

**2004 AVA SURVEY  
OF CLUB PRESIDENTS  
STATE PRESIDENTS AND  
NEC OFFICERS**

**January 21, 2005**

**Survey Appendices**

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## **Appendix 1: What clubs do to make volkssporting more fun for members.**

Note: In each Appendix similar responses are grouped together and listed only once. The number in parentheses shows the number of times that response was received.

**Food/Social Activities with or without meeting/walk:** 71 Clubs listed items such as:

Barbeque/pig roast.  
Soup 4 the Soul walk.  
Dessert potluck.  
Celebrate birthdays.  
Social \_ hour before meeting.  
Visit museums, plays, concerts.  
Provide meat at picnics.  
Picnic.  
Dinner at restaurant.  
Meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner) after group walks.  
Christmas lights walk with party.  
Holiday party.  
Pizza Party.  
Potluck dinners.  
Bratwurst at walks.  
Homemade cookies after meeting.  
Fresh fruit, cookies, etc.  
Having a meal together after holding an event.

**Group Walks:** 54 Clubs listed items such as:

Changed our meetings to have them after walks.  
Added more **friendship** walks of our year-rounds.  
Provide a variety of walks i.e. full moon night walks.  
Walks with meeting.  
More neighborhood walks with increased friendship time for visiting and eating.  
Walk our YRE/Seasonal.  
Saturday or evening walks.  
Walk other than volkswalk.  
Walk in July 4<sup>th</sup> parade.  
Train trip to a group walk.

**Quality Events:** 38 Clubs listed items such as:

Walks now encompass a variety of locations vs. repeat locations.  
Quality events on Nature Trails.  
Free New Balance giveaways.  
Ensure that maps, directions, etc. are accurate.  
Put on a walk in a different place each year.  
Trail Poker.  
Visitors are encouraged to walk with group and spread the word.  
Loop system with shorter trails so people come back to registration area for checkpoint.  
Quick start program.

Celebrate things outside of our club as part of walks.  
Theme walks, i.e. art walk, history walk.  
Bonfire and cookies at Christmas walk.  
Prizes and treasure/scavenger hunts.  
Walk at festivals.  
March with senior center to band music.  
Girl Scout walk.  
Food and live German Band.  
Cold drinks/food available.  
Guided group walks.  
*VolksGifts* to participants.  
Picnic items at walks.  
Identify flora on trail.  
Made our walking routes more interesting.  
Our walking trails are the best.  
Interesting Walks.  
Focus on helping people vs. enforcing rules.  
Maintain a balance between city and country trails.  
New locations to walk outside of our immediate area.  
Brats and potato salad at regular events.  
Food, refreshments and music at all walks.

**Special activities for club members:** 23 Clubs listed items such as:

Reward for completing all club YRE/Seasonal walks.  
Guest speakers at meetings.  
Outing for our youth.  
Half of our meetings are socials.  
Excellent programs.  
Added a \$2 discount for dues and .50 discount for five events.  
Paid for trip to biennial convention.  
Raffles/Little contests/Door prize drawings.  
Giveaways to volunteers.  
Redesigned newsletter to make it more fun and informative.  
No meetings, less rules.  
More organized meetings. Now have almost 100% attendance.  
Earn points for active participation – club bucks on club sales items.  
Email sub-group.  
Excellent email from our Trailmaster each week.  
Well organized officers to support members.

**Road Trips and Carpooling:** 23 Clubs listed items such as:

Joining with other clubs.  
Bus trips.  
Train trips.  
Trips to IML, IVV Olympiad, snowshoe trip.  
Encourage car pooling.  
Special occasion walks.  
Out of Town group walks.

## **Miscellaneous**

Assisting new walkers on our 12 km YRE.

Fun walks (not sanctioned) to get locals interested, but stopped since it wasn't working.

Tours/cruises for groups to provide fellowship and fun and travel.

Special awards.

Get more people involved in planning walks.

Have more of them.

We have held the \$2 fee (2 clubs).

We offered Mothers' Day flowers baskets and beanie babies for mothers and children.

Trail building.

Added a new YRE.

Joined with a non-volkssporting walking club to provide weekly walking opportunities.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Biggest Problems Faced by AVA Clubs and their Solutions.**

#### **Other comments (Problems – Question 14):**

##### **Volunteers and Officers**

The same people do all the work and get burned out.

Overcommitment and burnout

Burn out of officers.

Members are not active in AVA.

Members want a greater variety of walks - seems to be all talk on their parts and no incentive action.

Can't fill officer positions a close second.

No one is interested in taking the time.

Members are too busy. Lack of interest in organizing a VW.

Not enough ACTIVE members.

Competition for member time – commitment.

No one wants responsibility for chairing walk events or finding new YRE routes.

Filling key positions.

Apathy.

Lack of interest in walking.

##### **Recruiting New Members**

Not enough young members.

Club is strong but need new members.

No new members.

Finding younger members and children interested in walking.

Need younger members.

##### **Participation in Events**

Lack of walking participation.

Region clubs not participating at our events.

Interest lacking.

Most of our members do not walk each month.

Can't sustain interest of current members.

Not enough participants (down 80% in 10 years).

Small participation from out of state.

Not enough members who walk regularly.

Lots of members join but do not come to the walks.

Getting people from out-of-town to come to our events.

Many members don't participate.

Low participation in sanctioned events, which leads to a lack of money.

Decreasing participation over last five years.

##### **Publicity**

People don't know about us.

Publicity - hard to find someone good at it.

Lack of promotion.

Lack of name recognition of volkssporting at the national level.  
Hard to sell concept of volkssporting to university town-people.

### **Competition between events**

Many more walks other than AVA – fundraisers.

Putting on a walk on the same day as another walk by other club in another location or another area of state.

Too many YR walks.

Metro area clubs scheduling events the same date as outlying areas already have scheduled.

Too many other events every weekend.

Year round events.

Competition from clubs having an event on the same day.

Too many clubs within 50 miles.

Other clubs scheduling events same day as we have scheduled events.

### **No Problems**

No problems with money or walking area.

I don't see any problems.

I don't think we have any problems.

No problems.

### **Miscellaneous Problems**

Finding start points.

AVA.

Active members.

Outsiders pretend to know more about rules and local area. They want to dictate their whims

Incentive (event) awards too expensive and too large minimum required.

Members getting older.

Distance from us to other club walks.

We would like to try to start a club and pass on these responsibilities.

The Community Center (my employer) has just hosted it to help out.

Work interferes with working at events.

Perception by club members that AVA/State org rules and guidelines are not applied equally.

Location.

Getting accurate input from members as to what they want.

Our club is 100% handicapped. Physical problems to illness to weather (rain, temp, under 40 or over 80) prevents members from walking.

### **Other comments (Solutions - Question 15):**

#### **Club Officers and Volunteers**

Finding right person

Perks to get involved in leadership

We need to get our newer younger members more involved - haven't figured out how.

#### **Recruiting New Members**

We need to recruit some new dedicated members.

More activities to interest member participation.

More recruiting events  
More younger adults  
Draw younger volkswalkers  
Need to recruit younger members.

### **AVA**

Get the AVA back to supporting walkers, not the bottom line  
AVA should have a program to help, financially and publicity-wise.

### **Help from Outside Clubs**

Need help to hold quality events  
A new club (mine) has a very tough time without help from other clubs.

### **Miscellaneous Solutions**

We have an excellent 12km YRE  
Good community liaison.  
We need other clubs in the area.  
We are in Central Illinois and no one wants to drive this far - although we go to theirs all the time.  
I need less interference from others.  
More events in our area - more clubs. We are working on it though.

## **Appendix 3**

### **State Organizations – Combined Summary**

Note: In each Appendix similar responses are grouped together and listed only once. The number in parentheses shows the number of times that response was received.

#### **Question 27. If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

##### **Lists Event Information (37)**

**Everything (6)**

**Year-Round information (5)**

**Events and YREs in other nearby states (3)**

**Club news and articles (3)**

**Has all the flyers of all the events in one place (3)**

**Informative and dependable (2)**

##### **Miscellaneous**

Letter from State President

Easy to read.

Current and correct

Articles and pictures, event descriptions.

It has most of the information that's needed.

Easy access to info

Only an event listing.

Minutes

Includes event information and it is free.

Simple and short on one sheet of paper.

Event Summary Listing on back page

All the good information on AVA

It's free to new walkers. Mailed to those who donate. Has all state's walks and comes out quarterly.

Booklet with Starting Point info for all state YREs

Flyers

Know how to plan walks

Walks are all in one brochure.

Convenient way to organize brochures.

Walks well listed, concise, ads for walks

Arrives on time

Listing of events and distances walked

It's sent every month and keeps us informed of what's happening all over the state.

It's informative and continues to get better.

Has all info in it; is handy.

Website provides basic information

Information organized and well distributed.

