

Traditional Events Planning Guide

This guide has been developed for creating and running a Traditional Event (TE) for the Seneca Valley Sugarloafers.

Contact Information

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- Traditional Event Coordinator
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- Treasurer
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- ESR Contact for sanctioning, brochure submission and participation reporting.
 - communications@sugarloafers.org
- Publicity
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- Sales
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- Wednesday Walk Schedulers
 - Pat King - kingslag19@gmail.com
 - Nancy Fenster - nancy0302@comcast.net
- Sugarloafers Storage Unit (the shed)
 - Self Storage Plus
15750 Paramount Dr., Derwood, MD
 - Obtain key and gate passcode from the Coordinator of Event Operations
- Sugarloafers Mailing Address
Seneca Valley Sugarloafers
% Anthony Laing
3504 Mt Olney Lane
Olney, MD 20832-1116

Abbreviations Used in this Document

- AVA - America's Walking Club. [AVA Website](#)
- TEV - Traditional Event Coordinator
- MVA - Maryland Volkssport Association. [MDVOLKS Website](#)
- POC - Point of Contact - Club member that is in charge of a Traditional Event
- RD - Regional Director - Our region is the Atlantic region. [Atlantic Region Website](#)
- SVSVC - Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club - this is the founding name of the Sugarloafers Walking Club. [Sugarloafers' Website](#)
- TE - Traditional Event - A one or two day volkssporting event

Club Archives

The Sugarloafers maintained a Traditional Event archive in 3-ring binders on open shelves in the shed. This archive is being moved online to the club's secure Google Workspace. The club members that have account access to this secure online Workspace will help you access the events in this archive.

Traditional Event Planning

Many club members are available to help with the planning of the event. If you have any questions concerning this process, contact the TEC. We try to get our upcoming Traditional Events sanctioned by December 31. This is so we can distribute our Club Bookmark at the December 31 Volksmarch, which is sponsored by the Freestate Happy Wanderers.

1. Choose a specific start point, date and time for your TE.
2. Check that there will be sufficient parking for your event. We often look for parking for 50-75 cars.
3. Check that the start point will have room for registration and finish tables and access to a restroom.
4. Check that the start point will be available 1 hour before your event start time and will stay open through the event and cleanup. The event must stay open for 3 hours after the start table closes.
5. Not all start points require specific permissions. If your start point requires permission then get permission to use the start point in writing or email. ([See Attachment 2](#); adapt as needed.)
6. If a deposit or fee is required for your start point then get approval of the amount from the TEC.
7. If the start point requires co-insurance contact the TEC. Co-insurance is available if required but the exact procedure changes.
8. If this or a similar event has been used before, locate the previous event brochure and instructions. These may be online in the club's online archive or in the shed's trail file. Ask the TEC for help locating these items.

Sanction Your Event with AVA

Sanctioning the event is an important step that locks down the event date. Other clubs in our area will not sanction an event on the same date once sanctioning is approved. The following items are necessary for the sanction to be sent for approval to the MVA President and then the RD. Many of these items can be changed at a later date. However, a change to the event group, city, state, name, date or type will trigger a re-approval process by the MVA President and the RD.

If this event is a repeat of a previous event, then you can use the previous sanction as the basis for much of the new event sanction information. You will need the year in which the previous event occurred to access that information.

AVA sanctioning requires the following information and is completed by the ESR Contact.

1. Event Group – this is a Traditional Event
2. Event City and State
3. Event Name
4. Event Date
5. Event Type – Walk or possibly Swim, Bike, Kayak, ...
6. Event Flags if applicable for this event– Travelling/Guided, Guided, Night
7. Event Special Fees (Park entrance fee, etc.)
8. POC Name, Email address, Phone Number (Cell, Home or both), Street Address
9. Event Trail Ratings – Basic trail rating for the 10k and the 5k trail rating if different. See [AVA Trail Ratings](#) for trail rating guidance.
10. Event Access – Restrooms, Pets
11. Event Location –
 - a. Start/End Point Name
 - b. County
 - c. Event start on map
 - d. Period of time that the Start Table will be open
 - e. Start Address and Directions
 - f. Remote Start if different
 - g. Mapping Services Phrase to be used for Smart Phone directions
12. Event Description
 - a. Elevator Pitch for the event,
 - b. Website Link (sugarloafers.org)
 - c. Important Event Information - Include any additional required fees such as park entry fees. Also include that all participants over the age of 12 must pay the \$4 fee or supply a Sugarloafer or AVA coupon.
 - d. What participants will see on the trail.
13. Stamps –
 - a. Initial Stamp request (usually 1)
 - b. Stamp Text- default is the name of the event, city, state but it could be something that distinguishes the event. For example “Moonlight Walk.”
 - c. Event Special Programs. Special programs are listed here: [AVA Special Programs](#)

