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## Northeast Region News November, 2024

This newsletter is coming out just after the AVA Board meeting on November 12, 2024 via Zoom

**Update on the Big Give!** As most of you know, the 2024 Big Give ended officially on October 31, 2024. We wanted to congratulate our national organization for exceeding their goal! As a nation, we contributed \$95,759! Thank you to all of our Northeast Clubs and individual members for your generosity! If you want to plan ahead on your budget allocations for 2025, the timed portion of the Big Give next year will be held September 18-20.

**Subscribe to the digital TAW!** Are you receiving the digital version of the *American Wanderer*? I think it was such a great idea to get away from paper! So much more can be done with a digital publication! The photos in the September issue are stunning! News from around the regions is very colorful. Actually the entire issue is very colorful. It shows off the creativity one can express online! And what I wrote in the last newsletter bears repeating:

**Producing TAW internally is estimated to save AVA over \$12,000 annually! And the first issue reached almost 2000 additional walkers over the December, 2023 issue (the last traditional paper issue)!**

**The email address for TAW submissions is still the same: [TAW@ava.org](mailto:TAW@ava.org).** Deadlines for photos and articles can also be found at that web address. If you missed the September TAW, I encourage you to read it. Just go to [ava.org](http://ava.org) and scroll down to click on the link for the TAW. You can also subscribe there if you haven't already.

**2026 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AVA** – AVA President Henry Rosales continues to remind us that AVA will be 50 in 2026 and we should be considering how we want to celebrate this event. Do you have any ideas? Send them to [Henry@ava.org](mailto:Henry@ava.org). At the November 12 Board meeting, Henry announced that Fredericksburg, Texas, as the location of the first AVA walk in the US, plans to host a special event. Details are still emerging. Also, in solidarity with the town in Texas, the Fredericksburg, VA club also plans to host a special event. Henry is hoping that the celebration will involve clubs in each region. So let's be thinking about what we want to do in the Northeast!

**Grouper and Strider?** – Are your clubs benefiting from Strider participants? Let us know your experiences with the program

### November 12 Board meeting summary -

**National Office moved** a few doors down to bigger space for lower rent; 48 month lease – 1032 South Alamo Street, San Antonio TX 78210

**Mobile Walk App** still being developed; details next edition

**AVA Cruise is still accepting applications!** Currently 63 AVA folks have signed on! It's not too late! Wouldn't it be fun to cruise and walk? I think so! **November 15-22, 2025**; 7-days on Norwegian American ship Escape; 10% discount for military; 5 ports of call, walks in every port: New Orleans, Cozumel, Mexico, Harvest Caye, Belize, Roatan, Honduras, Costa Maya, Mexico, New Orleans. Email Rob McDaniel for details: [mcdanielr99@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdanielr99@yahoo.com)

**Membership Survey results** available on [my.ava.org](http://my.ava.org);

**Highlights of comments:**

**Things that we are doing well:**

- Monthly communication to clubs
- Facebook use
- Fee structure
- Organizational change

**Things that can be improved:**

- Improve and Increase benefits for Lifetime/Associate members
- Address declining participation and clubs
- Improve transparency and understanding of national office support
- Improve/develop partnerships with fitness/health organizations
- Improve visibility with aligned publications/conferences
- Expand outreach
- Expand AVA retail offerings

**Budget for 2025**

Proposed revenues: \$635,418; Proposed expenses: \$621,218

**Nominations for Board Officer positions for 2025**

Chair: Carl Cordes

Vice Chair: Ed McCabe

Finance Chair: Chris Mellen

Secretary: Leslie Stone

**Update from IT Committee**

Resources that have been accessible on the AVA website under “Clubs Only” tab have been moved to [my.ava.org](http://my.ava.org) Resource page. Use the Find A tab and click on Documents

