



***Fun, Fitness, Friendship***

A PROMOTIONAL KIT  
FOR  
TELLING THE AVA STORY



# A PROMOTIONAL KIT FOR TELLING THE AVA STORY

From its very beginning, AVA has been a grassroots organization with local clubs made up of local citizens holding walking events in the local area. This special personality of the AVA requires that a large portion of the publicity efforts take place at the local level under the tutelage of the members of the local AVA club. This kit is being provided to you as an aid in promoting a critically important goal of moving the AVA: Transforming the AVA from “the best kept secret in the US” to its deserved place as “The premier walking organization in the U.S.”

# TELLING THE AVA STORY

We all know that walking is the exercise of choice for millions of Americans. We also know that the AVA is attracting a very small percentage of those who have chosen walking as their exercise. We are also aware that there are millions of Americans that do not exercise at all.

Our first challenge is to show these people that walking is an excellent low stress fitness activity that can improve their health. Our second challenge is to show them that the AVA and AVA walking events offer them the best ways to make walking fun and to help them continue in this important means of daily exercise. We must show them that the AVA, by giving them the opportunity to walk with others and participate in formal walking events, provides more than just exercise. It provides them with fun, fitness and friendship that can improve not only their physical well being but also their mental well being.

To meet these challenges, AVA club members must be willing to take an active role in promoting walking and the AVA. We must:

- Become the community walking experts who are called upon for advice and counsel on walk related matters,
- Actively seek opportunities throughout the community to promote walking and the AVA's programs,
- Actively assist other organizations that promote walking as an important exercise of choice and encourage the development of partnerships with these organizations,
- Ensure that the AVA events conducted by the club are not just walks, but quality events which will encourage people to continue to walk with the AVA, and
- Become the ambassadors who promote the fun, fitness and friendship of the Ava in the community.

This kit is one of the tools that will help you meet these challenges. We wish you good luck as you seek to renew *The Spirit of Walking* in your community and across the United States.

## USING THIS KIT

This kit was designed as a tool to help AVA club members tell the AVA story to groups in their community. In addition to this guide, the kit contains:

- The *Every body Walk!* video (4 minutes)
- Welcome to the AVA – information sheet
- Come *walk* with us
- While each of the items in this kit is excellent in its own right, these materials should be used together in presentations before community groups to help us meet our challenge to bring more people to walking and to AVA events. Additional *Welcome to the AVA* – information sheets and *Come walk with us* grabbers are available free of charge from AVA.

Remember, actively seeking opportunities throughout the community to promote walking and the AVA programs is an important role each of us must accept. Making a presentation to the employees of a local company, to a civic or social organization, or to a local school are important publicity opportunities. The materials on the following pages can be used to help you prepare for such presentations.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING FOR YOUR PRESENTATION

- Clearly understand what is expected of you. What type of group is it? How many people will attend? Will they be men, women, and /or children? What age group? How long should the presentation last? Where will it be given? Will the audio/visual equipment you need be available? Do you need to emphasize any particular aspects of walking?
- Discuss your presentation with the person who invited you. Tell this person you would like to bring handouts (*Welcome to the AVA* – information sheets and *Come walk with us* grabbers), Club brochures, Event brochures, etc.) Ask if he or she would like a brief biography to use in introducing you to the group.
- Decide what type of presentation you will give. A good format is to give a brief talk followed by the showing of the video and then having a short question and answer period. Carefully consider your time limitations. It is important that you keep to the point and not exceed your allocated time. Do not hesitate to bring notes with you. Remember that you should always combine a short talk with the video. The video should not be used by itself.
- Be on time. As a matter of fact, plan to arrive 30 minutes early. This will give you time to meet and briefly visit with the person who invited you, lay out the handouts you brought with you, adjust the podium and microphone, check the position and operation of the electronic equipment and to relax and compose your thoughts.
- Get off to a good start. Begin by thanking the person who invited you and the group for inviting you to speak.
- Speak from the heart. Smile, relax and be friendly.
- And, end on a good note. Thank them again, encourage them to pick up the handouts and invite them to attend your next club meeting or event.
- The day after the presentation, evaluate how you did and how you can improve your next presentation.

