island Ledge Lighthouse offshore. The 11k route takes you to Spring Point Ledge Lighthouse on the campus of Southern Maine Community College.

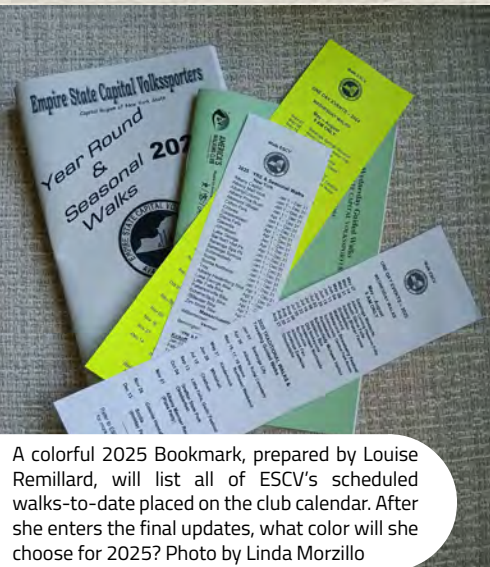
On Sunday, May 18, explore Portsmouth, New Hampshire, which was first settled as "Strawberry Banke" in 1630. Portsmouth was the capital of the English province of New Hampshire before the Revolution. Learn the role Portsmouth played in the War for Independence and the Civil War as well as its current role as one of New Hampshire's few seaports. Portsmouth Harbor Lighthouse (also known as Fort Point Lighthouse, New Castle Lighthouse and Fort Constitution Lighthouse) was first established in June 1771. This Lighthouse was the first light station north of Boston in the American colonies. Today's 48-foot tower was built in 1878.

All three walks will be available the entire weekend, so you can walk on your own, at your own pace and time frame. Each club has additional walks to enjoy in the area so come early and stay longer to explore the area.

Social events being planned include a Meet and Greet and a group dinner. The host hotel is Microtel Hotel and Suites in York, Maine. Check our website at walkescv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html for information about hotel reservations, registration forms, brochures, other walks in the area, local attractions, etc.

For questions, please contact infotristate25@aol.com

We look forward to seeing you in May 2025 - a beautiful time of year in the Tri-State area



WE'RE READY FOR 2025!

BY LINDA MORZILLO AND CHRIS YOST

A New Year means a new calendar of scheduled Volkswalks for the Empire State Capital Volkspotters (ESCV)! Besides our ambitious slate of Seasonal, Year-Round, May-August Wednesday, Traveling Guided and Pop-Up walks, an exciting list of Traditional Walks will take place throughout the year. ESCVers are known to put all of the scheduled walks on their calendars by January 1st. A colorful bookmark with the walk dates for handy reference is available to all.

Five of the Traditional Walks for 2025 are planned in places that are either new or have been enjoyed in the past.

April 26 - Albany Rural Cemetery is renowned as being one of the most beautiful pastoral cemeteries in the U.S. with over 400 acres. Many notable burials include President Chester A Arthur and other 19th century New York politicians and industrialists and figures relating to the history of the Adirondacks.

May 31 - Kinderhook, a quaint historic Dutch village, was the basis for the principal characters of Washington Irving's The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and home of President Martin Van Buren.

June 28 - Whitehall, birthplace of the US Navy, is located at the point where the Vermont border connects to the southern end of Lake Champlain.

July 19 - Chatham is a picturesque town and the route guides walkers through unique neighborhoods. Many walkers will pair this walk with a show at the MacHaydn Theater later that day.

September 13 – A walk in Little Falls will be held in conjunction with the town’s annual Garlic Festival which includes everything garlic, entertainment, activities, garlic lectures, and fun!

Three of the walks are Traditional, not only as per the AVA definition, but are Traditional in the fact that they have become a part of ESCV’s culture.

October 04 - Grafton Lakes State Park will be the location for our annual Oktoberfest following the walk. Attendees will enjoy traditional German fare (bratwurst, knockwurst, sauerkraut) along with member homemade appetizers, salads, and desserts. This is always a popular event!

November 1 – Albany will be the site of our Annual Walk and Pizza Party where we recognize members who have completed Walking in all 50 States and Walking in all 51 Capitals programs that year. The party includes appetizers, pizza and wings, and a celebratory cake.

