



Hello NW Volkssporters!

Franklin D. Roosevelt said: *"When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on."* I guess that's where we are right now. Hope you're all hanging on tight, as relief seems a bit far off yet from this crisis.

- 1. Social Distancing.** With national guidance to limit group size to 10 or less until 30 April I'm sure our states will also extend their restrictions. Get out walking as much as you can, as that's our best medicine for good physical and mental health right now and look after yourselves.
- 2. Events List Update.** As you know, we have no Traditional Events on the calendar for April and that may extend beyond. As much as possible, the April events will be rescheduled, but it's too early to know when for most events.
- 3. Year Round Events.** Many of our YREs are unavailable due to host restrictions. My best advice is to concentrate on ones you know are available and close to home for now. For events you're unsure about check the Event Listings on the AVA website, which should all be updated now, to ensure the location is available or what restrictions might apply.
- 4. OSB Discussion.** Current policy requires walks to be either hosted in a walkbox, by mail from the walk owner or in the Online Start Box (OSB). The current national lock down has several Board members discussing a proposal to allow hosting in both the OSB and walkboxes. Previously, we were limited by server space when we first started the OSB, but we don't appear to be limited now, so it appears to be feasible to permit both. I support the proposal and hope that our Board would favorably consider this idea.
- 5. Big Give—Walk Long, Walk Strong.** San Antonio managers of the Big Give decided it best to delay until 10 September. AVA will gladly accept online donations or mail in donations now, but also would appreciate support on 10 September. Bob Hall completed his 200km Walk-a-thon with Panda and you can read their story and donate at: <https://allweatherwalkers.weebly.com/fundraisers>. Well done Bob & Panda!
- 6. Quarterly YRE Reports.** To complete your quarterly reports gather the walk data from all the walkboxes you can and enter that data. For those walkboxes that are inaccessible you'll have to submit a best estimate of the number of walkers and adjust in the second quarter. For the new one page system to work you have to at least enter zeroes in unknown events to be able to submit your report. I see a note that indicates Q1 reporting page won't be available until 3 April.
- 7. Winter Challenge.** Be sure to close out your Winter Challenge worksheets and submit them to Ed Hainline as soon as possible.
- 8. National Walking Week—Apr 1-7.** Deferred for now and up to your clubs to find a later opportunity this year or gear up for 2021.
- 9. Regional Conference Update.** The Oregon Trail State Volkssport Association committee is still moving ahead with plans to host the conference in Medford OR on 25-28 June and we're staying in touch with the host hotel. If you have been holding off about attending until you're more certain about the COVID-19 pandemic we certainly understand. If you think you'll attend if conditions permit, please email us at TLBates@aol.com, so we can get a better idea of how many to expect. Registration and payment can come later when we know the conference is assured. Any decision to cancel will be made as late as possible and if we do cancel everyone will receive a refund.

10. **Canadian Convention Cancelled.** The Canadian Convention in Yellowknife, NW Territory in June is cancelled. They hope to try again in 2022.

11. **Phoenix Festival.** Our Canadian friends on Vancouver Island are planning the Phoenix Festival for 16-18 April 2021. For those who have attended you know what fun you can anticipate and if you haven't attended in the past you won't want to miss this one. Victoria BC is a gorgeous city, the walks are absolutely stunning and our hosts put on a first class event.

Once again the Festival will be held at the Greek Community Centre - [4648 Elk Lake Dr, Victoria, BC V8Z 5M1](#)

Thursday, April 15

- The Festival begins with a Thursday evening walk around downtown Victoria and along the waterfront.

April 16, 17 and 18

- The Festival kicks into high gear with a variety of walks from 5 to 21 km, all eligible for Volkssport credit. All walks are open start, with two optional group starts each day.
- Complimentary coffee all day; free cookies between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- Lunch, snacks, beer and wine available for purchase from 11:00 a.m.
- Meet and Greet on Friday evening with a tasty variety of Greek snacks (included with registration fee). Reconnect with old friends and make new friends.
- Lots of great draw prizes – draws take place Saturday afternoon
- The ever-popular Greek buffet dinner on Saturday evening. Features pasta, meats, salads, vegetables and desserts. (Sells out every festival).

Post Festival Walks

Five or six days of walking beginning Monday morning. Check out our website at <http://www.vvpf.ca/> for updates.

12. **Element3 Opportunity.** Obviously we won't be receiving referrals from Element3 until summer or later, but having sat in on a Q&A session the other day I believe it'll be a good opportunity to add a few new members. I don't perceive that our clubs will be overwhelmed or burdened by the process, so please consider signing up to participate.

"When written in Chinese the word "crisis" is composed of two characters – one represents danger and the other represents opportunity." – John F. Kennedy

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