## SAMPLE BIOGRAPHY OF SPEAKER

Judy Walker is the president of the Very Friendly Walking Club. She, her husband and two children have lived in our community for seven years and all are active members of the club.

The Very Friendly Walking Club is the local affiliate of the national American Volkssport Association which is part of a worldwide organization devoted to walking fitness. The club promotes walking as an excellent fitness exercise for people of all ages and sponsors noncompetitive walking events in the local area.

# SAMPLE SPEECH TO A LOCAL GROUP

*(PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS INTENDED AS A SUGGESTION – YOU MAY ADD DELETE,  
AND REVISE AS YOU WISH TO ADAPT THE PRESENTATION TO YOUR AUDIENCE)*

First, I want to thank *Mr. Hill and the Lions Club* for inviting me to speak to you this evening on the important topic of improving your physical and mental fitness.

In the next few minutes, we are going to look at three things: Why exercise should be an important part of your daily routine; Why walking is an ideal choice for your exercise program, and finally; How you can embark on an enjoyable walking journey that can improve not only your physical fitness, but also your mental fitness.

The main message of The Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health was that Americans can substantially improve their health and quality of life by including moderate amounts of physical activity in their daily lives. Now, I know some of you are already thinking, "this is great, but I don't like to exercise and I don't have time." Don't turn me off yet. Let me tell you a little more.

The Surgeon General's Report goes on to say that moderate – remember that word – moderate – physical activity done on most days of the week can substantially reduce the risk of dying from heart disease and from developing colon cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure.

The word "moderate" is important because it tells us we do not have to become competitive athletes or spend hours in a fitness center or run until we are dragging to improve our health and quality of life. It gives us some more attractive options and one of those options is walking.

So, you ask, "why walking?" Well, walking is something that requires no additional training to begin your exercise program. You have been walking since you were about a year old. But, there are some other things that make walking a great exercise of choice.

- Walking is the safest of exercise. The only injuries you might expect are blisters and falling as a result of an uneven surface or from encountering a tripping hazard. One can be prevented with proper shoes and socks and the other by a little care and concentration.
- Unlike many sports, walking is an exercise that you can enjoy at any age – as a child, as a young adult and as a senior citizen. Even if you have never exercised before you can easily start a walking program.
- Walking can certainly add more adventure to your life. It can take you to places you have never been before to see things you have never seen. It gets you off the interstate so you can see the real country. Plus, think of all of the people you could meet and the new experiences you might have.
- Walking gives you the opportunity to spend quality time with your family or friends as you enjoy the outdoors. Or, it gives you the opportunity to be alone and find peace of mind in the beauty of nature.
- More importantly, a regular walking program can drastically improve the working of your entire cardiovascular system. Regular walking is a natural exercise that strengthens muscles, often reducing pain and preventing new injuries from occurring. Walking can increase the flexibility of your muscles and joints allowing you to move around more freely. Studies have shown that walking can raise the metabolism, leading to more calories and fat being burned and weight loss. And, walking can relieve stress and, thereby improve your mental well being.

I think that pretty well makes the case for walking. So, how do you get started?

You could just walk out the front door of your home and take a stroll around the block. Many people in neighborhoods all across the country do this every day. It would be better, however, if you establish a regular routine towards a set goal. To start, I would recommend that you start your goal to be able to walk at least 5 times a week, at a rate of about 3 MPH for 45 minutes to an hour. Remember the most important thing, at first, is not how far or fast you walk, but that spend some time and establish a habit. The speed and distance will come soon enough.

Once you have established this routine, it is time to broaden your horizons and seek new adventures. There is an association that gives you and your family that opportunity by providing organized walking events in new and interesting places with no competition and with little or no cost. They provide safe, marked trails so that those who wish to walk alone feel comfortable. People of all ages are welcome and all from children participating with their families to senior citizens, walk at their own pace purely for their own enjoyment. The American Volkssport Association, a national nonprofit organization, offers free and low cost noncompetitive walking all across the United States with the support of member clubs and corporate sponsors. The Very Friendly Walking Club is the local affiliate and I am their representative.