December 13 – Scotia will be the location of our annual Holiday Walk which includes a stop at a Cookie House along the route where walkers can enjoy homemade treats and drinks. A Holiday Luncheon follows the walk. It is our best attended walk and event.

If you are traveling through our area, check your calendar to see if you can join us. You will have a great time doing a fun walk-and-talk experience as well as the opportunity to learn about a place you many have never visited in the past.

WINTER WALKING WITH WALK 'N MASS

BY JOSEPH LAPOINTE

Please join Walk 'n Mass and warm your bodies up with some fun walks. Our club is preparing for a busy winter of scheduled group walks. We look forward to seeing you at our group walks or enjoy any of our beautiful walking routes on your own time. Keep an eye out on our website and Facebook pages for details on our annual New Year’s Day group walk in Boston.

Start times, directions to the start, and updates to the walk schedules can all be found at our website walknmass.org or on Facebook at AVA Walk 'n Mass Volkssport Club ([m.facebook.com/WalknMass](https://www.facebook.com/WalknMass)). These resources are updated frequently so please check in often to see what new adventures await.



NORTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

NW REGION WALKING
BY SHARON MOATS

Fun walking adventures have happened in the NW Region this past year. We enjoyed many multi-day events. We walked “Wild and Woodsy” in Lacey WA in April. May brought adventures in the western themed town of Winthrop to hike through the Balam Root. August found us hiking at Mt Baker and the beautiful trails there. We traveled to Wallace, Id in later August to enjoy this fun historic town and surrounding areas. September brought our NW Regional Conference in beautiful Kitsap County in Washington. In October we made the trek to Oregon’s Rogue Valley for many days of hikes and walks. These long weekend events enable us to meet and greet walkers from our region and farther. Our closing event for the year is a big event in West Seattle on New Year’s Eve. This event is a very large gathering of walkers enjoying a late afternoon walk and a soup social together to end the year. The next morning, we come back again and do another walk!



The new year will bring more adventures for us. Our region has about 20 new YRE/SYR for walker’s enjoyment of exploring! Emerald City Wanderers has a new special program for “Walking the Link Rail”, our local trains, that now connect more cities in the greater Puget Sound area. 6-7 new YREs are planned for the Bellevue, Redmond, Lynwood and other stops along the new routes. New AVA Special Program, “Walking with the Wild Things”, begins in 2025 and we are ready with 5 of the Dambo Trolls already on planned routes. The 6th will be presented on a Traditional Walk on Vashon Island in April. In May we will be enjoying a long weekend for walking in Jefferson County and Island County exploring the “Triangle of Fire” hosted by Olympic Peninsula Explorers. 1 of our clubs is planning for an Alaskan cruise to enjoy the walks along the water corridor to Anchorage. October will bring a long weekend of hiking and leaf-peeping in the Lake Wenatchee and Leavenworth area.

Come walk with us!





PACIFIC REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



LAS VEGAS ONLINE 24/7

BY CARL CORDES


The Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers enter our 40th year continuing to provide 12 walk and 3 bike events for your year-round pleasure. And now you can register for any of them at the AVA Online Start Box 24/7, same hours Las Vegas keeps the lights on and doors open. Eight of the events do still offer an in-person registration experience if you prefer.




But if you are interested in the North or South Strip walks OSB offers an advantage. If you are staying in a Hotel on/near Las Vegas Blvd South then very likely you can start one of these from your hotel or very close. The North Strip route includes north to south the Fontainebleau, Circus-Circus, Resorts World, Encore, Wynn Resort, Treasure Island, Palazzo, Venetian, Harrah's, The LINQ, Flamingo, Caesars and the Cromwell at Flamingo Avenue. Mandalay Bay is the southernmost hotel on South Strip route. From there north is the Delano, Luxor, Excalibur, New York-New York, MGM Grand, Park MGM, Waldorf Astoria, Planet Hollywood, Ara, Vdara, Cosmopolitan, Paris, Bellagio and Horseshoe. The UNLV university walk starts at Virgin Hotels on corner of Paradise and Harmon if you register online for directions.

