

American Volkssport Association



Fun...Fitness...Friendship

www.ava.org

Welcome to the American Volkssport Association (AVA)

Founded in 1976, the AVA is an educational non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, dedicated to promoting Non-competitive physical fitness, friendship and fun through folkssporting events.



What is Volkssporting?

Volkssporting simply defined, is a personal fitness sports and recreation program offering noncompetitive walks, hikes, bike rides, swims, and in some regions cross-country skiing and roller or ice skating. You may choose your time to start within the start/finish “window” and participate in the sport at your own pace.

Volkssporting in the United States is sponsored by the American Volkssport Association (AVA) which has over 320 active clubs presenting thousands of folkssporting events each year.

Promoting well being and good health by providing safe exercise in a stress-free environment is the hallmark of folkssporting. Walking – also called “volkswalking” – is the most popular of all the folkssporting activities. Walks are generally 10 km (6.2 miles) in length and the routes are marked or guided by a leader. Local clubs generally offer a 5 km option for participants who are physically or medically unable to complete the longer walks. All events are noncompetitive. The folkssporter chooses the sport, the distance and the pace.

Volkssporting events take place throughout the year, all around the country. Historic and scenic sites are selected for their enjoyment. Trails are carefully laid out and marked, easy to follow directions or maps are provided. Ratings of 1 to 5 (the most difficult) are given to trails based upon the challenge the trail presents. The designated Start Point is open for several hours to allow you to begin your folkssporting adventure at your leisure. Trails have checkpoints along the route and are monitored for security and safety.

In the folkssporting tradition, you frequently find folkssporters gathered at the Finish Point where they take time to enjoy friends, and at some events, entertainment or food and drink.

Open to everyone, local club or national membership is optional. Most participants do take part in the low-cost Achievement Awards Program or receive the special award for an event. That adds to the fun of accomplishment.



Over 50,000 Volkssporters.....

50,000 Americans participate in AVA's achievement program by purchasing record books to record their progress. The AVA boasts active members in every state of the U.S.



Many people adopt volkssporting as part of their lifestyle, and have completed hundreds of events and thousands of kilometers. While

most begin walking for fitness (that inevitable medical 'wake-up call'), most continue because of friendships and social benefits.

From our experience with sponsors, volkssporters develop an intense loyalty to their sponsors.

The Volkssporter Profile



The average volkssporter is a 'baby boomer', in his or her mid-fifties, and usually an 'empty-nester' either approaching or beginning retirement.

It is not uncommon to find two or three generations at AVA events. Adults with children participate as a family while young adults enjoy more extreme hikes and longer distances.

The ratio of female to male participants is about 60%-40%. Approximately 25,000 volkssporters are members of local clubs, with thousands more regular participants who do not belong to a club.



Coast To Coast Events

Of 3,000+ events per year, about 1,200 events are 'live', with many participants coming together over one, two or three days of a weekend.

About 1,800 events are self-guided and open every day of the year. AVA's **Starting Point** is an annual directory of these events published and sold by AVA.

All AVA events are listed on AVA's website at www.ava.org. AVA's largest events routinely attract thousands of people.

Biennially, the AVA hosts a week-long National Convention, which Volkssporters from all over the world attend.