

AVA Recognition Awards Program – Guide for Nominations

Introduction: This guide has been developed in an effort to streamline the AVA award nominating process. Our intention is that its use will:

- Assist the nominator in creating properly prepared and fully documented recognition award nominations
- Assist the AVA Awards Committee in reviewing recognition awards to ensure nominations are approved uniformly across all regions
- Assist the AVA Awards Committee in developing a single, coherent document—the AVA Biennial Recognition Awards booklet

Getting Started: Your first decision is not “What award do I want this person to receive?” Your first decision is “What did this person do to deserve an award?” Consider all of the following:

- **How many years of active service to Volkssporting does this person have?**

This does not mean *when they did their first Volkswalk, when they first paid dues to a club, or even when they became an Associate Member of AVA*. It also does not mean *how many events or kilometers they have accumulated*. This does mean *when did they begin taking an active role in a club—helping at events or behind the scene, developing walk routes, holding an office?*

- **Make a list of positions this person has held—and at what level.**

Were they an officer at the club level? state association level? AVA level? How did they perform in this capacity? Did they perform above and beyond expectations? Did they come up with any innovative ideas that were put into place? (One way to think about this would be to pretend you are working for an organization where people receive small cash bonuses for good performance: If this person were a paid employee, did he merely do what he was paid to do? Or did he go above and beyond what is required and is he perhaps due a small cash bonus?)

- **Make a list of committees this person has served—and at what level.**

How did she perform in this capacity? Was it a club, state association or AVA committee? Was this individual a committee chair/active member/member

in name only? Think about her contributions to the success of the committee. The committee chair may get the acknowledgement, but perhaps this individual made even more significant contributions to the success of the committee. If you don't know the details, ask someone who does.

- **Is this person an Associate Member of AVA? If so, for how long?**

Associate membership in AVA is not a requirement for nomination; however, it does seem to show the person has a higher level of commitment to the AVA than the person who does not hold associate membership. Therefore, a nominee for an AVA recognition award other than Certificate of Service or Certificate of Appreciation realistically should be an Associate Member of the American Volkssport Association at the time of nomination. Honorary members who receive special awards which are approved on a one-time basis would be another exception.

- **What AVA recognition awards has this person previously received?**

This information is available from your regional director or the AVA Awards Committee and can help in your decision for which nomination to make. Nominations for national level awards (Distinguished Achievement and Hall of Fame) must show work at the national level.

Only after you have gathered the above information should you determine which AVA recognition award you want to make the nomination for. Now you need to compare the award criteria with the information you have gathered. How does the information fit into the criterion for each award? Look at requirements for years of service and levels of service (club, state, national). It may be easiest to start with a higher level award and work your way down as you can rule them out if the right level of service is not present.

AVA Recognition Awards Available: The AVA Policy Manual details criteria and requirements for the following Recognition Awards. Basic information is listed below:

- **AVA Hall of Fame Award** – Requires ten years of service to AVA; service at the national, state and local levels; exceptional contributions to Volkssporting that affected several AVA regions
- **AVA Distinguished Achievement Award** – Requires eight years of service to AVA and exemplary contributions at several stages of service, including national
- **AVA Meritorious Service Award** – Requires five years of outstanding service to AVA
- **Commendable Service Award** – Awarded for two types of service to AVA:
 - The AVA may bestow an AVA Certificate of Commendable Service Award upon individuals who have given significant service to the AVA. The award can be given regardless of the amount of time, before an individual is again eligible. Commendable Service Award criteria has been modified to eliminate time periods for performing significant service. The award will be recognized by a certificate, a pin, and a rocker patch.
 - For each period of service on the Executive Council, as an appointed AVA official, or as a member of a national committee – awarded by national committee chair to all members of the committee
- **AVA President’s Award** – Awarded at the discretion of the AVA President
- **Ted Ballman Memorial Award for Youth Volkssporters** – Awarded to individuals/organizations inside/outside AVA who have been instrumental in enhancing/promoting Volkssporting programs for youth around the world
- **AVA Trailblazer Award** – Awarded to AVA **clubs** making significant contributions to development, maintenance or improvement of walking trails or to the support of trail-related issues
- **AVA Certificate of Appreciation Award** – Awarded by clubs, state associations, regional directors or the NEC to individuals, organizations and businesses for service to AVA (**NOTE:** This is the perfect recognition to give a business that serves as a start point for a YRE.)
- **IVV Honors** – Nominations made by AVA for individuals within AVA for performance affecting the international aspect of the AVA