Don't forget about our amazing Downtown Las Vegas Walk, too, that goes through the Freemont Street Experience. Hotels along this street start with El Cortez on east end of route to the Plaza on west end at Main Street. In between you have the D, Four Queens, Fremont, Downtown Grand, Binnions, Golden Nugget, Circa, and Golden Gate hotels. California and Main Street Station are a couple north of the Plaza on Main St.

So if you are staying at one of the above hotels on your next visit you can register online and receive walk directions without driving to the physical walk box. When you do come to Vegas be sure to check our Saturday morning group walk schedule at www.lvhrs.org to see if timing is in your favor to join us. We would love to walk with you! Viva Las Vegas!



ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



STUNNING UTAH

BY SHERRY SAYERS

In my continuing quest to walk in all the county seats, this saga involves Utah. There are 29 counties in Utah, and we walked them all in 30 days, as well as exploring the Mighty Five National Parks in Utah – Arches, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, Bryce and Zion. Three of the parks had volksmarches. Bryce was my favorite with the beautiful red hoodoos. The trail went UP to the promontory point and just as I got there, it started to rain. The red dirt got slippery fairly quickly, and coming back down from the point was a little treacherous. Zion is the most popular with tourists, so it was quite crowded, and you must ride the shuttle bus to get to the trailheads.

Luckily for you all, I am not going to talk about all 29 towns but will only highlight a few of my favorites. I would also like to give you a little history of Utah. Bet you all did not know that in Utah, the towns have a unique street-naming requirement. Here is an example of a direction: Turn left on 300 W, turn right on 100 S, turn left on 400 W, turn left on 300 S. For someone like me who is directionally challenged, as well as mathematically challenged, it was a nightmare trying to follow these directions! The bigger the town, the bigger the numbers get. It was kind of funny that in the smaller towns, you were walking out in the country, but you were still on a numbered street. All the towns had excellent signage.

Another fun fact is that between 1847 and 1900, the Mormons founded around 500 settlements, not just in Utah, but Wyoming, Idaho, Arizona, and California. A few of those we walked in are Salt Lake City, Moab, Kanab, Heber City, Manti, St. George, Provo, Nephi, Logan, Brigham City, Ogden and Fillmore, which was the first territorial capital from 1851 to 1856, when it was moved to Salt Lake City. A lot of the towns have beautiful temples and tabernacles.

A WALK IN WILLCOX

BY PAUL LAMB

Willcox is located in the south east corner of the state of Arizona. It is a railroad town, build along the tracks back in the early days of the state. Then Rex Allan made it famous.



The local museum got twelve organizations to construct and paint miniature train engines which are on display along Railroad Avenue in the heart of Willcox. And on the walk route.

So on Saturday, February 10, the Thunder Mountain Trekkers held a walk in Willcox. Almost. It was snowing and the wind was blowing and the couple of walkers who showed up were encouraged NOT to walk in that weather.

On Saturday, October 12, the Thunder Mountain Trekkers tried again to hold a walk in Willcox. The temperature at the time the walk window opened was way up there, Arizona style. And, again, the few walkers who ventured out were encouraged to take lots of water with them.

In the club's review, we concluded that, ON AVERAGE, the weather was great for a walk in Rex Allan's railroad town to see the model train engines on display.

Maybe we will try a walk in Willcox again in a couple of years.



One of my favorite walks was in Farmington, where the trail goes through a beautiful, wooded section paralleling Lagoon Amusement Park. Looking through the trees, we saw some bison and elk, as well as some of the rides. Downtown Ogden had quite an array of life-sized beautifully painted horses, and while on the trail, we encountered a huge farmers' market.

In Vernal, which is known as Dinosaur Land, there is a huge pink dinosaur at the edge of town, as well as cute smaller painted dinosaurs throughout the town. In Manti, while walking down a residential street, I looked up ahead and saw a funny-looking dog, however, as I got closer, I discovered it was a goat tied up in the front yard. Not something you see every day!





Provo is the home of Brigham Young University (BYU), and we found a neat coffee shop called Peace on Earth Coffee! As we were arriving in Kanab on a Saturday, they were closing the streets for the parade for their annual Western Legends Festival. Kanab is known as "Little Hollywood" due to its history as a filming location for numerous movies and television series (mostly Westerns back in the day). There is a Walk of Fame with plaques of many of the stars that filmed movies there. Kanab is a Paiute name meaning "place of the willows" and was another favorite walk.



