

## Volunteering at the AVA Convention

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What is convention volunteering and why should I volunteer? Volunteers are the glue that brings an event together. Without you and others giving a few hours of your time, we could not have an AVA convention. For the 20<sup>th</sup> AVA Biennial Convention in Billings, Montana, volunteers are more important than ever.

Our past conventions were located in an area of the country with numerous clubs close by. Each club in the local area assumed some responsibility for the different aspects of our convention. For Billings, we do not have that. That means we will be relying on volunteers from all over the United States to provide the necessary support for these activities. If you have been doing this for any length of time, or even attending your very first convention, there will be tons of different positions that can be staffed by volunteers. Providing information, checking start cards, taking money, stamping books, working at a checkpoint, and many more fun things to do!

Because of the remoteness of this convention, we are also soliciting for "Long Term Volunteers", more of a management position that will start from one to six months prior to the convention. You will be picking up where the Convention Committee has left these tasks. In other words, much will be done, but you will be responsible for the final detail work and for coordinating the volunteers necessary to perform this function during the convention itself.

Head over to the convention web site, <http://2017AVAConvention.org> and click on the Volunteer tab. We have descriptions of the jobs, and a link to follow to volunteer. The information covers Long Term Volunteers; Jobs During the Convention; Pick your Event; Swim Event Support; Bike Event Support; Volunteer Positions at the Hotel.

Naturally, we do not expect you to give up a part of your day without some compensation other than the really good feeling you get. Each volunteer will receive a T-Shirt that shows you have volunteered your time in some capacity. Once you have chosen your job, go to the link that will let you choose your Volunteer T-Shirt so we know what size.

Volunteer and be part of making the 20<sup>th</sup> AVA Biennial Convention an event of which you can be personally proud.

LONG TERM: This convention is a bit of an experiment. As we do not have the massive club support of previous conventions, and the near-term outlook is similar, discussions with Henry and the NEC have produced the idea that the National Headquarters will take additional responsibility for coordinating our biennial conventions than they have in the past. As part of doing the work to prepare for hosting the 20<sup>th</sup> AVA Biennial Convention in Billings, the Convention Committee is developing processes and procedures that will make the process easier for future convention committees. As each convention is prepared after this one, those processes and procedures will be refined. This should make the overall process of hosting a convention much easier in the future.

An example of some of the changes we envision is making the actual business of the convention two days in length, with half a third day for registration and socialization. This does a couple of things. For those with little free time but are involved with the continuation of our organization, it is less time out

of your week. Because it is shorter, the overall cost should be less. For those only interested in the events, we will still have pre- and post-convention events, but the timing during the convention itself will lend itself to being able to participate fully without overlapping.

There will be a survey. It will be critically important for everyone to give their honest opinions and suggestions. That way, we can make every upcoming convention something that everyone looks forward to, and it will not be as much of a burden to host as it has been in the past.

Thank you to everyone in advance for making the 20<sup>th</sup> AVA Biennial Convention in Billings, Montana a HUGE success.