

FAQs

Southeast Striders is a local member club of American Volkssport Association, aka, America's Walking Club. We are a nonprofit organization whose mission is **Fun, Fitness and Friendship**. Our events are non-competitive and open to all.

Membership - Annual membership is \$25 for a household and \$15 for an individual.

New Walker Packets are available for \$5 for Southeast Striders members who want to track their events and participate in the awards program. The packet includes:

Your first Distance Book, a \$6 value

Your first Event Book, a \$6 value

3 Free walk event coupons, a \$9 value

Send in your Distance and Event Books to American Volkssport Association when you complete 10 events and receive your patch, pins and certificate in the mail. You are welcome to walk your first walk free. After that, you can decide to join our club or simply to continue walking with us as a non-member. Regardless, the charge for each walk event is \$3 – that's inexpensive for a guided, safe, interesting, pre-planned event with likeminded folk.

Club Meetings – are gatherings once a month for the purpose of planning club events, sharing information, socializing and having fun.

How hard are the walks? We rate our trails with a number and a letter. The number indicates how much elevation and the letter indicates the condition of the terrain. For example, a 1A rating would let the participant know there are no significant hills or stair climbing and the route is primarily on paved surfaces.

Why are walks measured in kilometers? Volkssporting began in Germany where the metric system was used to measure the distance. It is simply traditional to do the same as American Volkssport Association is a member of the international organization. We usually create walk routes with a short (5k) and longer (10k-20k) distance. A 5k walk takes about an hour and a 10k walk takes about 2 hours.

How are walk events created? Trailmasters are trained by American Volkssport Association to look for safe, interesting routes which can be measured, mapped and written in a set of two column directions. Anyone can become a trailmaster by studying the manual and creating a walk to showcase to the regional director and fellow walkers.

How are walk events conducted? It depends on the type of walk. All walks will have a Walk Leader and a Sweep at the end. All walks will be led by a Walk Leader who has directions or who is familiar with the route. At the beginning of the walk event, participants who have not already registered on the Online Start Box (OSB), will register in person and pay the \$3 fee. At some walk events, the walkers will step off at the same time, for others, there will be a "rolling start time and finish time". Of course, if a walker decides to register and complete a walk alone, the instructions will suggest a wider time span to begin and finish the walk. All walk events are created and conducted with lots of volunteer effort.

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What do all the abbreviations mean? We are a typical organization with useful abbreviations. If you hear something you don't understand, ask and someone will explain. Initially, the most important abbreviations to know are: **AVA** American Volkssport Association, **OSB**, Online Start Box (available at ava.org), **YRE** Year Round Event (a self-guided event that is available all year), **TE** (Traditional Event, in the European tradition, i.e. a one-time event created for a larger gathering that has a rolling start and finish time), **K** (kilometer), **POC** (Point of Contact is a person you can contact who is familiar with a walk route and who keeps a club walkbox supplied and monitored quarterly), **IVV** (International Volkssport Verband, the International Federation of Popular Sports – walking, swimming, biking, canoeing).

What is a WalkBox? A walkbox is a plastic file box supplied with everything an event participant will need to register, pick up directions and pay the club fee. A local **POC** manages a club walkbox. Walkboxes were used originally before computers existed and continue to be placed in easily accessed locations. Participants used to be guided to the walkboxes by following instructions in a large book of AVA events known as the **Start Point book**. This is becoming an antiquated system as we move toward the **Online Start Box** located on ava.org. Not all events are online today. We continue to use walkboxes in many locations. The Start Point book is still published yearly. We are evolving.

What is a Year-round Event? A Year-round Event is a self guided walking event available most days of the year. The local club selects a trail, draws a map and writes detailed walking instructions, and sets up a permanent start point. You arrive during the stated open hours, register, take a map, and enjoy the trail. These events include series of state parks in several states, great tourist attractions, national parks and good daily exercise routes in hundreds of communities. Some are scenic, some are historical, some are just for exercise. Call the club to find out which events suit your interests.

What do the trail ratings mean? Trails are rated for difficulty so you can more easily choose which one will suit your walking.

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