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



TWO NEW COUNTY WALKS OFFERED IN ARKANSAS IN 2025
BY PAT GOLDEN

The two walks in two new counties will be introduced at a special event on April 10 and 11. The walks will be in Clarksville, Johnson County, and Ozark, Franklin County. Of course, these walks will be available all of 2025 as well. The physical start box will be located at the Quality Inn, 1167 Rogers Street, in Clarksville. No online start box will be available.

The Ozark Hill Hikers invite all walkers to our special event in April. The Clarksville walk features the Spadra Creek Nature Trail, the campus of the University of the Ozarks, and residential neighborhoods. On Thursday, April 10, there will be dinner at 5:30 at Kaspar's restaurant.

The Ozark walk in Franklin County will go through the business and residential districts and along the banks of the Arkansas River where beautiful homes sit.

Also available will be the revised directions for Fort Smith (Sebastian County) and Van Buren (Crawford County). The Fort Smith will take walkers by the new Marshalls Museum as well as the National Historic Site and the Trail of Tears along the Arkansas River. In Van Buren, the walk will go through the historic downtown, residential districts, and around the lake in Dr. Louis Peer Memorial Park.

For more informations, contact Pat Golden at bwohh@gmail.com.



In Loa, I walked past a little soda shop that had a British double-decker bus next to it where you could go in and sit. The bus had surfboards painted on it. I thought how strange, so I looked up Loa and discovered it had been founded in 1878 by 40 families. One of the new residents had resided in the Hawaiian Islands and was impressed with Mauna Loa, so they named the town Loa.

All the towns had some sort of Veterans' Memorial, but Nephi was the most impressive with a beautiful rose garden dedicated to World War II veterans.

In summary, I found Utah to be a beautiful place, with friendly people, interesting history, and so many things to explore. It was a wonderful trip, and I hope you might decide to go exploring and walking in Utah! You may just find some Wild Things and/or Grain Elevators! Twenty-eight of the walks are sponsored by Woodland Wanderers and are available online at <https://WoodlandWanderers.org/Store/>. Log in, select Utah, put your events into your cart, check for a discount, and check out. Easy-peasy.



SOUTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



YOUTH CLUB IN ITS 8TH YEAR WITH ASHEVILLE AMBLERS
BY REVEREND COOPER

"Cardinals Walk" Club at Clyde Elementary School, Clyde NC, is now in its 8th year. We presently have 45 members from Kindergarten through 5th Grade. On any given Monday or Wednesday, nearly half will be present.



Charles is a 5th Grader. He often walks with the Asheville Amblers Walking Club in addition to his walks at school. As of this writing, he has accumulated 1484 KM distance in 210 events. Sometime this next week he will be only the second child in club history to achieve 1495 KM, receiving a Hydroflask as an award. Later in the year, he should pass 1532 KM, becoming the all-time club distance leader. By the end of the school year, he should have walked the equivalent of the distance along I-40 from the Texas/Oklahoma border to the Atlantic Ocean in Wilmington NC.



Each Club meeting, we spend a few minutes encouraging the children to be healthy, happy, and active, which will help them achieve a long life. We stretch together before and after walking. We encourage the children to be supportive of one another both on the track and at awards time. As Angela, a 3rd Grader, said last week, "Walking Club is the best!"



This year we are also finding a way to include Zoe, who moved from our county 2 years ago, but who this year wants to be a long-distance member of the school club. When she walks, her parents send us the distance and a photo. It is nice to have someone with such happy memories of walking with us and with the Asheville Amblers.

"Cardinals Walk" Club continues to appreciate its sponsorship by the Asheville Amblers, the Tarheel State Walkers, and America's Walking Club. We hope many of our students will be lifelong walkers.



WALK AROUND FLORIDA 2024
BY PAT GOLDEN

Over 100 people descended into Palm Coast, Florida, for Walk Around Florida's 3-day events, November 1-3. 18 clubs from 13 states and 1 (couple) from Germany were represented, with a total participation in all events of 482. Awards were given to nine volkssporters who participated in the triathlon: walking, swimming and bicycling. There was also a contest to name the Florida panther mascot, and 3 people won, suggesting the name "Ava". Several other contests took place to make the weekend fun and memorable. Thank you to the three sponsoring clubs: Happy Wanderers, Mid-Florida Milers, and Suncoast Sandpipers.