Format for each walks

Free advertisers for events  
How information is presented

**Question 28. If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

**Nothing (23)**

**Content (16)**

Not enough extra articles re. walking.  
No letters to the editor.  
Long boring letters from State Pres.  
No letters from members.  
Nothing but event ads  
NO letters to the Editor  
No news about other clubs in the state  
No articles on our sport  
Limited space for comments.  
No articles  
Errors  
Few pictures, no articles,  
Needs interesting stories  
Website not well populated with information.  
It is all just walk info. Nothing about what clubs are doing, unfortunately  
Other than the event list, it always pretty much the same info every issue, not much new material.

**Arrives Late (5)**

Not distributed early enough  
Distribution to clubs sometimes delayed.  
Inconsistent distribution to clubs and events.

**Limited Distribution (3)**

Not distributed widely beyond US community.  
Not distributed widely outside of volkssporting population  
Availability

**Frequency of publication (2)**

Comes out bimonthly rather than monthly. Too long lead time needed for ads.

**Miscellaneous**

Somewhat cumbersome for new volkswalkers to read.  
It costs  
Isn't open to new ideas.  
Name  
Duplicates Starting Point Info  
All of it  
Not all walks have a flyer.  
Doesn't have state officers' addresses or phone numbers.  
Could benefit from more color  
Can't be updated (too expensive)  
Control by the editors.

Giving it away free

It only lists Starting Point of YR and does not tell you about them.

**Question 29. What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Produces regular walk Publication (20)

Sanctions walks (19)

Coordinates events/calendars (17)

Publicizes events (12)

Holds State Meeting (9)

Keeps clubs up to date on AVA matters/rules or walk changes/communication with clubs. (8)

Verifies accuracy of ESR and brochure and walk directions (6)

Helps clubs solve problems (6)

Maintains web site (5)

Promotes cooperation and communication between clubs (5)

Nothing/Offer no support/Influence not noticeable (5)

Promotes Volkssporting to non-volkssporting audiences (3)

Provides workers if needed (3)

Holds Convention/Conference (3)

Provides Books/Start cards/supplies (3)

Gives Incentives or awards (3)

**Miscellaneous**

Help set and mark trails (2)

Attend walks (2)

Assists with sanctions. (2)

State Park walking events (2)

Prints a calendar of event dates (2)

Hold events (2)

Carries extra flyers to next event

Exchange of information; respects input by each club.

Planning meetings

Local calls to clubs

Have meetings in variety of locations to benefit clubs

Allows everyone the opportunity to get together to hold walks in remote areas.

Trying to make all clubs feel like a family.

Helps get brochures to other areas of the state

Have representative visit club meetings

Clearing house for patch programs and sponsored walks

Encouragement to volunteers

**Question 30. What task would you like your State Organization to perform better?**

**Promote volkssports to non-volkssporting audiences (28)**

Promote events involving more than one club

Promote Events in more rural areas

Promote local partnerships and sponsorships  
Promote development of new members and clubs and.  
Promote volkssports statewide and encourage formation of new clubs.  
More community programs  
Promotion of ALL state clubs and events.  
Website  
Get involved in more health fairs, etc.

### **None, it is excellent as is (11)**

### **Scheduling events/resolving schedule conflicts (11)**

Scheduling in conjunction with the region  
Allow more than one VM on the same date in different places  
Not having two clubs sanction events on the same day.  
Let clubs know when another event is sanctioned for same weekend, so you can move  
We do need event coordination but the web can help that.

### **Better/faster communication (9)**

Get minutes of state meetings to clubs faster.  
Better feedback on electronic sanctioning of YRE/Seasonals  
More communication with clubs, especially those outside of metro area  
Make event sanction and approval process simpler and easier  
More meetings (2)  
Relationship with clubs and members

### **Assist Clubs (9)**

Identify and assist troubled clubs (5)  
Training for new clubs, new officers (3)  
Provide leadership for new or troubled clubs.  
Guidance for putting on events.  
Forms, etc. are not very familiar since completed once per year.  
Aid the smaller clubs as well as the larger ones.  
Personal contact with President to give guidance  
Better communications of special events.

### **Helping clubs to attract new members/walkers (6)**

### **Encouraging volkssporting (3)**

Encouraging more use of Sundays.  
Encourage more 2-day events  
Understand that the multiple club events will draw walkers to the area and all clubs can benefit.

### **Liaison between AVA and Clubs (2)**

Provide a single voice to HQ about change or problems  
Club assistance and conforming to IVV policies

## **Volunteer Recognition (2)**

More help in recognizing individual club volunteers.

## **Paperwork (2)**

Cut duplication of paperwork with AVA.

Less paperwork!

## **Enforcement (2)**

Enforce state rules

Enforcing clubs to correct errors on information clubs provide.

## **Support events (2)**

Get more active in supporting events

Support all walks

## **Don't know (2)**

### **Miscellaneous**

More receptive to new ideas

RD is doing a great job. But why is state org there?

Be more welcoming to new officers who do not belong to the military and have no spouse.

Hold walks in areas of clubs - not out in the boondocks of the state.

## **Question 31. What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

### **Promote Volkssports to the non-volkssporting community (11)**

Develop more clubs in State (3)

Attract more walkers (2)

Youth outreach

More signs from clubs on road during events to gain interest.

Higher profile - represent themselves better, be positive, cheerful and fun.

Publicize - coordinate publicity for all state walks, especially in major metro areas.

Support activities/walks

Support activities such as Friendship Walks.

### **Lead by Example (11)**

Have social events

Put on more events

State should make an effort to put on a sanction event to promote the state.

Help make walks in counties where there are no clubs.

Special walks – State Parks

Have more walks on Sunday.

More social (2)

Add music to Christmas event

Take the lead in promoting new activities - stress the social aspect by example, not decree.

Bring back "the more the merrier" potlucks once each month.

Don't yell at each other at state meetings - too much negativity in past years, so I stopped going and volunteering at State.

Have more fun - don't be so serious. Offer more benefits to families.

Have better walks and events

Be friendly

Have more events that include club participation

Encourage social activities and participate in them

### **Satisfied with what State Organization does (11)**

They have done a great job promoting the sport for health and fun.

They have implemented various challenges.

They already sponsor events that are fun.

Continue to encourage all clubs to organize and conduct top quality events - not just a walk.

It has just started a county program.

Continue to promote special programs

I like the Challenges.

Not the States responsibility. Clubs need to provide the fun.

### **Help clubs be more innovative (6)**

Encourage clubs to have music, food and other activities at events (4)

Encourage clubs to change event routes more frequently (2)

Give suggestions for activities that appeal to younger members like treasure hunts.

Help with innovation to make events more interesting.

Help with having more fun, special events.

Promote 'quality' events (too many Saturday only events), too many short start times.

Make suggestions to increase participation

See that clubs put on fun and safe walks.

Encourage volkssporters to get to know each other outside of their own club.

Hold more than one sanction event in the state on the same weekend.

Encourage more walks

Support clubs so that they can do a better job.

### **Don't know (5)**

#### **Don't play favorites (4)**

Help all clubs, not just some of them.

Work with everyone, not just their small clique.

Let more new people help.

Be less critical of newcomers.

#### **Better Communication (4)**

Dispense follow up info on events - number of walkers, etc.

Provide information statewide

Communicate more effectively; focus on the sport, not the state publication

Add programs (informational, educational) to meetings

## **Miscellaneous**

It seems that it is difficult to get flyers approved.

The walkers just like nice walks in great areas.

Prizes

Leave individual Organizations alone to do their thing.

Stop infighting and work as a team with inspired leadership

Less year rounds.

More recognition

Stop sponsoring events on same date as a club has a scheduled walk.

Assign duties to state officers or committees.

## **Question 32. What can your State Organization do to help your club?**

### **Better Communication/More Information (15)**

Send news electronically so I can share with members via email.

A newsletter by email.

Continue to promote and provide state info.

Better communication regarding the sanctioning process that is not electronic.

Relay information in a timely manner.

We need info on how to advertise better.

Provide advice and knowledge of AVA rules, policies and programs.

Leadership training ideas.

Stay in contact and keep us informed.

Provide assistance understanding AVA rules and regulations.

Reply to requests and needs.

Provide training to new officers.

Be responsive to clubs. Answer emails; return phone calls

Broadly distribute event information through state publication and the web page.

Better communications

### **More Publicity (13)**

Spend time promoting volkssport events instead of sponsoring them.

Become more visible and make walking so

### **Nothing (10)**

Nothing. We need to do it ourselves.

Probably nothing since we need more, younger members.

### **Encourage clubs to work out conflicts (7)**

Ensure that all clubs work out a schedule of events as far ahead as possible, that contains no conflicts.

Keep me informed of walks in the state to minimize scheduling conflicts.

Encourage clubs to avoid holding club (group) walks that conflict with other clubs walks.

Promote events in our state region/area and prevent events on same day in large cities. This will encourage walkers to drive to events.

Not have competing walks on same weekend.

Coordinate and encourage clubs to schedule events so as not to compete with one another.