Now, I have a short video that will give you a quick look at our wonderful program designed to renew *The Spirit of Walking* in communities all over our great country.

SHOW THE PROMOTIONAL VIDEO HERE

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about walking or the AVA walking program.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Thank you again for inviting me here today. I have enjoyed meeting you and please come to our next walking event at \_\_\_\_\_ . Bring your family. Remember, it is free and there is no obligation. Please help yourself to the information I have brought and I hope to see you on the trail.

# APPENDIX A – WELCOME TO THE AVA – information flyer sample

Printed material available from the AVA without charge or download from:

[http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava\\_publicity\\_materials.html](http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava_publicity_materials.html)

The screenshot shows a PDF document titled "Introduction to AVA Flyer - 2010.pdf" in Adobe Reader. The flyer content is as follows:

## American Volkssport Association

Fun...Fitness...Friendship [www.ava.org](http://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 volkssporting events. AVA is endorsed by the US Surgeon General, the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport, and the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO).

**AVA** **What is Volkssporting?**

*Fun, Fitness, Friendship* Volkssporting simply defined, is a personal fitness sports and recreation program offering noncompetitive walks, hikes, bike rides and 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 300 active clubs presenting thousands of volkssporting events each year.

Promoting well being and good health by providing safe exercise in a stress-free environment is the hallmark of volkssporting. Walking -- also called "volkswalking" -- is the most popular of all the volkssporting 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 volkssporter 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, or 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 volkssporting adventure at your leisure. Trails have checkpoints along the route and are monitored for security and safety.

In the volkssporting tradition, you frequently find volkssporters 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 take part in the low-cost Achievement Awards Program or receive the special award for an event. That adds to the fun of accomplishment.



American Volkssport Association • 1001 Pat Booker Road • Suite 101 • Universal City • Texas • 78148 • 210•659•2112

# APPENDIX A – WELCOME TO THE AVA – information flyer sample page 2

Introduction to AVA Flyer - 2010.pdf - Adobe Reader  
File Edit View Document Tools Window Help  
2 / 2 78.7% Find

**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.

Of 3,000+ events per year, about 1200 events are 'live', with many participants coming together over one, two or three days of a weekend.

About 1800 events are self-guided and open every day of the year. AVA's **Starting Point** is an annual directory of event start locations published and sold by AVA.

All AVA events are listed at AVA's website at [www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org). AVA's largest events routinely attract thousands of people.

