

1. 2019 AVA Convention in Albany, NY

- a. More than 400 walkers at Pre/Post-Walks except Buffalo with 261. More than 600 walkers at each of the Convention walks.
- b. Silent Auction: \$11k raised including club cash donations.
- c. Madison WI selected for 2021 convention.
- d. All NEC/BOD recommended motions passed:
 - i. Change of AVA Fiscal Year (no effect on clubs) to begin January 1.
 - ii. Reduction of the number of required committees.
 - iii. Committees whose charter affects AVA Operations will report to the Executive Director.
 - iv. The option for AVA associate and lifetime members to elect up to 3 members of the Board in addition to the RDs and the AVA executive officers.
- e. Bob Schmick, Tom Jackson, and Tim Miner received AVA Distinguished Achievement Awards. Tim Miner received AVA Trailblazer Award.
- f. President's challenge to AVA clubs:
 - i. Hold one more TE per year than you have in the past.
 - ii. Increase your club membership by 10 members and encourage your club members to join the AVA as associate or lifetime members
 - iii. Current officers train/groom your replacements

2. 2020 Atlantic Region Conference – Next year's AT Regional Conference, sponsored by the KSWA, is tentatively scheduled for April 24 - 26, 2020 in Columbia, PA in conjunction with the 2020 Susquehanna Rivertowns Weekend event. The hotel for the conference has been narrowed down to 2 possibilities but has not yet been chosen.**3. Renewal of 2019 YRE/SEs for 2020**

- a. Please get all of your club's YRE/SEs renewed ASAP or if you have a 2019 YRE/SE you intend to not renew, please use the ESR system to mark it as "Not Being Renewed".
- b. The default stamp text for a renewed YRE/SE will be inherited from the corresponding 2019 YRE/SE. But a club is permitted to edit the text for their 2020 stamps, a day or so after the event is approved, to override this default.
- c. This year Hector has indicated he will likely begin laser cutting stamps starting as soon as October 1st, since there is no intern to help do this work like last year (with the goal of distributing nearly 2,000 YRE/SE stamps to all AVA clubs during the first week of December). This means you will likely be unable to edit 2020 YRE/SE stamp text after September 15th.

4. Event Brochures

- a. Please make sure that the RD and DRD are copied on all approved event brochures.
- b. I attach brochure pdfs to events posted on Atlantic Region (AT) calendar found on the Atlantic Region website: <http://mdvolks.org/Atlantic/>
- c. It is my understanding that AVA HQ will soon start promoting events 7 days in advance of their starting date by postings to Facebook. For AT Region, the event Facebook posts include attachments of the event brochures downloaded from the AT calendar.

5. The Online Start Box (OSB) is now on my.ava.org

- a. The OSB has been moved from the California State Association page (cva4u.org) to the new AVA site my.ava.org.
- b. A number of OSB features have been improved. One of the more significant changes is the use of EVO (the AVA approved credit card processor) to add funds to a user account's "Event Bank". EVO requires a user to enter their credit card on each use and, unlike Paypal, does **not** require the creation of login account.
- c. If you had an account on cva4u.org, your account has been transferred to my.ava.org, but upon your first login to my.ava.org you will be prompted to again sign the AVA Athletic Waiver.
- d. Help button content has been improved and a new FAQ is available by first clicking on the "Find a..." tab.
- e. Eventually all legacy ESR features used by clubs will be imported and improved on my.ava.org (like event stamp editing and the ACE-WG participation form).

6. New Event Details web page

- a. Recently, a new event details page has been deployed using my.ava.org. See, for example, <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=112298>
- b. Clubs may find it useful to reference (and display event details for) a YRE/SE by its stamp # on their website (since stamp #s do not change every like the 6 digit event ID). See, for example, <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?y=1839>
- c. This new web page is smart phone friendly. You can see this on a PC display if you sufficiently narrow the Browser window causing event info to be displayed in a single column.
- d. Some folks have become quite attached to the old/legacy event details display. The new webpage now has a button at the top of the page to view the legacy event details page.

- e. Notice there is a "Point of Contact" button that is an image of the event POC's email and phone# making it more immune to web bots scraping the POC's info from this webpage. Clicking on this button brings up a form to submit an email on a particular topic.

7. New quarterly participation data entry form and procedure

- a. Now likely to start at the end of Q4 2019, a new **single page** form (on my.ava.org) will be deployed for clubs to enter their quarterly participation data for all of their events. This single page form will automatically include the participation numbers from a club's Online Start Box (OSB) events and provide entry boxes for the data for their non-OSB events.
- b. Clubs will also be expected to enter any additional participation data for their OSB events (on the same single page form) when they have supported, for example, group walks, bus groups, or remote registration by physically registering walkers and physically stamping books (independent of the OSB).
- c. Once the clubs have entered all their quarterly participation and submitted the form, a confirmation page will show a draft of their quarterly invoice. This draft invoice will show the funds collected from their OSB walks as a credit.
- d. Confirming the draft invoice will cause an Invoice pdf to be generated. The club will be expected to download this invoice pdf.
- e. If the collected OSB amounts for the quarter are sufficient, it's possible the club will receive a check from the AVA for the excess funds. Otherwise, when there is a net balance owed to the AVA, the club is expected to print the appropriate portion of the invoice to send to the AVA with their payment.
- f. The AVA will no longer be sending clubs an Invoice via US Mail or via e-mail. (Note: 2019 Q3 Participation Data entry will be done using current system with an entry page for each event later followed by an invoice sent by the AVA.)