Schedule walks so there are no conflicts

### **I am Satisfied (7)**

At this time we are receiving the assistance (2)  
Keep up the good work.  
They really are very attentive and supportive  
They do well now.  
Nothing - highly responsive to each and every request.  
We are OK

### **Don't know (7)**

Unfortunately we are not active with the state so are not prepared to answer the above.  
I think our state org does the best they can. Members are getting older like all of us.

### **Come to our events (4)**

### **Very Unsatisfied (3)**

Unfortunately our state organization could go away and not be missed.  
It can't - its got more problems than we do!  
We want to help them vs. vice versa.

### **Help Recruit Members (2)**

Refer members.  
Assist with events and suggest ways to draw folks into volkssporting and them joining a club.

### **Miscellaneous**

Maintain supplies. Record books and new walker packets for club purchase (small emergency supply). Provide list of volunteers to assist at events.  
Just be there when we need advice.  
Maybe schedule meetings closer to our area of the state.  
Promote a 'work together attitude'  
We must attract new people both to our club and the sport. We need effective leadership now or else we are out of business.  
Allow comments from club during state meeting.  
Simplify forms.  
Lobby for lesser fees.  
Don't schedule events conflicting with club events.  
Reduce paperwork and fees for struggling clubs.  
Coordinate publicity; help to coordinate walk schedules . We use the web now to see when we can hold one.  
Reduce YRE

## **Appendix 4**

### **State Organization – Responses by State Organization.**

#### **California**

##### **Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Everything - it is great (2 responses)

Event summary listing at back page.

All the good information on AVA/CVA

It's free to new walkers. Mailed to those who donate. Has all CA walks and comes out quarterly.

Published quarterly; listing all weekend events as well as year-round events.

Best info about regular events.

List all walks in CA

Information about walks and better from CVA President

Easy to read.

The calendar of upcoming events.

Current and correct

Articles and pictures, event descriptions, calendar.

It has most of the information that's needed.

For excellent info on upcoming events.

##### **Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Nothing (11 responses)

Somewhat cumbersome for new volkswalkers to read.

##### **Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

State meetings & Publications. Local calls to club

Publish Compass. Walk notices and maintain website.

Coordinate all events, etc. in state, keeping everyone informed.

Publicizing our events

Verify accuracy of Event Sanction Request's and brochures.

State publication every three months.

Advertise walks

Publishes the Compass - keeps clubs up to date on AVA matters.

Annual convention

Advertising our walks in the Compass and website.

Coordinate events

Advertising in state publication, annual conventions.

It does planning meetings.

Promote

##### **Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Nothing (5)

Don't Know (2)

Helping clubs to attract new members.

Better feedback on electronic sanctioning of YRE/seasonals

More communication with clubs.  
Promotion

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Don't know (3)

The walkers just like nice walks in great areas.

Give suggestions for activities that appeal to younger members like treasure hunts.

It seems that it is difficult to get flyers approved.

Develop more clubs in the State

Support activities such as the Friendship Walks.

Increase club numbers

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Just be there when we need advice.

Relay information in a timely manner.

We need info on how to advertise better.

Better communication regarding the sanctioning process that is not electronic.

Continue to promote and provide state info.

## **Florida**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Not by State

Events and Information

**Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

It costs.

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Updating us on changes to walks or rule changes

Promote cooperation and communication between clubs.

Periodical upcoming event listing

Listens to problems and suggests remedies.

Timely approval of Event Sanction Requests

Excellent State Park Program.

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Events involving more than one club.

Promote club membership

Nothing

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Help with innovation to make events more interesting.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Provide advice and knowledge of AVA rules, policies and programs.

Publicity

## **Illinois**

### **Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Quick Event Sanction Request reviews/approvals; Quick brochure review/approvals.

None

Approves events

Attend walks and hold meetings there.

Answer questions and help our club which consists only of officers.

Promotes events.

### **Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Promotions at events in more rural areas.

Meetings and encourage walkers.

Forms, etc. are not very familiar since completed once a year.

### **Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Assist with events and suggest ways to draw folks into volkssporting and them joining a club.

Refer members

## **Indiana**

### **Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Only an event listing.

Minutes

Includes event information and it is free.

Simple and short on one sheet of paper.

### **Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Doesn't have state officers addresses or phone numbers.

### **Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Helps mark trails.

Help set trails

Promotion of volkssporting to external audiences.

Helps with questions or problems/helps schedule walks.

Manage calendar - no clashes of dates.

Carries extra flyers to the next event.

State Park Walking Events.

### **Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Allow more than one VM on the same date in different places.

Promotion of volkssporting to external audiences.

publicity

Make the event sanction and approval process simpler and easier.

Nothing

### **Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

More food after some VM's

Cultivate new clubs.

Prizes

Don't know. They do try.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Publicity

## **Maryland**

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Sanction events (2 responses)

Exchange of information, respects input by each club.

One member assists with sanctions. He's wonderful! Besides, he's cheerful!

Approve volkssport events.

Advice, books, start cards

Offer no support

Brochure review/approval

Encouragement to our club volunteers for having some of the best events in the region.

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Coordinating all events throughout the year so there are no conflicts (4 responses)

Getting to know members, officers, etc.

Aid the smaller clubs as well as the larger ones.

Provide a single voice to HQ about 'change' or 'problems'

Nothing

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

More signs from clubs on road during events to gain interest.

Higher profile - represent themselves better, be positive, cheerful and fun.

State should make an effort to put on a sanction event to promote the state.

Help all clubs, not just some of them.

Help with having more fun, special events.

Promote 'quality' events (too many Saturday only events), too many short start times.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

More advertising within the state.

Ensure that all clubs work out a schedule of events, set as far ahead as possible, without conflicts.

Keep me informed of walks in the state to minimize scheduling conflicts.

They really are very attentive and supportive

Promote a 'work together attitude'

## **Minnesota**

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Coordinate event dates (5 responses)

Prints a calendar of event dates.

Co-op walk event, incentive awards.

Disseminate rules information.

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Publicity (2)  
Promotion  
Training for new clubs, new officers  
Club assistance and conforming to IVV policies.  
Work with clubs.

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Attract more people (2)  
Make suggestions to increase participation  
Encourage clubs to change event routes more frequently.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

More publicity (2)  
Leadership training ideas.  
Spread word about our walk  
It can't - its got more problems than we do!

## **North Carolina**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Booklet with Starting Point info for all state YREs  
Gives thorough information on walks

**Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Duplicates Starting Point Info  
Name

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Co-ordination, cooperation and communication of clubs (4 responses)  
Review AVA programs and policies  
Coordination and assistance

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Get more publicity for volkssports  
Provide leadership for new or troubled clubs.

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Leave individual Organizations alone to do their thing.  
See that clubs put on fun and safe walks.  
Am generally satisfied with functions of and support from State organization.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Encourage clubs to avoid holding club (group) walks that conflict with other clubs walks.

## **Ohio**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Good information about all walks (3 responses)  
Convenient way to organize brochures (3 responses)  
Schedule of state's events and neighboring states (2)

Flyers and calendars of events  
Listing of upcoming scheduled walks.  
OVA Journal  
Know how to plan walks  
Walks are all in one brochure.  
Full page flyers of each event

**Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Not all walks sometimes have a flyer.  
Not distributed widely beyond US community.  
Not distributed widely outside of volkssporting population.  
Availability  
Distribution to clubs sometimes delayed.  
Nothing – 7

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Publishing the OVA journal (3 responses)  
Assistance understanding AVA rules and regulations  
Attend the walks, Have state meetings in variety of locations to benefit clubs.  
None  
Sanctioning/scheduling events.  
Controlling the number of walks being put on the same day. Too many walks too much competition.  
Helps with sanctions  
Helps coordinate our activities to promote a successful walk  
Helps when needed and sponsors walks  
Allows everyone the opportunity to get together to provide walks in remote areas.  
Advertises walks - provides workers if needed - helps schedule events.  
Sanctions events.

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Promote local partnerships and sponsorships  
Get the minutes from the State Meeting faster to the clubs.  
Club recruitment  
Give more guidance on putting on walks.  
More help in recognizing individual club volunteers.  
Preventing competition for dates; encouraging more use of Sundays.  
Enforce state rules  
They do the best they can.

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Encourage clubs to develop new walk locations and routes.  
Help make walks in more counties in Ohio and other special walks - State parks  
Less year rounds.  
Have more walks on Sunday.  
Provide food or a fun activity along the walk  
Encourage volkssporters to get to know each other, to make acquaintances outside of their own club.  
They have done a great job promoting the sport for health and fun.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Provide assistance understanding AVA rules and regulations.

Stay in contact and keep us informed.

More publicity statewide

Promote events in our state region/area and prevent events on same day in large cities. This will encourage walkers to drive to events.

I think our state org does the best they can. Members are getting older like all of us.

**Oregon**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

It is the best! (3 responses)

Walks well listed, concise, ads for walks

Lists upcoming walks

Arrives on time

Ads - Listing of k's walked and events walked

It's sent every month and keeps us informed of what's happening all over the state.