PLAN YOUR WALKCATION IN NORTH ALABAMA
BY ELIZABETH DUNAWAY

Walkcations have been the rage for awhile, especially among Volksmarchers. As a group, we love to move, see, and explore our surroundings. Some of us like the solitude of a quiet day to ourselves and others love company. AVA offers both. When I am traveling, AVA sanctioned walks are my favorite way to get to know a city. Because local volunteers spend time and energy to perfect their walks to show the best parts of their town, I trust that my time is going to be a good one.

The combined walks of Alabama's two clubs, the Capital City Wanderers and the Alabama Amblers, will give anyone on a walkcation plenty to do. North Alabama has plenty to experience including a delicious local food scene, the home of Helen Keller, a Frank Lloyd Wright house, and mix of rural hiking and city pavement trails for your enjoyment. There are 13 sanctioned walks within a 3-hour radius from Montgomery heading North to the TN border. Many of them have Special Programs. Come to North Alabama this Fall and Winter season to enjoy our Fall leaves and Holiday seasonal festivals.

Montgomery is the capitol of Alabama and our historical capital walk qualifies for the Walking around the US- Capitals. The route is around downtown Montgomery and takes in numerous historical points of interest including the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and other important Civil Rights locations. On Dexter Avenue, you can take your picture with a life-sized statue of Rosa Parks, grab a hot dog at Chris' which has been open since 1917, and see a tribute to Hank Williams. You could spend a whole day here if you stop at all the historical sights and museums. 1.5 hours north of Montgomery is Birmingham, Alabama's Magic City. Spend the day seeing the many interesting historical sites including the Civil Rights District, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the Alabama Theatre, the Sloss Furnaces and the Five Points area.



Huntsville is 1.5 hours north of Birmingham and has 3 walks within the city and 7 others within a 1-hour radius of downtown. Huntsville has a historic downtown walk, a downtown craft coffee trail walk, and a hidden art walk. Madison and Athens are permanent walks while the towns of Decatur, Florence, Tusculmbia, Scottsboro, and Cullman are sanctioned for 2024 and 2025 to support the Amblin' in Alabama County Program.

There are a total of 20 sanctioned walks in Alabama with 6 of them changing every July 1 so walkers can complete the Amblin' in Alabama Challenge. Please check the AVA website to see if those counties are ones that you want to include in your goals (a nod to David and the folks who have completed or hope to complete this goal!). We hope everyone will join us walking every county in Alabama over the years. We invite you to explore and enjoy our wonderful state on your next walkcation!

Walk the Counties with the Alabama Amblers for a Walkcation Weekend January 17-20, 2025, Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. See the link for info and registration.

Join the Alabama Amblers for their county program! Each county will be available via OSB with group walks on Holiday Weekends. Books are \$10. Contact us via email alabamaamblers@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook Alabama Amblers

Or check out our website www.alabamaamblers.net

Or

www.ava.org Search Events by State



SOUTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



2025 CONVENTION BONUS WALKS

BY HELEN HULL

The Sun Country Striders, our local host club, has sanctioned walks in Deming, Fort Bayard Historic Site, Gila Cliffs National Monument, and Truth or Consequences for the April-June quarter as bonus walks for the convention. The club also has YREs in Mesilla (3 miles from the convention center), Las Cruces Encanto (4 miles), Cloudcroft (90 miles), Ruidoso (120 miles), and 2 walks in El Paso. But first more about the bonus walks.



Deming which is 60 miles west of Las Cruces on I-10 is a nice stop on the way to City of Rocks and Silver City. It was part of the original Gadsden Purchase in 1853. The land was purchased to provide a southern route for a second continental railroad, the Southern Pacific which was completed in 1881. The city became an important railroad center and surprisingly is very flat. Check out the many 'precious metal' streets (Gold, Silver, Lead, Zinc, Bronze, Iron, and many more) running north-south while the east-west streets are named for trees.

While in Silver City, consider the Fort Bayard Historic Site and/or the Gila Cliffs Dwellings National Monument as additional places to visit.