Once sanctioning is completed an event number will be assigned and an AVA event page will be created.

Next Steps

Brochures

Prepare a half-sheet brochure for the event.

1. Check for ideas on prior brochures. These are in the club archives. See the event brochure checklist for detailed information. [AVA Event Brochure Checklist](#)
2. Create the brochure. We have Brochure Templates and the TEC and other club members can help.
3. Submit the brochure to the TEC for approval. It no longer needs to be approved by the MVA.
4. Submit the approved brochure to the ESR Contact and ask that it be uploaded to the AVA event page and that any changes from the original sanction information be updated on that page.
5. Print brochures. This can be done in batches as needed. Fifty copies may be a good starting amount. The color of the brochure should be different from the other traditional events in the same year. Colored paper is available in the shed. Save any paper and printing receipts for submission for reimbursement from the Treasurer.
6. Distribute the brochure at club meetings, Wednesday walks and other club events. Arrange to have them taken to events sponsored by other clubs in the region.
7. Write a newsletter article publicizing the event and send it to the newsletter address listed in the contact information.
8. Send the brochure and the newsletter article to Publicity listed in the contact information.
9. Coordinate with the Wednesday Walk Schedulers to schedule a preview of the 5k trail.

Trail Instructions and Map

Club members are available to assist with both the instructions and creating the map. The club has been using Plotaroute for trail maps.

1. Write the instructions using recent club event instructions as a formatting guide. If possible combine the 5k and 10k instructions. Combined instructions reduce the amount of copying that will be required for the event start table. The finish table can be used as a checkpoint for the trail.
2. Create the map using recent maps as a guide.
3. Verify the trail distance and trail ratings.
4. Have the walk instructions and map proofed by walkers that have not assisted in their creation. Ask them to also verify the trail distance and trail ratings.
5. Revise the walk instructions as necessary and reproof them.
6. If necessary, ask the ESR Contact to update the AVA event page.
7. Get final approval for the instructions and map from the TEC.
8. Plan where trail signs and markers will be placed for the event.

Volunteers

Volunteers make an event run smoothly. [Attachment 2](#) is a sample schedule that you need to modify as required for your event. Volunteer shifts normally are 1½ or 2 hours. Later Finish Table shifts may be able to cover the Info Table and Sales. You may need additional volunteers such as Parking Attendants.

1. Make a work schedule for volunteers. Setup time should allow for the start table to be ready ½ hour before the advertised start time. Walkers often arrive early! The finish table is required to be open for three hours after the start table is closed.
2. Volunteer positions, depending on your event's requirements, may include the following:

- a. Assistant POCs (this position helps train new POCs)
 - b. Setup helpers
 - c. Trail Checkers to walk the trail and check trail markings one hour prior to the event start. You may not need both 5k and 10k Trail Checkers depending on your Trail Instructions.
 - d. Parking Attendants when parking may be limited.
 - e. Greeters and Publicity who will answer questions about the club, IVV record books, New Walker packets etc. Greeters may be able to cover the Info Table.
 - f. Sales Table volunteers. Be mindful that not all venues allow us to have sales, but in any case even without an official Sales table, we do need to sell IVV Books and New Walker Packets.
 - g. Start table registration volunteers provide start cards, collect fees and coupons and provide trail instructions. If there is not an open Sales Table, then the start table will sell New Walker Packets.
 - h. Finish table volunteers collect start cards from the participants and stamp books. If there is not an open Sales table, then the Finish table will sell books and New Walker Packets.
 - i. Trail Sweeps to take down all trail markings. Depending on your walk instructions you may not need both 5k and 10k sweeps. Sweeps need to start early enough so that they can finish before the finish time.
 - j. Cleanup helpers at the finish time.
3. Find your volunteers
 - a. Assign two volunteers to each shift on both the start and finish table. If possible one should be experienced with running the table.
 - b. Ask new members and others who don't regularly volunteer. This helps to develop more trained volunteers. Also ask members that live near the start to volunteer. Bring the work schedule to club events and Wednesday walks and ask for volunteers. Other club members can assist in finding volunteers.
 - c. Be sure to get email addresses for volunteers.

