



Hello NW Volkssporters! Hope you're enjoying this blast of wintery conditions in OR, WA and ID. Of course the Anchorage folks know all about wintery conditions. Good luck with the Fur Rondy. We have over 6 inches of snow at our house in Camas, while we understand just across the river in Portland they only have a trace.

1. **Award Suspense.** If you have any regional level awards to submit and want the individuals to be recognized in the 2019 Convention booklet, my suspense is 1 March to the Awards Committee. Send me the completed AVA Form 303 by email or mail as soon as you can, but **before 1 March** send me this honoree information so I can forward it to the committee in time:

Meritorious Service Award: Honoree's name, city and state of residence and 50-word citation.

Commendable Service Award: Recipient's name, city and state of residence.

Trailmaster Certification: Trailmaster's name, city and state of residence.

Certificates of Appreciation: Name of person, business or organization, city and state.

2. **Club Development and Support.** At the January AVA Board meeting we approved a new policy manual chapter 6 on Club Development and Support. The basics are that it gives guidance on how clubs are to be assisted by state associations, regional directors and national office. Hope to see it in the manual in the near future.

3. **Club Greeter.** Another Board presentation was a proposal to establish a Club Greeter position. Proposal was referred to Committee for further study. Most of our clubs use a Greeter at events and it can be essential to helping new walkers learn about our program and be encouraged to join.

4. **Annual Insurance.** At the Board meeting our Executive Director reported that our annual liability and excess medical insurance policy was approved. Cost was \$34,900, which is one of many costs borne by all participants in our program.

5. **Central Oregon Salute.** The registration link is up and ready for everyone to pre-register for the Columbia River Volkssport Club's major event in the Bend, OR, area September 12-15, 2019. Sign up now at this site: <http://www.walking4fun.org/central-oregon.html>. Also, the following weekend the Evergreen State Volkssport Association has their **Rendezvous in Winthrop** and during the four days between events we'll be doing group walks each day working our way from Bend to Winthrop. Stay tuned for news on those activities.

6. **Walk Across Canada.** For those who participated in the 401K Challenge, a Virtual Online Program (VOP), we have a different challenge this year to "virtually" walk across Canada. As part of the program we have a Regional competition, with the Northwest solidly in second place. What make me most proud is that we have 44 members on our team so far, which is double that of the nearest region and five times the participants of the leading region. Combined, we've walked nearly 60 million steps so far. If you've been on the fence, it's not too late to go to the AVA website and join the VOP challenge and then join our team. It's great fun to see so many walking friends stepping out on this challenge.

7. **Quarter and Annual Reporting.** You've probably noticed the last few quarters and fiscal year closeout that I've been tracking your club's reports closely and doing a bit of nagging and I'd like to explain why. Since I assumed duties as your RD, the website managers have provided RDs better tools for monitoring your reports. According to AVA policy, late reports will incur \$10 fines for each event reported late and I hate to see your clubs pay fines when the revenue from many year round or seasonal events can't absorb

the added cost. A secondary concern I have is that we are demanding that our national office become more and more efficient. We can help them by being timelier with quarterly reports and annual financial reports. The time they spend monitoring and following up on reports could be better used on other tasks in support of your clubs and members. Likewise, your state associations, Deputy RD and I can be more helpful to you in other ways if we're not spending as much time emailing and calling around to ensure your reports are done by the suspense date.

8. **Multi-day listing.** The AVA website has a page for us to display information on multi-day events and it is terribly out of date. If your club or state association is planning a multi-day event, please provide Hector with the specifics to post so we can effectively market our events to a wider audience.

9. **Fun Facts.** I received a report ranking the top 50 AVA clubs from 2017 data based on Paid Participation. The Atlantic Region was tops with 13 clubs in the ranking and we are next with 8 clubs in the ranking. Our top clubs were **Capitol Volkssport Club 3rd**, Interlaken Trailblazers 12th, Daffodil Valley Volks 13th and Columbia River Volks at 16th, while Emerald City Wanderers, Rose City Roamers, NW Tulip Trekkers and Vancouver USA are in the second half of the grouping. Not surprisingly, Black Hills is at number 1 due to the Crazy Horse numbers. At number 2 is the Empire State Capital Club, which is hosting our convention this year. One observation I made from the data is that our region is slightly more skewed toward YRE numbers versus Traditional Events (TEs) and my suggestion to you is that **we need more TEs**, as there are a lot of open weekends in our Future Events List.

10. **Big Give 2019.** Just a reminder that we'll be doing our annual fundraiser in March. Remember to hit up your family and friends to help us support walking in America.

Happy Trails!

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