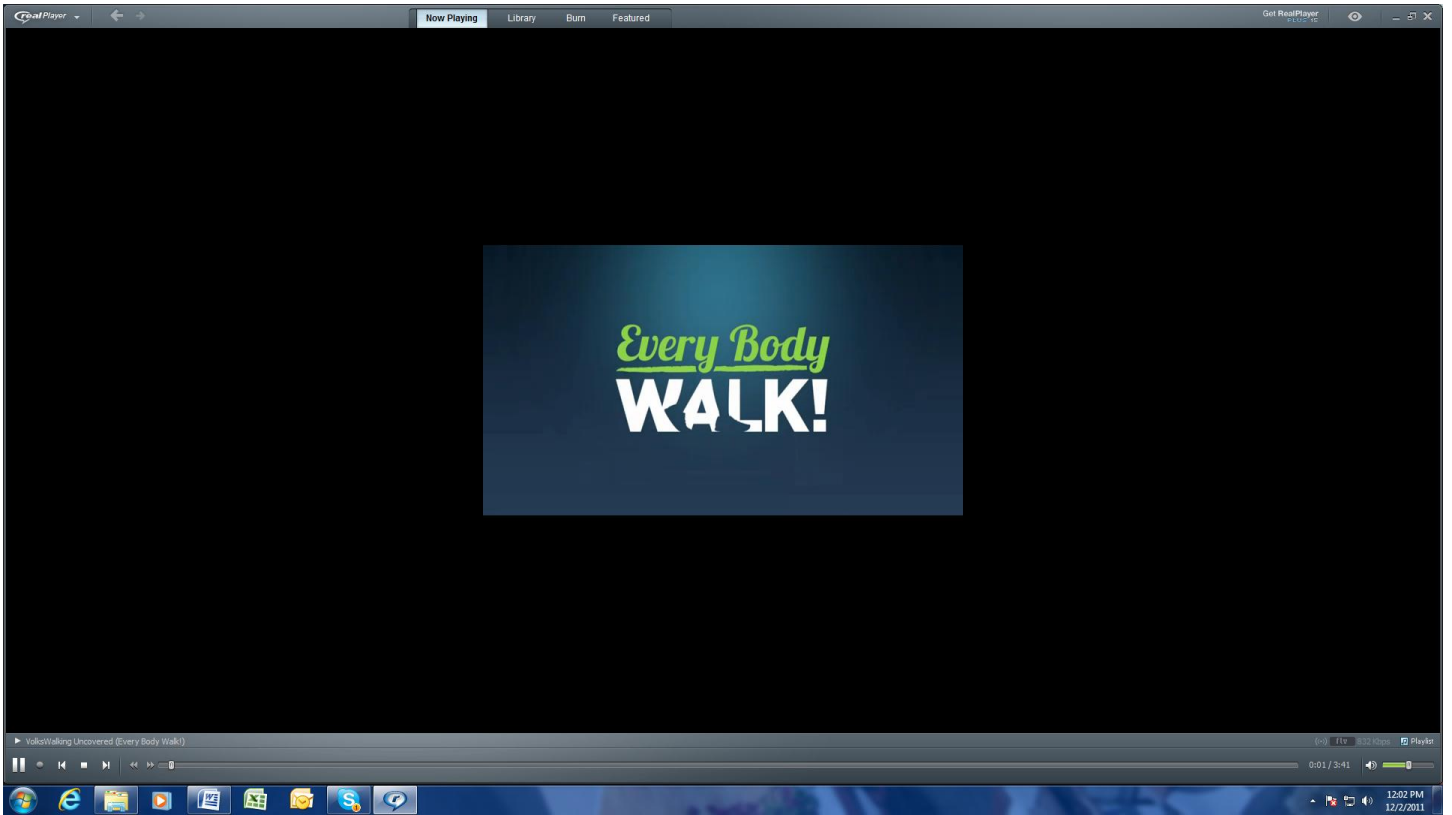
Biennially, the AVA hosts a week-long National Convention, which Volkssporters from all over the world attend.

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## APPENDIX B – EVERY BODY WALK! – video

This video can be viewed and downloaded from the AVA website at: [http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava\\_publicity\\_materials.html](http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava_publicity_materials.html)




# APPENDIX C – COME WALK WITH US – grabber sample

Printed material available from the AVA without charge or download from:

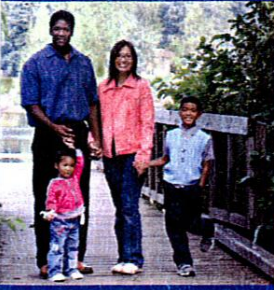
[http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava\\_publicity\\_materials.html](http://www.capitolvolkssportclub.org/ava_publicity_materials.html)

**Come walk with us.**




**AVA**

**Walk for**  
*Fun*  
*Fitness*  
*Friendship*




*Fun*

Walking is a great time to be with friends and family, enjoying the wonder of the countryside or large cities or small towns. Walk at your own pace – fast or slow.



*Fitness*

Walking is the best exercise – it is good for your heart, helps lower your blood pressure and makes you feel good all over.



*Friendship*

Walking gives you the opportunity to meet new people and enjoy old friends.

**AVA**  
*Fun, Fitness, Friendship*

American Volkssport Association  
[www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org)

To learn more about this unique walking program, contact the American Volkssport Association  
1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101  
Universal City, Texas 78148-4147  
Phone (210) 659-2112  
or your local volkssport club:

4/07