

# SUGGESTIONS FOR PROMOTING VOLKSSPORTING

This is the report from the committee that was asked to come up with ideas on how we can promote Volkssporting in Texas. Because Volkssporting begins with the individual, then to a club, on to the TVA and one cannot exist as a volkssporter without the other, we have suggestions for three different groups which involves everyone who enjoys the sport. The four groups are: 1: Each individual, 2: Clubs, and 3: State Associations.

## INDIVIDUALS:

1. Don't keep your walking experiences a secret. Tell all your acquaintance, friends and family. Invite them to come with you on a walk. Be sure to explain the importance of good fitting and proper supporting shoes before you take anyone on their first walk. Don't take them on a walk rated a three or must carried walking stick for their first walk. If they are not avid walkers already, encourage them to start on a shorter walk and build up to the longer walks.
2. Carry business cards with you at all times that have information on how someone can get information about volkssporting and up coming walks.
3. After completing a year round walk do two things:
  - A. Write a letter to the local Chamber of Commerce and or the Visitors Bureau telling them how much you enjoyed their city. Explain about volkssporting and how you found out about the walk in their city. Point out some interesting points of interest that you observed along the route. Give them information on how they can contact the local club for further information and how they can support the walking club or clubs in their city. If you stayed in a hotel while in this city use the hotel stationary to write your letter on. This lets the Chamber know that you have brought business to their city.
  - B. Using the walk directions, write a note to the walk contact person thanking them for setting up and maintaining the walk. Point out any special points of interest that you enjoyed. If the box or directions need attention be gentle and constructive with any comments. Include your copy of the directions with your note on it in the envelope with your payment.

## CLUBS:

1. Have written instructions on your web site, walk flyers, and separate flyers the importance of proper walking shoes. Many people have done a walk in improper fitting shoes, damaged their toenails and was turned off from walking.
2. Have specific written instructions on how to do Year Rounds. How to find out where there are year round walks; How to get to the starting point and exact instructions on what to do with the walk box.
3. Have a volunteer committee to take people who purchase new walker packets on their first year round walk. This will teach them how easy it is to do walks on their own and whenever it is convenient for them. Also, it will show them first hand how to obtain the walk box and how to use it.
4. Be familiar with all the AVA Special Programs and promote them on your regular and year round walks. Do the research on each of the club's year rounds and publicize which special programs apply to each walk. Be sure it is noted in the starting point, on any published flyer and on the directions. Note on the directions what qualifies this walk for each special program.
5. Contact the Chamber of Commerce or Tourist Bureau about each regular walk the club sponsors. Ask them to publish your event on their event calendar and if you can put flyers at their location. They may also have ideas on how to promote your particular walk.
6. Contact any local newspapers about publishing your walks or doing an editors article about why their city or area was chosen for this walk.
7. Have a welcome team at each walk to make sure everyone is welcome and to answer any questions.
8. Make sure your walk route is safe for all walkers. When marking a new trail think about what a brand new walker would think about or enjoy this walk. Make sure your description and rating of the walk is accurate, so everyone can make the proper decision on if they should do the walk .
9. Do not depend on everyone to get information about walks on the internet. Publish and distribute flyers at all walks at least three months before your scheduled walk. Distribute flyers at Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau offices and any other place where potential walkers might visit..

## **STATE VOLKSSPORT ASSOCIATION:**

1. The TVA should serve as a networking organization for Volkssporting clubs in Texas. This liaison would do such things as:
  - A. Assist in organizing new clubs.
  - B. Determine if there are alternatives to closing a year round.
    - a. Could another club manage this walk.
    - b. Could the TVA help financially to keep it going.
    - c. Evaluate why the current club is considering closing a walk and determine what should be done.
    - d. Assist clubs in setting up new year rounds.
  - C. Encourage and assist clubs in promoting the Special Programs that would Qualify on each of their walks. This would entail reviewing write ups for the Starting Point, flyers and directions, making sure all special programs are Listed and the write up correctly describes the walk.
2. Distribute flyers on TVA meetings and walks at least three months before the event. This should include sending flyers to the president of each club in the State and encouraging them to make more copies if necessary and distributing at every place they would distribute their own flyers.
3. DO NOT DEPEND on the internet to adequately advertise any meeting .
4. Assist the Regional Director as needed and requested.
5. Compile and publish for distribution at all walks the following:
  - a. Brochures explaining the benefit of proper shoes for support and fit.
  - b. Brochures explaining the Year Round program.
  - c. Brochures explaining how to obtain the WALK Box at the Year Rounds and what to do with each item in the box. How to stamp their own books and how to pay for their walk.
  - d. Flyers on what an AVA associate member is, the benefits of becoming a member and how they may apply.