Final Steps

One Month Before the Event

1. Re-contact the person who approved the start point. Remind them of the event; give them a brochure.
2. Attend the club business meeting to give a report on the event planning progress or ask the TEC to give the report for you.
3. Verify that the event stamp has been received by the club and get the event stamp. The stamp number is NOT the event number on the brochure.
4. Get the shed gate code and key. [Attachment 4 - Club Storage Shed - Sugarloafer Storage Unit \(the shed\)](#) Go to the shed with someone that is familiar with the shed. Verify that the necessary supplies are available. These supplies include the following:
 - a. Start Box - [Contents List](#). The TEC, or their designee, keeps this box filled with required supplies.
 - b. Donation can (on open shelves)
 - c. Tables & chairs
 - d. Trail signs, markers and chalk
 - e. Parking signs

- f. Table signs on green poles; wooden blocks, C-clamps to attach signs, and green RR spikes for use as paper weights are in a box on open shelves
 - g. IVV banner and PVC pipe stand.
 - h. Feather flag and stand
 - i. Small tent in case of rain
- 5. Plan what signs from the shed will be needed – to parking, to start, etc. Signs can be altered as needed.
- 6. Take the AVA start cards and money box from the Start Box. Number about 50 of the AVA start cards. Additional start cards can be numbered at the event start table as necessary.

One Week before the Event

1. Verify with the club Sales Coordinator that IVV Record Books, New Walker Packets and Yellow Coupon sheets will be brought to the event start. Ask if they will need a sales table.
2. Verify by email that the event volunteers are coming and ask them to arrive 10 minutes early for their shift to learn about their job.
3. Print instructions for the volunteer jobs. [Start Table](#) and [Finish Table](#)
4. Make copies of the trail instructions/maps. The number needed will depend on the event and the forecasted weather. Preview walkers will walk as a group and will not need many individual instruction copies. Keep in mind that the start table can ask family and friends to share instructions.
Suggestions: If the 5k and 10k instructions are combined then print 70 copies on white paper. Otherwise print 50 copies of the 10k on colored paper and 50 copies of the 5k on white paper. Save the receipts for paper and printing.
5. Check for a copy shop near the start point in case extra copies are needed during the event.
6. Make a sign for the finish table listing the AVA Special Programs for your event.
7. Request that someone on the Communications team send out an email reminder about the event to the club membership and Maryland clubs. Be sure to include an event brochure as an attachment.

Preview Event

1. Take the numbered start cards, insert cards, money box, event stamp, stapler and several copies of the instructions/map to the preview walk.
2. Plan on being able to make change during registration.
3. Set up a start/finish table to register participants. Use the numbered start cards for registration and keep both copies. Collect fees or yellow coupons or AVA free walker coupons. Staple coupons to the back of the start cards.
4. Stamp IVV books and special program books. Use insert cards if books are not available.
5. Retain the AVA start cards, insert cards, money box, stapler and event stamp for the event start table.

Final Preparations for the Event

1. Buy bottled water for the start/finish. There is a large water container in the shed that can be used. Save the receipts.
2. Get all event equipment from the shed including the tent if it will be required.
3. Mark the trail. Write on a copy of the walk instructions where streamers, markers & signs have been placed.

Day of the Event

1. The printed instructions/maps, numbered start cards, the money box, and the event stamp with you.
2. You (or your designee) should remain at the start/finish point from setup until clean-up is completed. Situations may arise that the volunteers need direction from the POC.
3. Welcome volunteers. Let them know that cheerful, friendly, and helpful attitudes make a BIG difference in the success of this event. Give instructions to each volunteer and help them get a name tag. Introduce them to the other volunteers.