It's informative and continues to get better.

Ads for upcoming walks.

Informative and dependable

Club news and articles

Great articles, ads, club news.

Posted walk info

Club news and articles

**Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

When it doesn't come on time (3 responses)

Nothing (3)

No letters to the editor (2)

Could benefit from more color

Not enough extra articles re. walking.

Long boring letters from State Pres.

No letters from members.

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Website - publicize and coordinate walks

Keeps us current with upcoming events and news.

Keep us coordinated with the other clubs in the state.

Meeting every other month.

Influence not noticeable

Communication at meetings

Kept state publication going.

Provides minutes from their meeting.

Advertises events

Getting the state publications out to new walkers and working health fairs, etc.

Checking directions to walks and walk directions.

Advertises events

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Publicity for Volkssporting (3 responses)

Publicity fro volkssports statewide (2)

We need to develop more training sessions. (2)

Personal contact with President to give guidance

More communications - Most of the clubs are located in the northern part of the state.

Prevent overlapping of regular events

Help clubs in trouble

Hold meeting for all reps once a month.

Negotiate with clubs so walks are not stacked up on one weekend. Let clubs know when another event is sanctioned for same weekend, so you can move.

Enforcing clubs to correct errors on information clubs provide.

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Have more fun - don't be so serious. Offer more benefits to families

Continue to encourage all clubs to organize and conduct top quality events - not just a walk.

Encourage more walks

Take the lead in promoting new activities - stress the social aspect by example, not decree.

Work with everyone, not just their small clique.

Bring back "the more the merrier" potlucks once each month.

Don't yell at each other at state meetings - too much negativity in past years, so I stopped going and volunteering at State.

More recognition

Have better walks and events

More potlucks and social events.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Not have competing walks on same weekend.

At this time we are receiving the assistance.

Maybe schedule meetings closer to our area of the state.

We must attract new people both to our club and the sport. We need effective leadership now or else we are out of business.

Allow comments from club during state meeting.

Provide walk advertising to the public.

We want to help them vs. vice versa.

## **Pennsylvania**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

All year-rounds are listed.

Has all info in it; is handy.

Can't be updated (too expensive)

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Publish YRE state book (2 responses)

Trying to make all clubs in state feel like a family.

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Publicity

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

It has just started a county program.

## **Texas**

**Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Event schedule (4 responses)

No publication except occasional letter to club presidents.

**Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Frequency of publication (2 responses)

We don't have one.

No news about other clubs in the state

No articles on our sport

**Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Sanction walks (6 responses)

Semi-annual meetings - keeping clubs well informed (2)

Coordinates events with neighboring clubs.

All Texas volkssport events and meetings

Checks brochures

Information. Supplies.

Nothing!

Promote development of new members

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Cut duplication of paperwork with AVA (2 responses)

Relationship with clubs and members (2)

Publicity

Get more active in supporting events

Be more welcoming to new officers who do not belong to the military and have no spouse.

Promote development of new members and clubs and identify and assist troubled clubs.

Encourage more 2-day events

Communication

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Put on more events

Be less critical of newcomers.

More social - add music to Christmas event

Stop infighting and work as a team with inspired leadership

Youth outreach

They already sponsor events that are fun.

Let more new people help.

Promote better

Assign duties to state officers or committees.

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Come to our events. (3)

Provide training to new officers.  
Lobby for lesser fees.  
Come visit us at walks. Also send news electronically so I can share with members via email.  
Attend the event  
Reply to requests and needs.  
Not schedule conflicting events.  
Simplify forms  
Unfortunately our state organization could go away and not be missed.  
Reduce paperwork and fees for struggling clubs.

## **Virginia**

### **Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

Current info (2 responses)  
Lists of events  
Website provides basic information

### **Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Other than the event list, it is always pretty much the same info every issue, not much new material.  
Website not well populated with information.  
Do not have a publication

### **Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Approve sanctions (4 responses)  
Sanction quickly and reviews brochure quickly  
Approve brochure.  
Constant communication up and down chain between AVA/AD/VVA & club  
Helps get brochures out to the other areas of the state.  
Awards  
Makes VVA certificates for up to 5 members a year on clubs recommendations  
Maintains state website.

### **Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

More community programs  
Promote AVA  
Understand that the multiple club events will draw walkers to the area and all clubs can benefit.  
Promote volkssports statewide and encourage formation of new clubs.  
Support all walks  
I feel they do a good job; people are not inclined to travel far to events.  
Hold walks in areas of clubs - not out in the boondocks of the state.

### **Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Promote clubs to have music, food and other activities at events  
Add programs (informational, educational) to meetings  
Party  
Stop sponsoring events on same date as a club has a scheduled walk.

### **Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Nothing (2 responses)  
Promote the organization.  
Reduce YRE  
Probably nothing since we need more, younger members.  
Spend time promoting volkssport events instead of sponsoring them.  
A newsletter by email.

## **Washington**

### **Q 27 If your state has a publication, what do you like best about it?**

All events are posted. (4 responses)  
Format of event listings (3)  
Good event ads.  
Info about local walks, YREs and other  
Information organized and well distributed.  
Informative  
Listing of adjoining state Year-round Events  
Lists all YRE, seasonals and events in Northwest  
It covers events for 2 months and lists walks in region.  
Lists events and contacts  
Calendar  
Free advertisers for events  
Information all in one place.

### **Q 28 If your state has a publication, what do you like least about it?**

Nothing but event ads (4 responses)  
Control by the editors.  
Comes out bimonthly rather than monthly. Too long lead time needed for ads.  
Nothing about what clubs are doing, unfortunately.  
Giving it away free  
Not distributed early enough  
Isn't open to new ideas.  
It only lists Starting Point of YR and does not tell you about them.  
Limited space for comments.  
Errors  
Needs interesting stories  
Few pictures,  
Inconsistent distribution to clubs and events.

### **Q 29 What is the most important task that your State Organization performs to benefit your club?**

Publishing the Pathfinder (10 responses)  
Creates a forum for idea exchange at quarterly ESVA meetings.  
Have representatives visit club meetings.  
Supports Regional conference if in our state.  
Clearinghouse for patch programs and sponsored walks such as TNT series.  
Lists upcoming events  
Publicizing events, access to equipment, e.g. tables  
WA Challenge  
Website, and phone info

**Q30 What task would you like your State Organization to do better?**

Scheduling of events (4 responses)

More publicity outside the existing VP community. (2)

Support clubs in trouble (2)

More receptive to new ideas

RD is doing a great job. But why is state org there. We do need event coordination but the web can help that.

Get involved in more health fairs, etc.

Better communications of special events.

Website Advertising

Promoting new members

Promotion of ALL state clubs and events.

Communicate

**Q31 What can your State Organization do to make Volkssports more fun?**

Publicize - coordinate publicity for all state walks, especially in major metro areas.

I like the Challenges.

Encourage social activities and participate in them

Dispense follow up info on events - number of walkers, etc.

Be friendly and provide information statewide

Get the word out more - more advertising

Support clubs so that they can do a better job.

Have more events that include club participation

Have social events

Not the States responsibility. Clubs need to provide the fun.

Continue to promote special programs

Communicate more effectively

Focus on the sport, not the state publication

**Q32 What can your state do to help your club?**

Coordinate and encourage clubs to schedule events so as not to compete with one another.(2 responses)

Become more visible and make walking so

Promote volkssporting to increase event attendance and members.

Advertise walks more and tell about year-rounds

Maintain supplies. Record books and new walker packets for club purchase (small emergency supply).

Provide list of volunteers to assist at events.

Coordinate publicity; help to coordinate walk schedules . We use the web now to see when we can hold one.

Better communications

Broadly distribute event information through state publication and the web page.

Be responsive to clubs. Answer emails; return phone calls.

## **Appendix 5**

### **The American Wanderer (TAW).**

Questions 35 – 38 asked for an evaluation of *The American Wanderer*. All responses are listed below. Similar responses are grouped together with the number of respondents shown in parenthesis.

#### **Question 35. What articles would you like to see in TAW?**

##### **Walks, Past, Present and Future (40)**

More about events (7)

National & International Walk Reports & stories (6)

Special events (5)

More info about local walks (2)

Upcoming events rather than past events. (2)

Upcoming events, not something I already missed unless it is a yearly event.

More from each region on upcoming events.

Upcoming walks - unique and interesting

In depth articles and picture about upcoming events.

Upcoming walks and good past walks

More articles showcasing upcoming events and YREs/seasonals

Walk descriptions in each region

Articles on interesting walks in our state/region

##### **I like TAW the way it is (26)**

It's already an excellent publication, especially compared to what it used to be

##### **Health Articles (21)**

About walking (2)

Weight control - fun for younger people.

Guest columns on the technical aspects of walking.

Fitness

More on pedometers, walking off weight.

Educational, informational (not event or club-related)

Walking health, training, marathon training tips

Gear

##### **How-to Articles (17)**

How to attract new members (2)

How to promote volksmarching (3)

How to create great YREs and regular events. (2)

A 'how to' or 'best practices' column.