Completing AVA Recognition Awards Nomination Form: Now that you have determined which award you want to make a nomination for, get a copy of the appropriate form (AVA Form 302 or 303, depending on level of recognition). Be sure you are using the latest version of these forms (both May 2011 at this writing). The forms can be downloaded from the AVA website or obtained from your regional director or AVA headquarters.

The information required by the forms is self-explanatory, but is reiterated here:

- Only one individual (or club) and one type of award should be submitted per form.
- Check the appropriate block for the award you have decided upon.
- When entering the nominee's name, use full name (no nicknames) as requested on form: **First name, MI, Last Name of Nominee**
- The citation should contain no more than 50 words. Use the exact wording that you want to become part of the AVA records—it will be printed in the AVA Biennial Recognition Awards booklet as well as on the recipient's Certificate of Award. *Samples of well written citations are included at the end of this document.*
- Fill in your name, the date, the AVA club you are affiliated with and the position you hold in that club.
- On page 2 provide a statement as to why you feel the nominee deserves the award. Your statement should contain all the information you considered when determining which award you wanted to nominate them for. Do not include information concerning number of events and distance walked as this does nothing to support an AVA honor award—and remember there is already an award system in place for Volkssport event and distance achievements. Keep in mind that a poorly documented award nomination can result in a deserving volunteer not receiving an award. A few carefully chosen adjectives help when describing a person's volunteer activities, but don't overdo it. Explaining exactly what the person achieved or an activity's outcome will do a better job of convincing the Awards

Committee than a lot of meaningless adjectives. *Samples of well written and documented statements are included at the end of this document.*

Nomination and Citation Style Guideline: Because the AVA Biennial Recognition Awards booklet is a compilation of award nominations from all regions, the following guidelines are provided in an attempt to result in a seamless document. It should help ensure consistency in style/general guidelines. (In some instances this may be a prescribed “style” vs. following rules we learned in school.)

General:

- Use only one space between sentences. If you learned *typewriting*, this is a hard habit to break since you learned to use two spaces between sentences; if you learned *keyboarding*, this should come naturally because you were taught to use only one space between sentences.
- Spell out numbers 0 through 9.
- If beginning a sentence with a number, spell it out.
- Abbreviate states when stating clubs’ locations using 2- letter abbreviations approved by the United States Postal Service.
- When listing a series, do not use a comma before the conjunction. (e.g., She brought pens, pencils, erasers and paper with her to the meeting.)
- Carefully review your work for spelling and grammar—if you use a computer, use its grammar and spell check feature. If you don’t use a computer, ask someone else to review your document.
- Do not use contractions and abbreviations in the ***award citation***.

Capitalization:

- Titles of offices held should be capitalized only when used with the name of a specific club or organization.

Examples:

- *He served as President of the Specific Volkssport Club for six years.*
- *She has been the Secretary of the Specific Volkssport Club for ten years.*
- *She served as the Specific Volkssport Club President for six years.*
- *She served as club president for ten years.*

- *He served as the president of the club for four years.*
- *Over the years she has served as club president, secretary and treasurer.*

- Do not capitalize point of contact, year round event or traditional event. However, abbreviations/acronyms are capitalized.

Examples:

- *He served as the point of contact for two of our year round events and he developed the route for one of the traditional events.*
- *She served as the POC for several events.*
- *He developed the new route for the Chicago YRE.*

- “Volks” words (Volkssport, Volkswalk, Volksmarch) should be capitalized regardless of how used.

