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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **USA to Host Premier International Walking Festival**

#### ***AVA: America's Walking Club to Host IVV Olympiad in February 2023 in San Antonio***

**(San Antonio, Sept. 8, 2022)** For the first time, one of the world's premier walking festivals, the IVV Olympiad, will take place in North America next February 19-23, in San Antonio. The bi-annual international event will welcome guests from around the world, across the nation and locally for a series of non-competitive walking, biking, and swimming experiences.

The [2023 IVV Olympiad](#) will be hosted by [AVA: America's Walking Club](#), a national nonprofit organization based in San Antonio, and a member of the IVV -- the International Federation of Popular Sports. The Olympiad will be held in conjunction with the Texas Trail Roundup, February 24-26 - another international event co-sponsored by America's Walking Club's Texas state association and the International Marching League (IML).

"This week-long festival is an incredible opportunity for us to share our passion for walking and the hospitality of our beautiful city with active people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds," said Henry Rosales, President and CEO of AVA: America's Walking Club. "Our sport organization is committed to fun, fitness and friendship. That's exactly what our guests will experience in San Antonio next February."

Each day of the festival offers a different schedule of walks, swimming and biking events. Walking distances range from 5km (3.1 miles) to 42km (26 miles) and take place on trails, parkways, and urban routes to the north, south, east and west of downtown San Antonio. Participants will walk along San Antonio's world-famous River Walk and visit the historic Spanish missions, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Swimming events will take place at the Northside ISD Aquatic Center.

Participation is open to the general public, and the \$155 registration fee covers the entire week of events (both IVV & IML). The registration fee increases to \$170 on Nov. 30. Registration includes daily admission to the Olympiad Village at La Villita and to the 40 country Parade of Flags, plus opening and closing ceremonies.

All IVV and IML events are non-competitive and completed at the participant's individual pace. Participants may start an event individually or in a group at any time during a specified time window and are allowed more than enough time to finish the various distance options. Special provisions also allow for the physically challenged to participate in most events.

Walking is the most popular of all U.S. fitness activities and has been identified by the Surgeon General as the most beneficial form of exercise for Americans of all ages and athletic ability levels. America's Walking Club - formally known as the American Volkssport Association (AVA) - administers one of the nation's largest healthy living sports programs through its 188 local walking clubs nationwide. Its all-volunteer clubs hold a variety of events - more than 2,500 annually - in all 50 states. Many of its walking events offer a pre-marked 10-kilometer trail with an option to walk 3 or fewer kilometers, but these festivals will also include extended distances of up to 42km.

As a non-profit organization, America's Walking Club is dedicated to promoting personal physical fitness and good health by providing fun-filled, safe exercise in a stress-free

environment through non-competitive walks and hikes, bike rides, swims, and in some regions cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

**DIGITAL MEDIA KIT:** [This link](#) offers digital assets including photos, videos, maps, and approved logos.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1M1qcaHfF7cdzFx9onFDdK6l7P9sO342O?usp=sharing>

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#### **ABOUT AMERICA’S WALKING CLUB:**

America’s Walking Club is the largest walking organization in the United States. A national nonprofit corporation founded in 1976, America’s Walking Club is dedicated to promoting personal physical fitness and good health by providing fun-filled, safe exercise in a stress-free environment through non-competitive walks and hikes, bike rides, swims, and in some regions cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Its nationwide, grassroots network of more than 180 active clubs host more than 2,500 events annually across the country. The club, based in San Antonio, Texas, is a member of the International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV) and the International Marching League (IML). For more information visit <http://www.ava.org>.

#### **ABOUT SAN ANTONIO:**

San Antonio is the seventh largest city in the USA and one of the fastest growing. It is host to more than 39 million visitors a year, including 31.1 million overnight guests. San Antonio has the largest concentration of Spanish colonial architecture in North America and is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which includes five 18<sup>th</sup>-century missions. The city also has the oldest active cathedral sanctuary in the U.S. It was designated a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy in November 2017, only the second city in the U.S. to receive the designation. For more information:

<https://www.visitsanantonio.com/mediakit/san-antonio-overview/>