How successful clubs stay that way.

How to be a POC.

Recruiting success stories

How-tos for clubs

Club and event how to info

Stories about individual (group) successes  
Columns on how clubs solve common issues, i.e. memberships, officers  
What clubs are doing and what works well  
Organization building articles

### **Travel (7)**

New walks to different places (2)  
Walking in other countries. (2)  
About walks  
More travel articles or testimonial letters  
More articles on volksmarching related tours.

### **Milestones (4)**

### **Special Programs (4)**

### **Articles about Clubs (4)**

### **AVA/IVV Information (4)**

More comments (good or bad) concerning AVA practices.  
Some of the information on the AVA website.  
More on AVA policies and rules.  
IVV & AVA news

### **Miscellaneous**

Info for conventions (2)  
Events List (2)  
I enjoy the articles about people and clubs. (2)  
Advice Column – pick topic and ask for club input  
Correlating travel opportunities/travelogues with walk notices.  
Regional articles  
Update YRE and seasonals - list new walks.  
Food/drinks before and after walks.  
Articles or events NOT changed by the editor.  
I like ones that show accomplishments.  
Schedules and sponsorship info.  
Background info on New Balance and GNC  
Detailed information about New Balance. American-made shoes. Sponsors.  
Historical places & human interest stories.  
Regional Director comments.  
Articles by individuals.  
Nothing past the issue.  
More personal - fun.  
Less stories about who reached their goal.  
Put YREs back in the Wanderer.  
Less Texas more USA.  
More articles on individuals (not walkers who spend \$10,000 a year traveling to every state).  
People, places and events.

### **I Don't Read/Subscribe (4)**

Generally I don't read TAW - the walks are too far away.  
Never read it. I don't subscribe.

### **Question 36. What Features would you like to see in TAW?**

#### **Health, fitness and walking column (13)**

Exercise suggestions  
Walking in cold and hot weather - foot care.  
What to wear (including shoes and other equipment) (2)

#### **Clubs with successful ideas/walks (9)**

Sample PR ideas, e.g. newspaper "Club Brief", such as ads for weekly walks and contact person.  
How clubs promote volksmarch info.  
Building membership articles.  
Highly practical how-to info for local clubs.  
Successful walk suggestions/ideas.  
How to promote volksmarching to attract new people - tips that work from clubs.  
Ideas from other clubs that could work for others clubs.  
Success stories.  
Success stories of increasing membership.

#### **Milestones/Awards (7)**

Publish a list of people completing special event books.

#### **TAW is OK as is (6)**

#### **Weekend Events (5)**

Other clubs upcoming events with pictures.

#### **Information about Special events (5)**

More on special 'big walks' in US.  
Upcoming special events.  
Information about great walking events.

#### **Information about AVA (4)**

Meet our officers and board members.  
Information on what goes on with EC.  
AVA Finances.  
Organization contacts.

#### **Miscellaneous**

If a new member joins a club ask if their name can be published.  
Profiles of long-time volksmarchers.  
50 state/51 capitol member completions.  
National, international walks and stories.  
More on Special Programs.  
Do articles on AVA staff.

Walk statistics by state, region and nationally.  
 Make article shorter, to the point.  
 Announcing changes and corrections for Starting Point again.  
 Emphasis on joint support between clubs.  
 A column on event planning and preparation which may include a critique of a club's event.  
 50 State/51 Capitol award recognition, how walkers got interested in volksmarching.  
 Cartoon/joke section.  
 List regular events, changes in YREs, club lists.  
 I enjoyed the club features upcoming.  
 C- word puzzles, trivia/facts.  
 On areas of walking.  
 World news - Other country walks, etc.  
 Columns about new member growth, community involvement, finances.  
 Review of best US year-rounds.  
 More stories on the history of an area or reason to make the trip there.  
 Color, travel, fun stuff.  
 Mix, but a magazine format, smaller would be better, easier to handle than a newspaper.  
 Recommend walks.  
 Expanded letters to the editor.  
 Discount coupons.  
 Looking forward-looking backward articles that feature individual volkssporter profiles, pick a date and what happened in our volkssporting history.  
 Featured clubs/states. Promote events.

### **Question 37. How do you think we can improve TAW?**

#### **TAW is OK as is (18)**

##### **Increase Content (14)**

Articles for everyone not just areas.  
 Put stories regarding walks several months before event.  
 Have a special section for multi-events.  
 Focus on people at the lowest level, not the officers.  
 Info useful to clubs.  
 Write interesting articles (2)  
 Encourage local facts about featured walks.  
 More personal articles.  
 More positive, uplifting stories.  
 Short articles with more pictures of interest.  
 Changes to YREs posted.  
 Encourage better/more regional/ state contributions.  
 Write about upcoming events; more 'how-to' articles.  
 More features about events.

##### **Reduce Content (11)**

Cut out some of the travel advertising. Most trips are very expensive.  
 Leave out unnecessary stuff.  
 Less information (free) on major events.  
 Fewer pictures of Donna Seline and the NSTT club.  
 Less Texas, more USA.

Lower cost by deleting YR round events schedule - this info is on-line.  
Don't need walk changes or listing of walks - we get that on the web.  
Less Regional info; more to benefit all.  
Cut back on personal articles to make a shorter publication.  
Remove second section - give info on line.  
Too many articles.

### **Format (10)**

Magazine (4)  
It needs to look slick and professional.  
Make it more professional/less folksy, hometown like.  
Magazine format might be more attractive, but may be too costly.  
Good paper.  
Decrease size of page.  
Make it available electronically.  
Layout.

### **Distribution (6)**

Increase circulation.  
Publish only 4 times per year.  
Put on newstands.  
Send it to libraries.  
Increase distribution to non-volkssporters.  
Make it available to other people than associate members.

### **More Health Related Articles (5)**

Health and Fitness column with outside writers, experts in various health/fitness related fields.

### **Don't List Clubs Every Time (3)**

### **More Advertising (3)**

### **Photographs (3)**

Sharper, clearer photos.  
Improve photos or don't print.  
Photograph younger participants to try and interest a younger crowd of families.

### **Size – Number of Pages or Size of Pages (3)**

Shrink it, shorten and enliven articles and features.  
Make smaller.  
Have a smaller newspaper.

### **Edit articles/letters for length (2)**

### **It has improved a lot lately (2)**

### **Miscellaneous**

Direct wording to a larger audience - not use only volksmarch jargon.  
State organizations encourage more club participation in TAW.

I do not subscribe because of the cost. I am able to get sufficient info from other walks and the web.

Problem is not TAW. Problem is there are no incentives to become an associate member of AVA.

Occasional coupons.

Most walkers don't even know about TAW.

Less space between paragraphs for more news letters.

Print names and award levels only to a certain (level). At 14,000 km and 1300 events, I don't need to see my name in print.

Walks with their awards. Clubs don't have awards anymore so not interesting like in the past. It encouraged us to travel to get award.

Honestly, it's too long to read thoroughly.

I'd prefer listings by date; within a date by state.

The only walks written about have huge turnouts.

Recruit outside writers.

When listing events and distance, just name highest achieved. Quite a few people are listed numerous times.

Put it into electronic form on AVA website.

Print correct info - the address for Civil War program is incorrect. Change was requested but is still wrong.

Add some excitement.

Get rid of the editor and get someone that can deal with people.

More timely after deadline date of articles.

Liked section of events listed before revision.

### **Question 38. How do you think we can increase TAW circulation?**

#### **Promotion by clubs (11)**

Work through clubs on a subscription drive.

Clubs emphasize it - bring copies to meetings and display on info table.

More members would subscribe to the newsletter if promoted by clubs.

Clubs individually should encourage members to subscribe.

Offer a reduced price club membership rate for clubs to combine with club dues.

#### **Publicize it more (9)**

Walkers often don't know about it, members aren't good at spreading the word.

Most people don't know they can get it.

Advertise memberships in other publications.

#### **Reduce Price (9)**

#### **Modern Technology – Love it or Hate it (8)**

You can't. Paper is on the way out. Consider a web publication.

I think that email hurts written material.

Stop putting everything on the web.

Place on-line.

Stop putting everything on the web. Make them purchase it.

Offer on-line subscriptions at reduced rates.

Other than ads why not use web page?

Don't think you can - People can get listings of events on the web for free.

### **Need More Volksmarchers (7)**

Increase membership in 25-45 age group.

### **Sample papers out on display at walks (7)**

Advertise at walk events -free copy.

Need subscription blank pads for all walks.

Have free copies available at traditional events for non-members. Even back issues would help people know what they are getting when they subscribe.

Promote display of TAW at walking events, monthly club meetings.

### **Give Trial Subscription to all new walkers (7)**

Give one year free to people who buy New Walker Packets. (2 )

Send 1-2 free issues to all new club members.

Send sample to walkers after 10 events. (3)

### **Separate it from AVA Membership (5)**

Make TAW available as a subscription without associate attached.