Examples:

- *She volunteers to assist at each of our Volkssport events.*
- *She always helps at the Specific Volkssport Club events.*
- *She was instrumental in forming the Evergreen State Volkssport Association.*
- *She completed her first Volksmarch in 1989 and she quickly joined a local Volkssport club as well as the American Volkssport Association.*

Submitting Your Nomination: Submit your completed award nomination to your region’s director no later than November 1 prior to convention.

Approval Process:

- AVA Hall of Fame, Distinguished Achievement, Ted Ballman, Trailblazer and certain Certificate of Appreciation Awards are reviewed by members of the AVA Awards Committee. The committee chair presents the committee’s recommendations to the National Executive Council for final determination.
- AVA Meritorious Service, Certificate of Service, and certain Certificate of Appreciation Awards are approved by the regional director of the region in which the majority of the service was provided. Even though these awards are not reviewed by the AVA Awards Committee, care should be given when making the nomination so the regional director has sufficient information to review.

Hall of Fame Award

Weak Nomination:

I nominate Wallace Walker for the Hall of Fame Award. Wally distinguished himself by providing 11 years of significant/outstanding service to the Recreational Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. His service included:

- AVA Treasurer
- President, Recreational Volkssport Club, Somewhere, WY
- Director, Which Region
- Associate Member, American Volkssport Association
- Wally has always given his all to help clubs and walkers. He's the one always asked to barbecue the bratwurst because he does such a good job.
- Wall is a really good guy and everyone likes him.

Citation: During the past 11 years Wally has made many outstanding contributions to AVA clubs. He served as President of the Recreational Volkssport Club in Somewhere, WY, and later as the Director for Which Region and then as AVA Treasurer. Wally is an all-around good guy that anyone would be proud to know. He is a definite asset to the world of Volkssport.

Stronger Nomination:

I nominate Wallace A. Walker for the Hall of Fame Award. Wallace distinguished himself by providing 11 years of significant/outstanding service to the Recreational Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. His service included:

- **Treasurer, American Volkssport Association, 2009-2011.** During Wallace's term as AVA Treasurer, he instituted a new accounting system that enabled better tracking of AVA income and expenses. He also prepared a Club Treasurer's Guide to assist Volkssport clubs across the country to do the same albeit on a smaller scale.
- **Director, Which Region, from 2007-2009.** Wallace carried out the duties of regional director in an outstanding manner. ESRs were reviewed and approved in a timely manner and suggestions were offered when appropriate. He was quick to respond to questions from clubs in his region and often offered advice which proved extremely useful to newly formed clubs within the region.
- **President, Recreational Volkssport Club, Somewhere, WY, from 2003-2007.** The Recreational Volkssport Club began hosting more traditional events during Wallace's term. His strong work ethic provided an example for other club members and they willingly accepted responsibility for handling certain aspects of club events. While club membership did not grow significantly during his term, the members became more active and ultimately the membership did grow

into a much stronger club.

- **Associate Member, American Volkssport Association, since 2005**
- No job is ever too large or too small for Wallace. If he sees something that needs to be done, he steps up and gets the job done.

Citation: For outstanding contributions to the American Volkssport Association while serving as President of Recreational Volkssport Club (Somewhere, Wyoming), Director of Which Region and Treasurer of the American Volkssport Association. His accounting changes helped the Volkssport community at all levels.

Changes Made:

- Nickname was removed and replaced with full name/given name as appropriate.
- Supporting dates were added.
- Specific contributions to local club, region and AVA were listed.
- Recipient's name is listed in AVA Biennial Awards booklet and on the Certificate of Award, so is not necessary in the citation.
- Abbreviations were removed from the citation.
- The citation was made more specific at the same time keeping it within the 50-word limit.

Distinguished Achievement Award

Weak Nomination:

I nominate Nicky Summers for the Distinguished Achievement Award. Nicky distinguished herself by providing 10 years of significant/outstanding service to the Special Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. Her service included:

- President, Special Volkssport Club, Sometown, DE.
- Director, Whatever Region
- Associate Member, American Volkssport Association
- Nicky has always given her all to help clubs and walkers. Even today in retirement she continues to volunteer at her local club in Someothertown, KS.