**Northeast News –**

**Hud to Hou** – the 2024 Northeast multi-club gathering held **September 6-8, 2024 was a great success!** Hearty congratulations are in order to the creative and hardworking team of **Carol and Lee West of Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club(CVVC)** and **Andrew and Carol Schmidt of West Point Volkssport Club** for a super job of overseeing the day to day planning. They spent many hours on planning calls to bring a successful regional meeting to completion! I hope you had an opportunity to attend. They had a total of 92 participants and 3 very nice walks. My favorite included walking across two bridges in **Poughkeepsie** spanning the Hudson River. If one did the 10k, we got the opportunity to walk on the Music Bridge (aka Mid Hudson Bridge); there is a panel on one of the bridge supports with 12 buttons which, when pushed, played excerpts from very danceable percussion pieces created by composer Joseph Bertolozzi. If you want to read about this, please visit his web page: [josephbertolozzi.com](http://josephbertolozzi.com). I also had an opportunity to tour the home of Eleanor Roosevelt - Val-Kill before we met at the FDR National Historic Site Visitors Center in **Hyde Park**. At Val-Kill they were celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. The park rangers handed out little printed booklets and encouraged us to take several to give to friends. The Saturday evening banquet, which was well-stocked and delicious, was highlighted by a presentation by CVVC President Bob McDougal. He gave us an overview of the Northeast Region AVA Leadership over the years

and highlighted photos taken on walks during the weekend. There was also a trivia contest about the Hudson River and awards were handed out to winners. On Sunday we drove to Kent, CT to walk along the Housatonic River and visit the Appalachian Trailhead near the town. All in all, it was a lovely weekend! The two clubs were very grateful to enjoy lots of help from around the region. They have nominated 29 members from the Northeast and a couple of folks from outside the region to receive **AVA Certificates of Appreciation** for their help! These certificates will be awarded at the next regional gathering, being planned by **Southern Maine, Twin State** in Vermont and New Hampshire and **Two Town** on Massachusetts' North Shore. As mentioned in the August NERD News, The **Northeast 2025 Tri-State Lighthouse Tour** will be held **May 16-18, 2025, based at the Microtel in York, Maine.**

Those of you who fondly remember the Tri-State gatherings of late 1990's/early 2000's and those of you who love visiting Coastal New England, please mark your calendars. Details will be printed in the December, 2024 edition of the *TAW*. The planning team has been meeting via Zoom, courtesy of Walk'N Mass Club President Mary Frink. Hotel and conference registration will be open in December and January, respectively.

No plans are in the works at present for a 2026 regional gathering, but if you have ideas and energy, please, let's talk about what you have in mind! (Also, see news above about the AVA 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary) Most of our Northeast Clubs are or have been celebrating anniversaries this year or next year. Walk'N Mass will be celebrating 40 years in 2025. What about your club? Do you have an anniversary coming up? And if so, do you have a special set of walks we should know about?

Please post anything you are doing on the Northeast Regional Website. Deputy RD Eileen Skinner is our computer savvy webmaster, but she can only add what WE give her, including me, which is why, when you go to the Northeast website, you see greetings from Wayne Knapp! He was clearly much more web savvy than I am. I need to get my act together. I hereby promise, with Eileen's help, by January 10, we will have an updated website that will be a helpful resource for all of us! I'm going to ask Hector at AVA if each of the region webpages can be linked to the national AVA page, too. Please visit the website from time to time (especially after January 10<sup>th</sup>!!) at [avaclubs.org/ne\\_rd/](http://avaclubs.org/ne_rd/) Send any articles or announcements for the website to Eileen at [ne\\_drd@ava.org](mailto:ne_drd@ava.org)

Please remember time is running out for participating in the **Rhode Island County Challenge Special Program in Rhode Island**, co-sponsored by Walk 'n Mass and CVVC. Order a book by December 31, 2024 and turn in your completed book by December 31, 2025 and you will receive the award which is a 40" blue cooling towel/scarf, which can keep you cool on those summer walks. For more information or an order form, please send an email to Carol West – [carol.west@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carol.west@sbcglobal.net). I happily completed this series of walks and really welcomed the use of that scarf this past summer! It's truly a gift that keeps on giving.

**Let's have another Zoom meeting in February! Details coming soon to the club Presidents!**

**Carol Giesecke, Director**

**Eileen Skinner, Deputy Director**

**Northeast Region, AVA**

**November 14, 2024**