Event Start/Finish Setup

1. Put up the signs to direct drivers to the start point parking.
2. Set up the IVV banner and the club feather flag to direct participants to the event start.
3. Send out trail checkers before the event start time. Share your mobile number and get their number so that you can check in with them, if needed. Give them walk instructions that tell where markers are located. They should also take a bag containing a pen, extra markers to replace or repair markers and garden clippers to trim back foliage as needed. Ask that they add to the instructions any markers that they add to the trail. Remind them to return the instructions to you when they complete checking the trail.
4. Set up tables with their signs and the tent if needed.
5. Post the volunteer schedule near or on the start table.
6. Tape volunteer instructions to the tables.
7. Start Table: Start sign, Start Box, table & chairs, AVA start cards, cash box with money from the preview walk, walk instructions, paper weights, pens & pencils, donation can, stapler, start cards from the preview event, copies of the instruction/maps.
8. Finish table: Finish sign, AVA event stamp, inked stamp pad, insert cards, pens, checkpoint stamps, water & cups.
9. Sales Table: IVV record books and New Walker Packets for sale, any other sales items. The Sales coordinator provides the sales items, sales money box and sales register.
10. Information Table: Information sign, club and AVA information, Sugarloafer membership forms, upcoming event brochures, paper weights, Starting Point book for display.

During the Event

1. Open the start table for registration when setup is complete. Keep donation money separate from registration money. Close the start table at the end of registration time. When the start table is closed, put away the unused start cards, instructions/maps and the money box. Move the donations container to the finish table. The only registrations allowed after the table closes is for the sweep volunteers when they arrive. The POC may make exceptions to this policy if circumstances warrant.
2. Open the finish table about one hour after the event start time.
3. If there are any incidents to report, make sure that an AVA Incident Report is filled out.
[AVA Incident Report](#)
4. When the sweeps arrive:
 - a. Make sure they are registered. They may have filled out a start card at the preview walk.
 - b. Get sweeps' mobile phone numbers. They should plan on starting 30 minutes after the start time ends.

- c. Give them bags for collecting streamers, markers, etc. and walk instructions telling where markers are located. If you have both 5k and 10k sweeps then the removal of overlapping markings need to be coordinated. Bags need to be returned to the finish table when they return.
- d. Ask them to stay behind any walkers they encounter on the trail. Ask them to contact you if they will be delayed past the end of the event.

Event Cleanup

1. Remove signs that were placed for drivers.
2. Take down the IVV banner and the club feather flag.
3. Remove the tables, table signs and chairs and other equipment from the area.
4. Take the start cards, money and donations with you for after the event accounting.
5. Return the event supplies and equipment to the shed.

After the Event

1. Review any Incident reports with the TEC and the ESR Contact. The ESR Contact forwards the reports to the AVA.
2. Within two days:
 - a. Count the event money and donations
 - b. Count the total number of participants
 - c. Count the number that used Sugarloafers coupons
 - d. Count the number that registered with AVA free walker coupons
 - e. Count the number of children under 12. The club pays for all children whether they stamp books or not
 - f. Count any other AVA sanctioned free walkers (usually 0)
 - g. Make a copy of the Event Summary - [Attachment 3](#)
 - h. Reconcile the money with the participants on the Event Summary. Be sure to include
 - i. Event #
 - ii. City and Name of the event
 - iii. Number of participants
 - iv. Number of AVA free walker coupons
 - v. Number of other AVA sanctioned free walkers
3. Within 7 days:
 - a. Endorse any checks (For deposit SVSVC) and deposit the proceeds and donations to the club's account.
 - b. Send the treasurer an email with a subject that includes the word "deposit". In the message put the event name, date of the deposit and the total amount of the deposit. Also include the categories of the deposit. Categories include event fees collected, donations, and any sales that were not made by the sales table. Sales Table deposits are reported by the Sales Coordinator.
 - c. Add any additional information to the Event Summary that will be useful for a future event.
 - d. Send a copy of the Event Summary to the ESR Contact. They will report the counts to the AVA.