Decouple the cost from Associate Membership. I believe the requirement to be a 'member' turns a lot of folks off.

### **Make available to general public (5)**

Make it available to other people than associate members.

By subscription in addition to Assoc. member.

Open subscription to anyone and everyone.

Available to non-AVA members.

### **Give it broader walking appeal (5)**

Design it to attract other than volkssport readers.

Make it a general interest walking magazine.

Align with other walking/hiking association/societies.

Make TAW for common walker - not person who has over 10,000km.

### **Get it into libraries or other community gathering places (4)**

### **Special promotions for first time subscriptions (2)**

### **Distribute through out Sponsors (2)**

Over-the-counter sales through GNC and New Balance dealers.

Put in New Balance shoe stores.

### **Miscellaneous**

Make Free.

Send copies to all club members with a survey of what they would like.

More personal.

Be consistent in sending it out and send a renewal notice to subscribers even if it is just a colored label. I don't get mine regularly.

Include coupons for fitness items or work.

Stop giving it free to club - I would have them buy it.

Add it to club President dues, so not voluntary.

Urge members to subscribe in Checkpoint on a regular basis.  
Promote the TAW to clubs - give free subscription to each walk - like the shoes.  
More advertising.  
See subscriptions at events at a discount. Perhaps as a fundraiser for clubs.  
Create regional publications to stimulate local interest.  
There are too many regional publications competing for the same subscribers. National info takes a back seat if you don't travel a lot.  
Provide helpful tips and information.  
Give price break for longer renewals.  
More informative articles - not so much about "our events".  
Cooperative agreement with other organizations to exchange publications to the others members.  
Incentives, special offers, local club promotion.  
Not so newspaper like, but not the expense of a magazine.  
A majority of our club members who walk already subscribe - the others don't want to Pay higher volkssport Associate dues.  
Larger print.  
The local clubs should have at least one subscription as part of our renewal dues of \$50. A subscription to TAW should be included- too expensive.  
Increase ads and lower price.  
Articles about walking health.  
Most of our members see no benefit in joining AVA.  
Promote associate membership.  
Get a major sponsor so more free issues go out.  
Membership campaign every year; systematic follow-up on expiring subscriptions.

**Don't know (5)**

Where are they sent now?

## **Appendix 6**

### **AVA Website**

**Question 57. Which best describes your experience with the website? Please mark all that apply.**

**Helpful and efficient service: 125**

**Somewhat helpful in providing event information: 55**

**Inadequate assistance: 1**

**Frustrating and/or confusing: 19**

**Other:**

- I do not use the website (4).
- I do not have a computer (2).
- Consider a forgot password so it can be emailed back – and ability to change user id and password (2).
- Have had some problems with the password & log-in.
- Frustrating – cannot change password.
- Some online forms work, others do not.
- Forms not up to date.
- Data is not kept up to date.
- Require clubs to list event information.
- Clubs need to complete info on directions, etc.
- What's with the dreaded yellow message? I could have finished this survey long before now, except I had to repeatedly enter the Starting Point info as many as 4 times!!
- Better search/locate ability for walks. Spotter maps by states.
- Both have happened (helpful and frustrating) I can't choose just one.
- Frustrating to club trying to make SMALL changes to published information.
- Find the perpetual moving graphics annoying. Good information source and links for new consumers.
- Somewhat confusing trying to input or update walk information.
- Event sanctioning is frustrating.
- I have to ask for help when I need to make changes.
- Excellent and eye-catching.
- Home page is too cluttered and info is sometimes hard to locate.
- Too expensive for the value received.
- Not sufficiently thorough.
- Somewhat helpful in keeping updated info, i.e. telephone # or contact person.
- Hard to get.
- Helpful, but the start of the walks should be linked and how to get there!
- Initially frustrating but fine after used a few times.
- Is getting better all the time – my primary source of info.
- I don't have access.
- I don't have access to a computer. A member does our computer work.
- I do not have a computer. I do not think basic work needed on forms, registrations, etc. should all be on computer. Items need to be on paper for filing/reference; plus some will not use it.

## **Appendix 7**

### **AVA Special Programs**

#### **Q47 – AVA Special Programs**

#### **What special programs would you like to see AVA do?**

##### **No Additional Ones (16)**

##### **Improve What We Have (12)**

Improve quality and presentation of current programs. Quality not quantity.

Do a better job with the ones they have. Phone calls are never returned. No one knows anything about it The Youth program has been all but destroyed by poor management.

Keep what you have and expand on them.

Fewer simultaneous programs. Instead spend more time on promoting better events and more publicity of them to attract more participants to regular events!

Ensure the programs are 'national' in scope.

Events with broad appeal.

Swimming programs. Biking programs.

Have more that could be done in any state.

Get more scouts in program.

Program to bring in new walkers not just for dedicated walkers.

The programs are fine if they increase revenue for AVA or increase the number of new walkers.

But as I see it, only the veterans are walking the programs.

##### **Less than we have now (10)**

Retire some we have. Sometimes I think we have too many Programs. Special programs should have special or very interesting walks. Events should not last as long.

##### **Allow 5 km on Year-Round/Seasonal Events (6)**

Expand 5k events, including allowing 5k YRE. These shorter events will overcome the reluctance of many non-volkssporters. 10k is too much for most beginners.

##### **Keep Them Going (6)**

I am enrolled in all these programs. Keep them going. Ending dates in current programs needs to be reviewed and maybe extended.

Presidents will be good!

Anything that encourages people to walk.

Special Programs seem to get people out of their little corners of the country. They are fun and focused. Any historical events which are statewide or national would be good.

Programs are great.

There is already a good selection. Great for motivation. Wish I could participate in all of them.

##### **More programs to get new walkers, including younger adults and children (5)**

##### **Smaller Scope than National (3)**

State award for doing so many regular and seasonal/year-rounds.

More local and regional programs.

We need local special programs of suitable sorts and I don't know what would be best.

### **Specific Ideas**

Off- road. Unpaved trails (3)

National Parks (3)

How about a 12 in 12, 24 in 24, 36 events in 36 months.

I'd like National Heritage to be more inclusive.

Military Academies; Famous Bridges, Cities and towns in film and theatre, Presidential birth and burial sites.

Bridge Walks.

Special stamps for mall, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, etc walks.

Walks on Great Lakes.

State Parks.

Walk across America.

Authors homes/cemeteries. State Parks, Animals (any park-city with animal name); Passport (place with foreign country name).

Lincoln Highway in all 12 States. Nebraska did it in 2003-2004; Iowa is doing it in 2005- 2006.

Louisiana Purchase States.

More focus on west coast states. More programs for west coast states.

Something to do with railroading.

State Counties.

### **Non-Event Programs**

#### **Publicity (5)**

Public service announcements on radio and TV

More contact with local papers.

Advertise Volkssports nationally .

More video tapes but not for every club, maybe every state to loan to their member clubs for promotional purposes and some to explain special programs, even if just regions.

Offer a lower membership rate to smaller clubs who are financially stressed.

Corporate or business co-sponsor events. Hospitals, Big industry - something to get people involved.

Regional training for officers and recruiting. Regional training to attract new walkers.

More partner programs with Canada, Europe and other countries.

Send articles that clubs can give to local newspapers promoting walking/sports for health.

Keep it for fun. I'm not in favor of selling mailing lists or 'partnering' with lots of companies that we wind up selling their products.

Recognition of rural walkers/volunteers as well as city walkers.

Develop more walk types.

List top 25 walks in America.

Encourage more walks by local clubs.

Emphasize Presidential sports awards.

## **Appendix 8**

### **AVA Strategic Plan**

#### **Publicity most important issue (3).**

##### **Increase participation thru advertising (3).**

Would like to see some TV ads re: AVA showing members walking & socializing. And ads in magazines geared to young adults.

##### **Increasing walking participation (3)**

Increased participation will be more difficult since we're not a 'walking society' in the US. Its hop in the car, not walk to the store, grocery, etc.

Participation should be at regular events, not year-round events

##### **Sponsorship is the way to attract new members and TV spots over US channels and abroad.**

Tie-ins with national Health organizations, i.e. diabetes

##### **Increasing and strengthening clubs (2).**

NO, Focus on club strength. If we don't have enough volunteers to hold events it won't matter how much financial aid we have fm. Sponsors & partners & inc.particip won't matter if there are no events.

Agree somewhat. Encouraging more clubs. Without many strong clubs, there won't be enough events to draw larger numbers of walkers. Maybe a 'national club' to hold YREs in sites where no clubs exist.

##### **Haven't seen current Strategic Plan (2).**

Sounds like a good plan, but I've never seen it. Does it include addressing the needs of the clubs?

##### **Miscellaneous**

No, generic bologna. Membership increase (associate) and participation.

Most important single issue is "Volunteers"

Above choices are symptoms of poor walks. It's not numbers - it's quality. Clubs have gotten lazy.

We need to offer more than directions and 10k walk.