Fort Bayard Historic Site is located about 10 miles east of Silver City and features the grounds of the old fort established in 1866 to provide security against Native American attacks. The fort was mainly garrisoned by the Buffalo Soldiers and includes a memorial to them. Later the fort was converted into the military's first tuberculosis hospital. The walk also features the Fort Bayard National Cemetery and a very moving memorial about the Baatan Death March in honor of the New Mexico National Guard unit which was a part of it.

Gila Cliffs National Dwellings Monument is 45 miles north of Silver City, but due to the narrow winding (and very scenic road) thru the mountains, the drive will take 1 1/2 hours or so to get there. The walk features a 1-mile hike up to the cliff ruins and back and then a hike along the cliffs overlooking the Gila River. Hiking poles are strongly advised but sturdy walking shoes will suffice.



Truth or Consequences is about halfway between Las Cruces and Socorro and a nice stop along I-25. The town was originally known as Hot Springs because of the many springs and bathhouses there. In response to radio show, Truth or Consequences, the town changed its name to T or C in order to have the show's 10th anniversary show broadcast from there. The local park named for the original host, Ralph Edwards, is the start point for the walk. T or C holds its annual fiesta each year on the first weekend of May with a parade, beauty contest, show, and a dance in the park. Can anyone say, May 4, 2025.



THE TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP CHRISTMAS LIGHTS RIVER WALK

BY MARTIN CALLAHAN

The Texas Trail Roundup (TTR) will host the tenth in a series of annual Christmas Lights River Walks in San Antonio, Texas during the upcoming holiday season. This Christmas Lights Walk will be held on Sunday evening December 8 and begin at the stately Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 76, 10 Tenth Street, San Antonio, TX 78215. This post is the oldest VFW Post in Texas. For more information online, visit: <http://vfwpost76ontheriverwalk.org/>.



From left to right, Dee Repp, Thomas Frankhouser (behind Dee), Sandra Bliss, Wendy Dylla, Cheri, Marnie, Deanna and Laura pose for a picture in front of the Petty House before beginning the 2023 Christmas Lights River Walk in San Antonio, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)

Famed Pulitzer prize-winning journalist Ernie Pyle once described the San Antonio River Walk as the "American Venice." Volkssporters will enjoy the serenity of the River Walk while guided by over 100,000 multi-colored lights (2,250 strings of light) draped over the towering bald cypress trees that line the river. You will also be awed by the beauty of the more than 2,000 luminarias along the river bank. Luminarias are a traditional Mexican Christmas lanterns lining the walkways along the river trail. They symbolically mark the "lighting of the way" for the Holy Family. For information on the San Antonio River Walk online visit: www.thesanantonionverwalk.com/.



Martin Callahan (left) holding Winston and JohnDavid Griffin with Dolly stop for a picture at the entrance to the "Grotto" which is a Faux Bois (false wood) sculpture by concrete artist Carlos Cortés made to look like the inside of a cave along the San Antonio River Christmas Lights Walk in San Antonio, Texas in December 2023.

While following the trail at street level you will be treated to historic and modern buildings and monuments bathed in floodlights, dazzling light displays, and breathtaking holiday arrangements. San Antonio gives you thousands of twinkling reasons to make this walk your new holiday tradition. Some of the highlights of the 3k,7k and 10k walk trails will include the Alamo, Main Plaza, San Fernando Cathedral, Ameson River Theater, La Villita, the Friendship Torch, and the Korean and Vietnam War memorials. For general tourist information on San Antonio online visit: <http://visitsanantonio.com/>.

THE SAN ANTONIO PATHFINDERS' LINCOLN HEIGHTS WALK

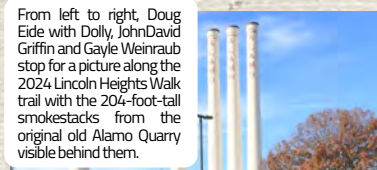
BY MARTIN CALLAHAN



From left to right, Charley Watt, Jr. Gayle Weinraub, Doug Eide with Winston and JohnDavid Griffin with Dolly pose for a picture in front of the antique Fordson Tractor on display near the start for the 2024 Lincoln Heights Walk in San Antonio, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)

The San Antonio Pathfinders Volkssport club is hosting a walk at Lincoln Heights in San Antonio on January 11 that starts in the Corner Bakery Café at the Alamo Quarry Market, 255 E Basse Rd, Suite 400, San Antonio, TX 78209.