8. AVA Interactive Map

- a. Please check that the AVA Interactive map correctly shows the location of the city for the starting point for your clubs YRE/SE/TE once they have been approved.
- b. Seven events in Virginia were recently discovered as being mapped incorrectly by Annette Tollet.
- c. If you find any events mapped incorrectly, please send me an email (mikeginf@gmail.com) detailing the event info including the 6-digit event ID. Only an AVA IT person (myself) or AVA HQ is permitted to edit the city field of an already approved event after its start date.
- d. Typically, the zip code or county needs to be added after the name of the city to correct the problem.

9. AVAPay

- a. AVAPay is a yet to be released feature to allow for payment of non-OSB YRE/SE event fees using the money in your OSB Event Bank (soon to be on my.ava.org).
- b. Clubs will need to opt-in to allow AVAPay to be used for payment for a specific non-OSB YRE/SE that they sponsor.
- c. This is also an optional feature for event participants. Event participants will still be permitted to instead send start cards and checks via US Mail to the club.
- d. The AVAPay procedure supports use of YRE/SE specific QR codes to allow for convenient and accurate payment by a smartphone.
- e. It is likely this feature will be released early next year.

10. Support Remote Registration and OSB

- a. I noticed a number of VA walks support Remote Registration only. There is support for a YRE to both be an OSB walk and a Remote Registration walk where the POC requests a physical stamp on my.ava.org for the OSB event in question.
- b. As an example, here is a link to the New York City, Central Park YRE event detail <https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=112350> that supports both OSB and Remote Registration. Clicking on the "View legacy listing" button more clearly shows the specific text entered for the event's "Location:" and "Start point / Driving Directions:" fields to indicate this capability.
- c. I will gladly work with any VA YRE POC whose event only supports Remote Registration to make their event also support the OSB as another way a walker can do the event.
- d. The requirements and recommendations for an OSB event can be found at <http://nodegreen.com/olsb/>

11. Group Works

- a. The AVA National Office create Group Works for all AVA clubs based on the Club's POC email.
- b. Clubs may choose to opt in or out of Group Works.
- c. Before opting out, Clubs should consider the benefits of having a Group Works account especially given a new pilot program is being initiated in selected states. If/when this program is adopted nationwide, it is likely to provide club specific, high quality referrals of individuals interested in walking in that club's geographic area. See the ava.org home page for a newly posted introductory YouTube video about Groups Works.
- d. Even if a club does not intend to use any other feature of Group Works, they should still have a Group Works account with a designated leader account in order to receive referrals in the future.

12. August 2019 AVA BOD Orientation and Meeting

- a. The AVA BOD held a Orientation sessions for new and returning RD/DRDs and a brief formal meeting in San Antonio from August 15-18, 2019.
- b. The AVA BOD approved the general approach developed by the AVA President to get AVA club approval for necessary AVA bylaw changes in order to make AVA bylaws compliant with current Texas law (where the AVA is incorporated as a 501.3(c)
 - i. Once the BOD has reviewed the proposed bylaws (including the redlined version), the proposed revised bylaws will be sent out (emailed) to the clubs with a cover letter indicating the most significant changes and a red-lined version of the current bylaws showing the proposed changes for comment.
 - ii. Comments will be collected. Changes may be made based the comments.
 - iii. A final version of the proposed bylaws will be sent out for club approval. Approval responses will be tallied and upon achieving the required approval percentage under the current bylaws, the proposed bylaws will become the official bylaws of the AVA.
- c. The AVA BOD will continue to hold monthly Electronic Board Meetings (EBMs) using MS Teams. New Issues raised during an EBM requiring a BOD vote can only be voted on during a following EBM or face-to face BOD meeting.
- d. There will be no January face-to-face BOD meeting in 2020 as a part of the general agreement to reduce expenses for BOD meetings in the current AVA budget. The next face-to-face meeting will be held June 12-14, 2020 in Madison, WS.
- e. The AVA National Office will proceed with changing their financial year to begin on Jan 1st starting Jan 1, 2020. Clubs are NOT required to change their financial year. But if a club wishes to do so, Erin Grosso, the AVA Financial Manager, has volunteered to help clubs to make the change.
- f. Your RD has been elected to be the RD representative on the AVA Executive Committee (composed of the President, Vice President, Treasure, Secretary, Executive Director, and a representative RD). Executive Committee infrequently meets to deal with pressing issues effecting the AVA (usually via electronic meetings).

13. Charity Miles

- a. A number of Volkssporters are starting to use the “Charity Miles” app, available for both Apple and Android smartphones. This app allows you to make your accumulated walking distance for a specific event or exercise session (upon first activating the Charity Miles) to result in a small donation (proportional to the distance walked) to a designated charity.
- b. John McClellan has formed a Charity Miles team, “#AmericasWalkingClub!”. John has also applied with the founders of Charity Miles to allow users to select the AVA as the target for their donation.
- c. Until the AVA becomes available as a target for Charity Miles donations, you are encouraged to go ahead and download the Charity Miles app and join the team and for now select another charity for your walking donations. John is hoping that as the member count for the #AmericasWalkingClub! team grows, the more likely/sooner the AVA will be approved as Charity Miles donation target.