



Hello NW Volkssporters!

1. I was recently reminded that we have a number of acronyms that may be unfamiliar to some. That was good feedback and I appreciate all feedback about my letters, emails, etc. As your representative, I want to know what's on your mind and receive the assurance that my communications with you are on target.

2. **More Certified Trailmasters.** We have an exceptional program through the Trailmaster Guide to help ensure our walks are consistently and thoughtfully developed with well-written directions and accurate maps. A key part of the program is to train and certify Trailmasters in each club. The WA state direction assessment program is an excellent example of the commitment to excellence our region exemplifies. I'm confident that we have many club Trailmasters who meet the qualifications and I'd like to ask club presidents to work with me to properly recognize our skilled Trailmasters.

3. **Regional Conference.** What a tremendous success, with 265 attendees and 960 event participations completed. The silent auction helped raised \$1046 to contribute to the Olympic Discovery Trail Coalition. Well done Evergreen State Volkssport Association (ESVA) staff, Olympic Peninsula Explorers and all the many volunteers who help put on this event. A special thanks to all who participated, because you all make it worthwhile.

4. **Reminder on Club Fee.** At the January meeting this year the National Executive Council (NEC) voted to return from \$100 to \$50 club annual fee and discontinue the rebate for hosting a Traditional Event (TE). At the same time, the staff and Treasurer were tasked to look at an adjustment of the fee to help address national costs to serve you, as the \$50 fee has never changed in 40 years. As of 1 July 2018 the club annual fee is now \$75, which is still far below the cost of doing business.

5. **Whidbey Walking Festival** is the next major event in the region and we have a number of great walking options weekly throughout the region. Pre-register if you can for the Whidbey event and plan to have a memorable experience. Details are on ESVA.online or simply search online using "Whidbey Walking Festival".

6. **DuPont—Hudson Bay Festival Days Walk.** A reminder that this event is coming up on Aug 19 and you can find the details in the Pathfinder or online in AVA's event listing. I mention this event because it dropped out of AVA's events list and Diane Wagner discovered it had disappeared as she was doing last minute reviews. AVA's tech folks found the glitch and restored the listing. Bottom line: review your event listings a month or two before the event and make sure everything is up to date.

7. **WA State Club Fee Due:** ESVA Treasurer, Cathy Greutert, asked that I remind WA clubs that your annual \$25 fee is due. Please send it in as soon as possible.

8. **New monitor capability.** AVA's Information Technology (IT) Committee gave Regional Directors (RDs) a new monitoring tool to see which clubs have not yet submit quarterly participation reports. I find it very useful to help us ensure your reports are in on time avoiding penalties for late reporting. It will also help the Finance staff at AVA in completing their quarterly summaries and billing. As of this morning we are down to 13 of 389 reports left to file, so terrific job NW clubs! Next quarter your deputy RD, Dennis Standridge, will take over monitoring and communicating with you in the last week of October on reports awaiting submission.

9. **Financial Reports.** Dennis is beginning to receive a number of club annual reports, which are due by mid-November, but I hope you'll try to complete by the end of August. I'm interested to compare the data from last year to this year to see how we're doing as a region. As a region our 39 clubs are 17 percent of AVA's 226 clubs. We deliver nearly 20 percent of AVA's participation numbers and half our clubs contributed a total of \$5075 to the Big Give, which was the top dollar amount of any region. I'm also aware of a number of donations made by clubs to other community needs, which goes a long way toward supporting our mission. Notionally, NW walkers represent about 13 percent of AVA's membership, so I'm very proud of your active participation and generosity. Keep up the great work!

10. **Fee Vote.** The NEC will likely vote in September on the motion to raise the ceiling for participation fees from \$3 to \$4. Thanks to all who have given me feedback on the motion and for giving direct feedback at our Regional Conference to your national board officers.

11. **America Walks.** We have a great new partner in America Walks (americawalks.org). Our president, David Bonewitz, has been invited to join the America Walks Board of Directors (BOD), which is potentially a big deal. We are working to get a representative of America Walks to speak at a convention workshop next summer and to help us figure out ways to partner to get more Americans walking.

12. **Cut & Paste.** The NEC is looking to revise policy to allow you to cut/paste in achievement books. Maybe a "so what" for many, but this is another of the many small steps in work by the Board to make the program easier for you.

13. **AVA Publicity.** I want to draw your attention to an article in the latest The American Wanderer (TAW) by Henry Rosales. This is another example of what AVA is doing for you and I appreciate the Publicity Committee's work to start doing national level publicity. Thanks especially to Pat Jewett from Portland for her work as part of that committee.

14. **Crazy Horse.** On 30 September there will be another opportunity to do a Volkswalk at the Crazy Horse Monument in the Black Hills. Louise and I, along with other Board volunteers, will be there to hand out literature and talk to non-Volkssporters who take part in the event. In past years AVA missed the opportunity to recruit as part of the event, but we're hoping to spread the word to more participants that Volkssporting exists throughout the country. More helping hands are needed, so contact me if you might be interested.

15. **AVA Calendar.** At the June NEC meeting we started work on developing an AVA calendar of key national events. We drew numbers for feature months by region and the NW will be featured in February. Obviously, we'll include the Sea Breeze event as our centerpiece for that month and other ongoing Traditional Events (TEs) and perhaps group walks of Year Round Events (YREs) in the region.

16. **YRE Renewals.** As of this morning we've submitted 170 Event Sanction Requests (ESRs) for 2019, which puts us at almost half done. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this process. For those clubs still in deliberation I encourage you to finalize your plans and get your ESRs in. Once submitted and approved you can go back and edit as needed. So far most events are concise and correctly formatted, yet detailed enough to be inviting.

PNW Walk Talk #13 - 27 July 2018

17. **Farewell Bill Byrd.** Yesterday the friends and family of Bill Byrd said farewell at a service in Vancouver. Bill was a founding member of Vancouver USA Volkssporters and a key figure in the Discovery Walks. His impacts on this community will not soon be forgotten.

18. **2019 Convention:** Plan to enjoy a great walk through history in Albany, NY, June 11-15. Details available on the AVA website. Hotel reservation window is open. Contact the Red Lion Hotel in Albany at 518-458-7250, ext 440 to get your group rate of \$109 + tax per night.

Happy Trails!

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