Volkssporters will stroll along a trail past upscale homes in Lincoln Heights, trendy 23-acre Shops of Lincoln Heights, through the Quarry Village with its fashionable shops and restaurants and finally around the impressive shops and other businesses at the 580,000 square-foot Alamo Quarry Market.



From left to right, Doug Eide with Dolly, JohnDavid Griffin and Gayle Weinraub stop for a picture along the 2024 Lincoln Heights Walk trail with the 204-foot-tall smokestacks from the original old Alamo Quarry visible behind them.

The Alamo Quarry Market is an open-air complex that was built at the site of the over 100-year-old Alamo Cement Plant and utilizes some of the original structures such as the 204 foot-tall smokestacks in its construction.

You can learn more about Alamo Quarry Market online at: www.quarrymarket.com/. You can also read more about the history of the old cement plant online at:

www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Paula-Allen-0528-11178574.php.

For information on the walk event contact Ellen Ott at 210-723-8574 or email her at: ellenott@sbcglobal.net. You can print copies of the walk brochure for this event by visiting the club website at: <https://sanantoniopathfinders.org>.

This is a night walk with a 90-minute Start Window that is from 5:30 - 7 p.m. The walk will be operated like a "Featured YRE" with no checkpoints and a 90-minute Registration/Start Window. All record books will be immediately stamped after you register and before you walk. This will permit you to enjoy the Christmas lights along the river without any time restraints and afford an opportunity for you to have an enjoyable dinner or refreshments at one of the famous restaurants on the river. Bring a flashlight to read the walk directions. For more information contact John Ives at 210-849-9498, e-mail him at: jibitexas1967@gmail.com and check out the club website at: <http://texastrailroundup.org/>.

THE SAN ANTONIO PATHFINDERS' DEL WEBB WALK

BY MARTIN CALLAHAN

The San Antonio Pathfinders Volkssport club of San Antonio, Texas, is hosting a walk on February 1 at the Hill Country Retreat by Del Webb in northwest San Antonio, Texas. The start for this walk will be at Dell Webb's 28,000 square-foot community center located at the Resort at Hill Country Retreat, 4505 Del Webb Blvd, San Antonio TX 78253.

Volkssporters will follow a trail along residential streets and a nature trail in this beautiful Texas Hill Country community. The Hill Country Retreat opened in 2006 and is the first premier active adult community for adults age 55 and over in San Antonio. You will be impressed with cascading waterfalls at the entrance, the attractive ranch homes, the beautiful paved nature trails and the full range of facilities available to the community. You can learn more about the Hill Country Retreat online at: www.delwebb.com.

For information on this walk event contact Ellen Ott at 210-723-8574 or email her at: ellenott@sbcglobal.net. You can print copies of the walk brochures for this walk event by visiting the club website at: <https://sanantoniopathfinders.org>



Cindy Mayfield and Winston pose for a picture next to some Valentine's Day decorations placed along the February 2024 walk trail by residents at the Hill Country Retreat by Del Webb in San Antonio, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)



From left to right, Tina and John Bohnert with Winston in the basket of the rollator and Cindy Mayfield all pose for a picture along the February 2024 walk trail in front of one of the many beautiful homes at the Hill Country Retreat by Del Webb in San Antonio, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)

THE RANDOLPH ROADRUNNERS' BOERNE CHRISTMAS WALK

BY MARTIN CALLAHAN

The Randolph Roadrunners Volkssport club of Universal City, Texas, is hosting its popular Christmas walk which will begin on December 14 at St. John's Church at 315 E. Rosewood Avenue, Boerne, Texas 78006. Boerne is about 30 miles northwest of San Antonio. The town was first settled in 1849 by a group of German pioneers and continues to this day to have a distinctive German flavor.

This will be the last official Roadrunner event since they will be merged with the San Antonio Pathfinders starting January 1, 2025. Everyone is asked to wear a Roadrunner shirt since there have been many different designs over the club's 44 years of existence. Anyone who wears a Roadrunner shirt will receive a gift.

Volkssporters will follow a route through residential and historic sections including the Boerne Christmas Market in the Town Square. Part of the route will be in a new neighborhood that decorates for the holidays. On the walk you will have the opportunity to visit many fine antique shops, craft shops and restaurants. You can learn about Boerne online at: www.visitboerne.org/.

