

## SEASONAL/YEAR-ROUND EVENTS

Seasonal/year-round volkssport events are events that can be completed anytime during a portion of the year or over the entire year. Unlike other volkssporting events which have established start/finish times and are usually conducted on weekends, seasonal/year-round events are usually available on a daily basis and can be completed repeatedly for event and distance credit. In most cases, the routes include the primary sights of a city or area that a visitor would most enjoy. Over 1800 seasonal/year-round volkssport events are available throughout the United States. Information on each of these events is contained in Starting Point, available from AVA.

Remember, you need not be a member of a volkssport club to participate in any volkssporting event. All events are open to the public. The aim of volkssporting is to promote physical well-being and to encourage people to exercise in an outdoor environment, without stressful physical exertion. Benefits of the program are an opportunity for people to see new countryside and landmarks, meet other people, and develop lasting friendships. With this philosophy as a goal, "Everyone Is A Winner".

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# FALCON WANDERERS VOLKSMARCH CLUB

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## VOLKSSPORTING INFORMATION



**AVA**

*Fun, Fitness, Friendship*



## VOLKSSPORTING

Volkssporting literally translates as “sport of the people.” Volkssports are organized noncompetitive events designed to appeal to people of all ages. They are not tests of speed or endurance, but exercise at your own pace. Volkssporting is organized to promote physical fitness and wholesome recreation in a safe environment. It is designed for all ages and levels of physical abilities. The volkssporting philosophy simply recognizes that everyone can not and should not attempt to exercise in timed or competitive events where awards are based on order of finish. Volkssporting offers participants a great escape from the pressures and hassles of every day life, and it provides an excellent opportunity to get out and enjoy nature. Since events are noncompetitive, participants travel at their own pace, thus making this an excellent outdoor recreational activity for the entire family.

## VOLKSSPORTING EVENTS

A volkssporting event is usually a walk (volksmarch), bike (volksbike), swim (volksswim), or cross-county ski (volksski or skiwandering) through a scenic and/or historic area over a predetermined route. Other sports, such as, snowshoeing and roller skating, have recently been introduced as new volkssporting events. The event routes are carefully selected for their safety and interest. All volkssport events are open to the public. Participation is usually free, if no award or credit is desired, but a nominal participation fee may be charged to cover event expenses according to the discretion of the sponsoring club. Participants may choose to purchase (usually \$6-8) an attractive award that commemorates completion of the event. The event award is usually a patch or medallion depicting the theme, location, or honoree of the event.

Although the greatest reward for exercise is the good health and fitness we achieve, we still need and want more. The individual awards program congratulates participants on their achievements. In addition, the event awards and the IVV record books are a diary of volkssporting experiences. You will enjoy remembering the fellowship of new friends and old, visiting historic and scenic areas, and your volkssport adventures in your own state, our nation, Canada, or the European countries that are a part of the IVV.

## FALCON WANDERERS VOLKSMARCH CLUB

The Falcon Wanderers Volksmarch Club was originally chartered on the Air Force Academy on March 20, 1981, and was the second club sanctioned in Colorado and the seventy-second club of the AVA. Today, the club enjoys a membership totaling over 250 people. Club membership benefits include development of personal friendships and the opportunity to help plan and execute club-sponsored events and activities. First year dues are \$10/person, \$16/couple, & \$20/family. Each new member receives a club patch along with their membership card. Renewal membership fees are \$8 a year per household. For persons 70 years of age and older membership renewals are free. All club members receive, via e-mail, a monthly club newsletter and any newly published club event brochures. Members preferring hardcopies of all newsletters and brochures mailed First Class to them can elect to pay \$10 a year for the service. Membership meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at a local restaurant. The monthly newsletter indicates the meeting location. Those interested in eating prior to the meeting arrive by 5:30 p.m. The Falcon Wanderers average sponsoring one weekend volkssport event each month and have 15 seasonal and/or year-round events in the local area, including: Cañon City, Salida, Fountain, Manitou Springs, Pueblo, Garden of the Gods, the Air Force Academy, and Colorado Springs.

## ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM

Volkssporting is unique among noncompetitive event programs. Not only do participants earn event awards, but they may also earn individual achievement awards, which are similar to merit badges for Scouts. These achievement awards are based on the number of events completed and the distance walked, biked, or skied. Swim events count towards event credit only. Each achievement award earned consists of a stick pin, cloth patch, and certificate indicating the level of achievement.