Final steps

1. Send electronic copies of the following to the TEC for archiving in the club's Traditional Events folder.

- a. Final brochure
 - b. Final Instructions and Map
 - c. Event Summary
2. Give the TEC the following for the seven years archive in the shed.
 - a. Top copies of the start cards
 - b. The Event Summary
 - c. Copy of any incident reports
3. Send a thank you note to the Start Point contact.
4. Send thank you notes to the volunteers.
5. Send the treasurer all receipts for event supplies so that you can be reimbursed.
6. Write an article for the newsletter about the event.
7. Attend the next club meeting to report on the event and share any ideas on how to improve our walks.

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT EVENT!!

This document is a work in progress. As you use it, please mark it up and give feedback to the President and the TEC.

Attachment 1 - Sample Letter

Date

Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club

Your name

Your address

Your email address

Your phone number

Name of official

Address of official

Dear Mr. Official,

The Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volksmarch Club would like to do a walk on (date) using your facility (give specific name) as the start point. We plan to have one 5k walk and one 10k walk in the (neighborhood, park, etc.). The walks will be open to everyone. Registration would start at (time) and last until (time), with workers arriving at (time) to set things up. We will clean up and be out of the start point by (time). We estimate that approximately (reasonable number not a wish for number) people will be doing the walks.

If this is acceptable, please send your approval to me at the above address. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your name

Attachment 2 - Volunteer Schedule Sample

Date: Registration Times: Finish By:			
Set Up	1 hr before start	(1)	(2)
Early trail checkers 5k	1 hr before start	(1)	(2)
Early trail checkers 10k	1 hr before start	(1)	(2)
Greeters	½ hour before start	(1)	
	Second shift	(1)	
Start table	½ hour before start	(1)	(2)
	Second shift	(1)	(2)
Finish table	1 hour after start	(1)	(2)
	Second shift	(1)	(2)
	Third shift to finish time	(1)	(2)
Sales and Information	1 hour after start	(1)	
	Second shift	(1)	

Date:		Registration Times:	Finish By:
Sweeps 5k	1 hour after Start Table closes	(1)	(2)
Sweeps 10k	½ Hour after Start Table Closes	(1)	(2)
Cleanup	When Finish Table Closes	(1)	(2)

Attachment 3 - Event Summary

The template Event Summary sheet is available at [Event Summary](#). Please make a copy and complete it for your event. The following is an example of its use.

Event Name Moonlight Walk at Seneca Creek State Park

Date Nov 16 2024

POC Tony Laing

Maribeth Evans

Expenses

Sanction Fee \$30

Brochures \$0 (Tony Printed using paper in shed)

Copy Instructions & Maps 6K \$0 (Tony Printed)

Copy Instructions & Maps 10K \$0 (Tony Printed)

Start Box supplies \$0

Other supplies \$0

AVA Participation (# of walkers * \$2) \$196

Total \$226

Walkers Pre-Event Participants 26

Day of Event Participants 72

Total Participants 98

12 and Under Participants 3

AVA Free Coupons 0

Club Coupons 33

Total Paid Walkers 62

POC Deposit Cash or Check Paid Walkers (62x4) \$248

Donations \$7

Notes; Weather: Full Beaver Moon rose at 5:36 pm, Clear Night; Temp in the 50s

Next Time: Reroute the 6K to a 5k past the dam

Yellow Direction Markers with stakes from our shed are inserted into cones by park staff

Maribeth made \$80 on baked good and drink sales

6k Instructions Printed 56 30 Printed by Alice - some left from 2022

10k Instructions Printed 20 10 Printed by Alice - some left from 2022

6k Instructions Used 30

10k Instructions Used 10

Sales Detail * 2 yellow coupon pages. \$80.00 \$80.00

4 new walker packets. \$20.00 \$20.00

Books - 1 blue, 2 purple, 1 gold. \$24.00 \$24.00

2 shoelaces \$8.0 \$8.00

1 donation \$1.00 \$1.00

\$133.00

Attachment 4 - Club Storage Shed - Sugarloafer Storage Unit (the shed)



Picture of the shed property entrance (A McDonalds is immediately to the left of the entrance.)



Our building



Our Unit



Inside the shed.