I think our biggest problem is a lack of understanding of what AVA makes possible to people

More people are walking now than ever. We aren't reaching them.

As a national organization, local clubs should be encouraged to do more weekend events and less YREs.

Make all events - regular: YRE - special, something our participants would want to repeat.

More conventions (yeah!!)

Back to basics. Events should be free and open to the public and fun for all.

AVA has a very irregular presence in our area. To be a #1 walking organization, there needs to be an AVA event every Sat, Sun and holiday.

Where are 'stable broad-based resources - unless you refer to the way AVA keeps increasing clubs costs; this is gradually destroying small clubs such as the XXXX.

Additional focus on pre-retirement community.

## **Appendix 9**

### **Making AVA Associate Members feel a part of National and International volkssporting organizations.**

**Q44 What can be done to make your members feel as much a part of National and International organizations as they do about your club?**

**No suggestion (22)**

**Better Communication from AVA (15)**

More Information to individuals (4)

Recommend sending to club via email - that way we can email all club members as an attachment.

Send things that I can then send out via email to members.

More info specifically for small clubs.

Provide clubs with half-page information inserts that we can include in our newsletters (once a quarter).

Put more AVA and IVV news in TAW (2)

Keep them informed always.

Keep them posted with info from Checkpoint, etc. RD letters.

Send Checkpoint to all volkssport associates.

List dates of Canadian Convention and other international dates in AVA Checkpoint.

**More visibility by AVA (5)**

National level advertising.

**More Access to AVA Officers (4)**

**Recognition Awards (3)**

**Special Programs (3)**

Incentive challenges.

Encourage special programs.

Promote programs and events that include more clubs.

**Specific Things AVA HQ Can Do**

AVA workers need better understanding of how volkssports really operate, and how volunteers run them.

Improve customer attitude toward clubs.

**Specific Things AVA Can Do**

Loved the giveaways of a year/2 ago. When I made an order AVA "prizes"! Members loved it! I raffled them off.

Perhaps a membership card; pin? Patch?

Video of actual walks at convention.

Let individual vote on things at the national level.

Make them members - assess dues back to national org.

AVA needs to be the organization - the clubs need to be the chapters.

Require all AVA members to wear a national patch at each event - most walkers can not be identified at an event as being an AVA member.

### **Specific Things AVA Officers Can Do**

More positive representation from EC

### **Specific Things Clubs Can Do**

Get them to come to meetings.

I can give updates at club meetings re: convention, etc.

Send members to the AVA National Convention.

Urge them to read TAW.

Groups trips - discuss at meeting.

We've had RD & Pres as guest speakers who have shared info on these events. Was well received by members.

We have the Start Point Book and try to have members use it.

We share our national and international experiences as "show & tell" programs at club meetings.

### **Specific Things Individuals Can Do**

Attend convention (2)

Travel to other events.

### **Miscellaneous**

More events like the IML close to home.

Regional walks put on by more than one club or state. Multiple events over weekend. Offer more than a walk - social activities. Ex. IML.

Continue partnerships - GNC, NB, etc.

Starting Point is important.

With rising costs of travel, more emphasis and support locally.

Find ways to make procedures less confusing.

Maybe an additional award program.

More support from Region Director.

Common dues.

Increase products and decrease prices. Stop losing documents.

Get more members to convention or Regional meetings to see how it works and put faces to names.

Encourage their learning and participation in various facets of club.

Officials responding to letters.

Get them (encourage) to attend events nationally and internationally - encourage tours.

Get them involved and that is different.

AVA made a BIG mistake in not offering the college campus housing conditions for less \$ than hotels. Dayton Baltimore offered more for the money, was more affordable (AVA Convention).

Have American rules - be flexible.

Make national, regional, state people more friendly toward the average member; less cliquy and more open to listen to peon members not just themselves.

Promote attendance.

Have special program in areas where isolated states can better participate.

Encourage AVA memberships.

Keep the Starting Point book. Bring back "Best 10 walks".

Just let them know of events and conventions, etc.  
Place more emphasis on individuals who volunteer. Stress fun not rules.  
Promotion at local club level; sharing of all communication, both up and down; emphasize AVA's hard work to promote walking thru partnership.  
Stop trying to police rural clubs with urban rules and mindset.  
If our members attend Regional & National events, they would feel a part. I think owning a Starting Point, you feel part of national group .I felt internationally aware when I attended Discovery Walks.  
Need more walks.  
Discussions & decisions need to go up from grassroots rather than orders coming down. Better explanation to clubs about how this will benefit them vs. why it is good for AVA.  
Possible make dues \$30/yr/family of \$20 goes to AVA and \$10 to clubs - thus AVA membership would be mandatory , but would probably lose many marginal members.  
National needs to recognize that all clubs have different needs.  
Regional meetings. Annual convention.  
AVA, and state organization is a big social club. New persons are not encouraged.  
Members need to be encouraged to attend events at many locations sponsored by different clubs.  
Let more members help - like doing the very expensive audit and computer upgrades.  
Visiting and walking with clubs. (2)  
Better designed website - separate AVA members material from VSA, General public material; easier site navigation.  
Need to learn more about both organizations.  
Most are not in favor with rules and reg's of AVA.  
The tour groups helped in this situation.  
Show them that the national and international care about local clubs besides a source of funds.  
We, as NEC are on the right track, continue to let them in on the 'Secret Society'.  
Not close enough.  
Raise awareness.  
Be more aware of what it is about.  
We can't ever feel a part of national or international organizations as we don't have a large membership clout.  
This may be unrealistic. Most members first affinity is their local organization. Local leaders need encouragement to present national/international in a positive light. Often perception is of cop setting rules.

## Appendix 10 AVA Convention

### Why did you attend an AVA Convention?

**Events: (142)**

**Socials (84)**

**Workshops: (84)**

**Reunite with old friends and family: (76)**

**Business Meetings: (76)**

**Awards: (34)**

**To meet candidates for national office: (46)**

**Sightseeing and shopping: (59)**

**Other:**

Travel, location (3)

See and walk in new places (2).

Regarding meeting candidates: Convention is too late generally; clubs and state organizations usually decide before arriving.

To get the 'feel' of the organization

State & State Capitols

Exhibitors

We had a great time the last two conventions

Our sister club, XXXX, has had many trips to the AVA conventions so many of my club members including myself have been to several conventions over the years.

Convenient location.

Was a national officer or candidate.

Never been there.

Walks – to see scenery.

Club representative.

Awards are nice and I get them, but I would attend without them.

Ambience, excitement, camaraderie.

Fellowship!!

Close to home so cost was minimal.

Work.

### In what area(s) can AVA's conventions be improved?

**Events: (22)**

More (2).

Include more alternate trails for older and disabled persons.

Fewer, better quality

Distance from convention sometimes too far.

I'd prefer just one a day leaving more time for workshops, etc.

Not held during workshops.

Transportation to events from housing.

Directions to walks.

Make sure there is really something to see. Ft Collins, CO was just walking in a pasture. You can do that anyplace – nothing new.

More that are not YRE  
Hold in morning.  
Require driving distance to be no more than \_ hour during workshops days.  
Events are usually excellent.  
More swims.

**Socials: (25)**

Socials are too expensive (5).  
Too expensive (excluding the banquet)  
Expensive for what you get  
Mostly OK  
Sometimes too crowded and not enough food.  
More seating at tables to enjoy meals  
Caterers that supply enough food.  
Enough room for all.  
Expo.  
Put more spotlight and make it earlier time, 5:00 or 6:00pm – 9:00 pm.  
More.  
Opening social – provide more lines for food. Add something different besides sausages.  
In general mid week socials are weak.

**Workshops: (36)**

Schedule workshops so people can do events and workshops. (3)  
Fewer; more focused and interesting (2)  
Better coordination with workshops and walk events (2)  
More in depth, longer sessions on subjects like marketing.  
More in depth and longer. The entire time frame is difficult to allow full participation. The same topics appear to be recurring. Some new topics needed.  
More and variety.  
Can any workshops be held in evenings?  
Some. We would attend more if there were no walks that day.  
More on sharing experiences or building participation.  
Do not apply all across USA.  
Better topics (more relevant) and presenters (dynamic, knowledgeable)

**Registration: (19)**

Usually good.  
You do a pretty good job.  
Keep registration open longer.  
Less cost.  
Shorter lines.  
Usually well-organized.  
Made sure packet is product originated, i.e. something the customer will want to buy.

**Business Meetings: (47)**

Too drawn out – Keep meeting on time scheduled (6)  
Boring; too long (5)  
Have leaders be very well-organized and trained to keep things moving smoothly (2)  
Business only (2)  
Keep verbal reports short & use written reports more.

Keep auction items small and to a minimum.  
Don't have live auctions.  
Would like to see the different regions sitting together and identified, i.e. all AT clubs in one area, all NW, etc.  
Voting system.  
Less ceremony and more explanation about partnerships and helping clubs.  
More large screens and details.  
By-Laws sessions take up too much time.  
More chairs needed.  
Hold in afternoon.  
On weekends. I thought the NJ one was going to be but it isn't.  
Not friendly or fun. Too much trivial arguments and trite issues.

