



Hello NW Volkssporters!

1. **Bylaws Changes Coming.** The AVA board is finalizing a re-write of our bylaws to comply with Texas non-profit requirements. To expedite the approval clubs will be sent the draft bylaws with a synopsis of the changes for your review and approval. I encourage approval, as most of the changes are mandatory per Texas code. At our August meeting the board approved a new version of the Certificate of Formation, as it doesn't require approval of the membership (clubs).

2. **Bloomsday 2020.** Have you signed up yet? The latest American Wanderer paper had a nice article about how Bloomsday in Spokane WA will be held as a virtual event this year. Walkers/runners will do the 12 km anytime, anywhere on 18-20 September to receive participation credit. Louise and I just got our bib numbers in the mail today. The Lilac City Volkssport Assn is offering to grant participation credit to walkers for their virtual walk, although we weren't able set up an Online Startbox (OSB) option. As an option, Louise and I registered via OSB for one of the Spokane YREs with a 12 km option and selected "no credit", so we can receive the Bloomsday event stamp downloaded as a pdf for our walk.

2.1. **OSB Donations Feature.** When you go to the online Finish Table after doing a walk through the OSB you elect which stamps you need. There's another feature at the bottom of the page where you can elect to make a donation to the host club. This will not be a tax-deductible donation, but does go to the club as a credit and helps cover AVA bills, such as sanction fees. The whole OSB payment process is a cashless system which I'm finding more and more attractive.

3. **Big Give Support.** Thanks to all the individuals and clubs who have donated early to the Big Give. Our region leads the AVA nation in giving, which speaks well of all our members. The national staff is now on a 24-hour work week to stretch the budget, which is essentially a pay cut for them. Half our clubs have already made a donation, with several planning to add to those early donations. Please consider a donation on 10 September as we close out the Big Give this year.

4. **"Sell It" for YREs.** In my.ava.org there's a feature to add an "elevator pitch" to your walk sanctions that might be the tease for some walkers to want to do your event. In the 2021 Starting Point book the "Sell It" words will be printed toward the top of each event listing, so please take the time create your pitch.



5. **New Linkages to Legacy from my.ava.org.** For those who work with event sanctions the Legacy system is quickly being retired, as it is too costly and time consuming to maintain the old system. Several have already noticed that club access to the Legacy system now requires logging in through my.ava.org. Once you're in your club home window of my.ava.org you'll be able to click on two GO buttons to get to the Legacy view to work on sanctions and add Special Programs to your sanctions.



6. New OSB Statement Required. For clubs uploading events to the OSB, while maintaining a PSB there's an added statement required on the walk directions or supplemental information sheet you upload. The statement is this:

"Please use either the Online Start Box (OSB) or Physical Start Box (PSB) to register and complete the event. Do NOT mix and match, for example, by registering using the OSB then completing your event using the PSB nor signing the PSB log sheet. The sponsoring club only receives credit for an OSB participation when an OSB registration has been completed online by entering your participation date, distances, and any special programs using the OSB."

7. Traditional Events (TEs) & Traveling Guided Walks(TGWs). As you probably observed in the latest Future Events List, our region is mainly hosting TGWs right now. They can be done very safely, keeping us within the state and local guidelines for group sizes, and allow our members to enjoy many new areas. I am willing to work with clubs on very short notice to approve TGWs, so be creative and keep on walking. There are several TEs still scheduled for this year and I encourage clubs to follow through with appropriate procedures to host those events where possible. If they can't be done please work with me to cancel/postpone as soon as you can. For walkers, always refer to the online sanction to get the latest status on events, as these are very fluid times.

8. Getting a lot of scam emails? There has been an increasing amount of scam traffic asking for pre-payment of cash cards, etc. You clearly recognize them, but they are getting more sophisticated. The IT staff at AVA is working to tighten up our protections and clubs need to do the same by limiting the amount of exposure of personal contact information through club websites.

9. Crazy Horse 2020. Believe it or not, the September 26-27 Crazy Horse walk in the Black Hills of South Dakota is on. Louise and I will be joining several other national officers and spouses helping the local club put on the event this year. It's a unique opportunity that we hope many will come to enjoy. Safety first will be our mantra and the monument's large open space will help walkers maintain social distance.

10. AVA Relocation Moving Forward. Our national office was unable to renew the contract with the facility owner, so they are moving forward with plans to move by the end of the year. Several options are being considered, so stand by for news, as I suspect it will be a quick move when it happens.

Keep up the walking toward the summer challenge running through 31 October!

Happy Trails! Tom Baltes, NW Regional Director, 505-298-1256, TLBaltes@aol.com