The club is continuing its tradition since 2014 of offering a free sausage and pancake breakfast for Volkssporters before they start their walk. There will also be free gifts while they last for Volkssporters who complete the walk such as old Volksmarch medals and other prizes.

For information on the walk events contact Ellen Ott at 210-723-8574 or email her at: ellenott@sbcglobal.net. You can print a copy of the walk brochure for this walk event by visiting the club website at: <http://randolphroadrunners.info/>.



HERE IS A LIST OF UPCOMING MULTI-DAY EVENTS FOR YOUR TRAVEL PLANNING. CLICK ON THE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION. THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THESE CLUBS.

Month	Date	Multi-day Event Description	Host Club	Location
2024				
December	13 - 15	Williamsburg Holiday Event	Peninsula Pathfinders of Virginia	VA
Dec/Jan	31 - 1	New Years Walks - Seattle	Emerald City Wanderers	WA
Dec/Jan	31 - 1	New Years Walks - Savage, MD	Freestate Happy Wanderers	MD
Dec/Jan	31 - 1	New Years Walks - Fredericksburg, TX	Volkssportverein Friedrichsburg	TX
2025				
February	14 - 16	Texas Trail Roundup / IML - San Antonio	Texas Trail Roundup	TX
April	10 - 11	Walk 2 New Arkansas Counties, Clarksville, AR	Ozark Hill Hikers	AR
April/May	26 - 4	AVA Biennial Convention Walks & Socials Las Cruces, NM	AVA	NM
May - National Walking Month & National Physical Fitness Month				
May	5 - 8	Group Walk - New NM County Walks	Sun Country Striders	NM
May	23 - 25	Triangle of Fire - Port Townsend, WA	Olympic Peninsula Explorers	WA
October	2 - 5	Walking Stevens Pass to Leavenworth	Interlaken & Central WA Sun Striders	WA
October	16 - 19	Shady Cove, Oregon	Interlaken & Central WA Sun Striders	OR

PARTICIPANTS CORNER

CLICK ICONS TO VIEW ANNIVERSARIES, EVENTS AND AWARDS.



AVA FEATURED EVENTS

New Years Walks in MD



**December 31, 2024
January 1, 2025
Savage, Maryland**

**4 Walks Over 2 Days
Welcome the New Year with Walks**

Sponsored by Free State Happy Wanderers

Info: Linda or Bill Hassel: wahasse1798@verizon.net

[Click here for more information](#)

New Years Walks in TX



**December 31, 2024
January 1, 2025
Fredericksburg, TX**

**3 Walks Over 2 Days
Ring in the New Year with Walks**

Sponsored by The Volkssportverein
Friedrichsburg - Club 001

Info: Dave Roberts: dloberts34@hotmail.com

[Click here for more information](#)

See all the walks/bike/swim events: ava.org – find a walk

New Years Walks in WA



**December 31, 2024
January 1, 2025
Seattle, WA**

**3 Walks Over 2 Days
Celebrate the New Year with Walks**

Sponsored by Emerald City Wanderers

Info: Mike Nagan: m.nagan@comcast.net

[Click Here for More Information](#)

IML in San Antonio, TX



**Texas Trail Roundup
International Festival
February 14-16, 2025
San Antonio, TX**

2/14: Downtown Walk 10/5K
2/15: Missions Walk 42/21/13/5K
2/16: River Walk 21/12/5K
Plus Swim and Bike Events & Ceremonies

[Brochure available here](#)

[Click Here for More Information](#)

See all the walks/bike/swim events: ava.org – find a walk

Arkansas County Walks



**Group Walk of Two
New Counties
April 10-11, 2025**

Start: Clarksville, Arkansas

Walk Johnson and Franklin Counties

Sponsored by Ozark Hill Hikers

Info: Pat Golden at bvohh@gmail.com

[Click Here for More Information](#)

AVA Convention & Festival



**Las Cruces, NM
April 26 – May 4, 2025
3 Cities – 3 States – 2 Countries**

10 Planned Walks + Many YREs
Swim and Bike Events
Social Events + Hall of Fame Dinner
General Membership Meetings for Clubs

Convention Dates are April 29 – May 2

[Registration & hotel info here.](#)

[Click Here for More Information](#)

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