Event achievement awards are earned for completing 10, 30, 50, & each additional 25 events. Distance achievement awards are earned for every 500 Km completed. You participate in this program by purchasing Event and/or Distance Record Books. Volkssport participants who have never owned achievement books may purchase a New Walker Packet consisting of both entry level books for the reduced fee of \$5.00. Record books are valid indefinitely and are honored at any IVV sanctioned volkssport event worldwide. A new book is required for each level of achievement. Books cost \$6.00 each and are sold at IVV events. You may register for the event award, which includes the price for IVV Credit, or IVV Credit only is \$3.00. Upon completing an IVV event, present your validated start card and record books at the finish table to receive the official IVV Credit. Event IVV Credit is certified in the Event Record Book. Distance IVV Credit is certified for the actual kilometers walked, biked, or skied in the Distance Record Book. You can receive IVV Credit only on the day of the event, as the specially coded rubber stamps are returned to AVA headquarters and destroyed. When an achievement level has been completed, send your record books to the headquarters for processing. In return, you will receive the pin, patch, and personalized parchment certificate designed especially for that particular achievement level and your name published in The American Wanderer (the AVA newspaper), indicating the award earned.



Volksmarches (WALKS) are typically 10 kilometers (Km) (about 6 miles) on scenic trails, along rivers, around historic sites, through downtown areas or anywhere possible! Walking events may include more than one distance but will always provide the minimum 10 Km. You may take 2 hours or longer depending on your chosen pace and how often you stop to enjoy the surroundings. Walking is good exercise and encourages outdoor physical activity. Walking provides an exercise activity in which people of all ages and physical fitness can participate. It truly is the body's most natural and original form of exercise. All you need to get started is a good pair of shoes, loose-fitting clothes, and a safe route to follow. Of the four events conducted by volkssporting clubs, the volksmarch event is the most popular. Walks are conducted in all kinds of weather and all year round. A wintertime walk can be just as exciting as a summertime walk, but dress accordingly.



BIKES are rides of 25 kilometers (about 15.5 miles) or longer. These events are usually held in conjunction with a walk. The courses are chosen for average ability bicyclists, to assure that riders of all levels may enjoy the ride.



SWIMS are 300 meters or longer. You choose your own combination of swimming strokes and can rest as needed. These events are usually held in conjunction with a walk.



SKIING events provide a fun way to tackle and enjoy the outdoors during the winter. The cross-country trails are selected to be enjoyable for both the beginner and the skilled skier. Skiing events are conducted on 10 and 20 kilometer trails.

## HISTORY OF VOLKSSPORTING

Volkssporting originated in southern Germany during the early 1960s. Originating as competitive running events, the program lost its appeal to the general public. The clubs changed the events to be noncompetitive, so that everyone could be a winner. The first noncompetitive event was held in Bobingen, a small town near Augsburg, Germany. In 1968, the International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV) was founded by West Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Austria as a union of non-profit sports organizations to promote volkssport events throughout the world. Today, there are 28 member nations, including the United States, Canada, Japan, and much of Europe.

Volkssporting started in the United States at Fredericksburg, Texas in 1976. In June, 1979, the American Volkssport Association (AVA) was formally organized and officially recognized by the IVV. The AVA is responsible for administering the United States' IVV program. The AVA is a non-profit, charitable organization composed of volunteers, and governed by an Executive Council with over 250 member clubs throughout America. The goal of the AVA is to promote physical fitness and good health by encouraging all people, regardless of age, race, color, creed, economic status, or handicap to exercise in a stress-free environment. Each year this association conducts thousands of weekend and seasonal/year-round volkssport events nationwide. The AVA produces a bi-monthly newspaper, The American Wanderer. It contains information on the association's activities, articles from volkssporting clubs, a list of the active clubs across America, achievement award recipients, and a list of the weekend volkssporting events taking place across the United States. Each year, the AVA produces a book, Starting Point (cost is about \$30), with all the seasonal/year-round volkssport events. This information is available on the AVA website at no charge.

## VOLKSSPORTING PARTICIPATION

Weekend volkssport events usually open between 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. with the latest starting time between 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There is no rush to finish. You will have at least three hours to finish. Consult the event brochure for the specific start/finish times. A volkssport event brochure is a flyer or prospectus published by the event sponsors about the event. Event brochures are free and are distributed at volkssport events to advertise upcoming events. A brochure will contain event location, dates, times, trail description, map, picture of the award, a contact person and registration information.

At the event, you will be provided a start card along with directions for following the trail. Some trails are marked with directional signs, colored ribbon/tape, etc. At other events, you will be provided a map and written directions to follow. To be sure a person completes the required distance (and to keep participants from getting lost) checkpoints are set up along the course at which all participants must stop and get a stamp or punch on their start cards. The number of checkpoints at an event will vary between one and four. You must have your card stamped at each of these checkpoints or you won't qualify for the award/credit. Located with these checkpoints are rest stops, which provide water. Depending upon the time you spend at the checkpoints and your own walking pace, you can usually walk a 10 Km (6.2 miles) course in 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

At the end of the trail, go to the finish table and turn in your start card. Return of the start card means that you have completed the course, and for paid participants, this is where you pick up your awards and/or receive your IVV Credit for achievement awards.