**Other:**

All areas OK (3).  
More exhibitors (3).  
The committees doing the work have done an excellent job (2).  
Less expensive place; price (2).  
More affordable housing (2).  
Publicity. Don't just send info to clubs; more publicity (2).  
2003 was well done.  
I believe they have all been great (since 1993)!!  
Why isn't Exhibit Hall even listed (in this question).  
Sleeping and eating in college dorms.  
Publicity – never enough publicity for the general club member or non-member walker who would come to a “walking festival”.  
Less rigid schedule, time crunch in trying to do walks, workshops and attend business meetings.  
Not having walks (or other events) & workshops at the same time.  
Business meetings, workshops, events should not overlap.  
Every two years everything is subject to change. No consistency. Staff and participants get frustrated. More errors are made. Computer programs have to be changed.  
Convention should be held once every 3-5 years.  
Accurate count of delegates votes – separate the delegates from the non-voters.  
Separate lunch and vendor booths, allow every participant to visit them, vendors like longer exposure.  
Guest speakers.  
Streakers.  
Start cards – Give all start cards at Registration. At each event the start card is punched. No lines to pick up each start card. A European technique that saves so much time.  
We are not a religious organization, so why not a moment of silence instead of a dictated prayer?  
Can't answer this because each convention is unique.  
Too little experience to judge.  
I only attended Colorado and thought it was very well run.  
I don't know. I attended Portland and Bellevue, Washington.  
Improve registration. This was two conventions ago.

## **Appendix 11 AVA Membership**

### **Question 58. Are you an AVA Member? If not, why not?**

#### **No reason/benefit to join. (17)**

More accurately, why? I don't find the TAW worth \$25 per year. Faster award processing - Is that five weeks vs. six?

#### **No, benefit not already received as club member (7)**

Belonging to local and state clubs sufficient.

Have membership benefits thru our club. Being an AVA member also would be redundant financially

I receive TAW as club President (3)

Our club is (2)

#### **Lack of understanding about structure/benefits (6)**

I'm not sure what it means to be a member.

Unfamiliar with program or benefits.

Lack of information

Am I a member because I'm using books?

I thought that being a member of an AVA club made me an AVA member.

Don't really know how to join.

#### **Cost (6)**

Don't see the need to pay \$25 to get TAW - I receive this thru the club. Other benefits either don't apply or are too few to offset cost of Assoc. membership.

#### **No Renewal notice- forgot to renew (4)**

#### **Miscellaneous**

I get the information I need as an EC member. When I started volkssporting, you could not belong to the AVA, only a club, so I don't yet feel the need.

AVA emphasis is on giving credit not walking.

Every time I resolve to join, the AVA does something that really upsets me and I change my mind.

Can't read paper and don't get out of local area much.

We are a German town, and I support volksmarching as an event in our town.

All the AVA is interested in is money! You can walk the AT from Maine to Georgia for free or walk 10k for \$3 - which is the better deal?

I do participate in AVA walks.

Arthritis - do not walk that far.

I stop when I'm Pres. So that I don't get TAW. I'm the only one who reads it.

No (3)

## **Question 59. How can benefits of being an AVA Member be improved?**

### **More Discounts, more benefits, more freebies (9)**

More useful discounts.

Walk fee discounts.

Generous discounts at New Balance store would be good.

Reduced prices for AVA products would help.

Develop relationships with vendor's that will result in benefits, i.e. discounts, giveaways.

A better discount for conventions.

### **More Benefits (5)**

Need more; can't persuade membership when it provides so little.

### **More freebies (5)**

Walk coupons (4), event book, pedometer, etc.

### **They are OK (9)**

### **Better Communication and Publicity (7)**

Increased visibility of AVA.

More communications with AVA.

Improved communication

More and better publicity about the benefits.

Communication, Communication, Communication,

More communication as to the benefits.

More person to person communications.

Better explanation as to how AVA helps out clubs.

### **What benefits? (7)**

Why is it needed?

### **Didn't Join for the Benefits, Joined to Support AVA (6)**

### **Lower Cost (4)**

Lower the cost of lifetime membership.

Lower price to appeal to more folks.

### **Recognized Current Benefits**

TAW (4)

Discount on the convention (2)

Immediate processing on books.

### **Member Recognition (2)**

This should give some type of pin or badge an individual can wear to signify that you are a member. Pin would be the best with # of years a member.

Sending something as a T-shirt or walking pack that the member could use would encourage others to join when they see it. As it is, no one knows who is a member and who is not.

### **Miscellaneous**

Welcome new members in TAW article each publication. (2)

Send new members a special welcome letter from AVA HQs.

How about a national database where people can log in their events and k's for all to see, get totals, etc

No one asks for a copy of our club roster. Could do a mailing, or provide discount to members.

Restructure site on web page to include main TAW articles.

Renewal notices and regular TAW mailing - I miss two to three a year.

Stick to basic purposes to enjoy walking and more of it and keep all clerical/desk work as simple as possible - that is not fun.

Samples of promotional items used by clubs on the web.

More practical - if you don't travel, rental & hotel discounts don't mean much.

Improve by becoming more walker friendly.

The cost of attending conventions/volksmarching-oriented tours is too costly. Like Germany, mid-Atlantic area has advantages of a large population and many clubs; so there are many events to attend.

Emphasize that members support AVA continuing to exist. Don't sell membership based on benefits. You give infrastructure for the whole thing, if we want the sport to continue, \$25 is not too much.

Improve American Wanderer content to appeal to a larger sector of volkswalkers

Ads that are showing young people and socials.

Fast turnaround on processing of IVV books.

Give Starting Point as part of the benefit from being an AVA member - The only benefit I can see is TAW subscription and faster turnaround time for book processing. Needs to be special for \$25-30/yr

Raise price and Mail Checkpoint to all members.

Life insurance policy - \$1,000. Discount at motels or car rentals.

The benefits are plain vanilla - probably due in part to our small membership numbers.

Increase number of events available. Eliminate the "my organization" syndrome. This means new leadership and shutting up the old ones that think they are the only ones that know anything.

Add routing service to convention.

Website info should not be given to everyone. Give access to members only for detailed information on walks, YREs, sale items, etc.

Stop giving all information for free on web. Give access to lots of information to AVA members only

Give more useful and meaningful benefits, e.g. better TAW

I like the discounts and getting books back faster - although they don't process within advertised time frames.

Greater participation

Annual membership campaign

Live up to life member promises.

## **Question 62. How can AVA Life Member Benefits be improved?**

### **Lower the cost (11)**

On a limited income many who would like to be AVA members or life members just don't feel the expense is worth it, or simply can't afford it.

### **Satisfied. (9)**

#### **Recognition as life member (8)**

Identify them as life members in all correspondence or any mention of their name. Award a life pin.

Give a patch that says Lifetime Member.

Give me a national nametag to wear at all events

This should give some type of pin or badge an individual can wear to signify that you are a member. Pin would be the best with # of years a member.

Offer special jacket/sweatshirt

Go back to the time at registration, offer a AVA rainjacket . Do on a recurring basis.

#### **Publicize the Benefits (8)**

I didn't know about the 15% and discount at conventions. Let people know what the benefits are!

Wasn't even aware of benefits. Let life members know. I don't see much benefit in the book processing. Mine always take 3-4 weeks.

Publicize better. Something simple to hand out to walkers.

Periodic explanation to all life members exactly what all benefits are.

I don't know what they are.

More information. They only pushed once when it just started.

Communication

Advertise more.

#### **Implement priority processing for IVV books (4)**

#### **It is my way of supporting AVA (4)**

As a member, I don't look at it as having any "benefits". I'm a member; I view it as financial support from me to AVA.

It is merely a way to donate to and support AVA. That is all that is needed (2).

The benefits are nice but I'd be a life member without them.

#### **Must have more benefits (3)**

Especially for the younger walkers

#### **Miscellaneous**

More communication with AVA; you got my money and now I'm just a number.

Meet published benefits. Probably an EC issue more than a HQ issue,e.g. several issues promised and published from EC meetings were not met

Need more payments to be a lifetime member - 3 months not enough and thus, too much.

If you can still participate over age 70, let them be free.

Greater discounts for conventions

Use this as an award to associate members who have been members for ten years or more.

Offer something we can use - the above are useless to me and many of those in the FLRVC

Our copy of TAW should be mailed first.

Walk coupons like New Walker packets - so many a year - incentive to club for having life members.

One free walk per year.

Aren't these also available to individual and family members too? Make it more worthwhile an option.

New Balance discounts. Portland, OR store offers discounts for volkswalkers.

Free

Have a 1x per year deal on an item put on sale for life members.

Increase discount to same as for clubs.

Membership unnecessary

Not of interest to me.

Obviously not important enough to be a life member. I have no suggestions.