Citation: During the past 10 years Nicky has made some significant contributions to the clubs in the Whatever Region. She served as President of the Special Volkssport Club in Sometown, DE, and later as the Director of Whatever Region. After retiring and moving to Someothertown, KS, she still continues to help the local volksmarch community with their events today.

Stronger Nomination:

I nominate Veronica L. Summers for the Distinguished Achievement Award. Veronica distinguished herself by providing 10 years of outstanding service to the Special Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. Her service included:

- **Member, Special Volkssport Club, Sometown, DE, from 2001-2010.** Nicky joined the Special Volkssport Club in 2001 after completing her first Volksmarch event. She immediately became an active member and volunteered to help at club events. She later volunteered to set up a new YRE in her part of town.
- **President, Special Volkssport Club, Sometown, DE, from 2005-2009.** Membership of the Special Volkssport Club grew from 29 to 74 during Veronica's presidency. This was in part due to creative ideas she developed to reward those who recruited new members (special prizes or free event credit to recruiters) and her expectation that the club host quality events. She also has a special ability to draw out the best in people—her enthusiasm and desire for quality events seemed to carry over to other club members. The average number of event participants increased from 75 to 120 under her leadership.
- **Director, Whatever Region, from 2009-2011.** Veronica carried out the duties of regional director in an outstanding manner. ESRs were reviewed and approved in a timely manner and advice and suggestions were offered when appropriate. She was responsive to questions from clubs in her region which sometimes required fairly extensive research. She also regularly sent the clubs e-mails reminding them of upcoming deadlines.

- **Associate Member, American Volkssport Association since 2002**
- Veronica has always given her all to help clubs and walkers. Upon her retirement, she relocated to Someothertown, KS, where she continues to volunteer with the local club.

Citation: For her outstanding contributions working toward growth of the American Volkssport Association while serving as President of the Special Volkssport Club in Sometown, Delaware, and the Director of Whatever Region.

Changes Made:

- Supporting dates were added.
- Specific contributions to local club and AVA were listed.
- Nickname was removed and replaced with full name/given name as appropriate.
- Recipient's name is listed in AVA Biennial Award and on the Certificate of award, so is not necessary in the citation.
- Abbreviations were removed from the citation.
- The citation was made more concise to stay within the allotted 50 words.

Meritorious Service Award

Weak Nomination:

I nominate Hank Winters for the Meritorious Service Award. Hank distinguished himself by providing 5 years of significant/outstanding service to the Special Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. His service included:

- President, Active Volkssport Club, Busy, MD.
- Associate Member, American Volkssport Association
- Hank has always given his all to help clubs and walkers.

Citation: During the past 5 years Hank did an outstanding job as President of the Active Volkssport Club in Busy, MD.

Stronger Nomination:

I nominate Harold B. Summers for the Distinguished Achievement Award. Harold distinguished himself by providing 5 years of significant/outstanding service to the Active Volkssport Club and the American Volkssport Association. His service included:

- **President, Active Volkssport Club, Busy, MD, from 2005-2009.** The Active Volkssport Club was only three years old and trying to live up to its name when Harold took over as president. Under his leadership club membership grew from a mere 15 members to 75 members and the frequency of traditional events increased as did the number of participants at each subsequent event. His leadership and enthusiasm for Volkssporting is directly responsible for this growth.
- **Associate Member, American Volkssport Association, since 2004.**
- **Member, Active Volkssport Club, Busy, MD, from 2004-2009.** Harold joined the Active Volkssport Club upon moving to Busy in 2004. He immediately volunteered to help at events and began making suggestions for ways to improve events.

Citation: For his outstanding contributions to the growth of volkssports in Busy, Maryland, while serving as President of the Active Volkssport Club.

Changes Made:

- Nickname was removed and replaced with full name/given name as appropriate.
- Specific contributions to local club and AVA were listed.

- Recipient's name is listed in AVA Biennial Award and on the Certificate of award, so is not necessary in the citation.
- Abbreviations were removed from the citation.
- Citation was changed to be more characteristic of the award being presented.