



# Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the  
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

## A Message from our Club President

by Jim E. Brown

Hi Hikers:

I'd like to "walk" you through another subject that has popped up in conversations with many of you: Walks vs. Hikes.

First, let me state unequivocally that we are a hiking club, not a walking club. There's a difference, which most of you can figure out on your own but I'll take a stab at that later.

Second, the "new member / diversity committee" will also have ideas on how we can reach out to a larger audience, which is my motivation for bringing up walking here.

In any case, PVHC has always sponsored "walks" without often calling them that. To keep it simple, walks are more likely to be on flat pavement, less likely to be in the woods and surely require a lot less equipment (think boots, poles, etc.).

Walking clubs are normally very small in membership, they already know each other and by the way they don't call themselves "membership." They don't have meetings, by-laws and a bunch of other stuff the hiking clubs have.

If you're like me, you know dozens of daily and weekly walkers, one eye on their Fitbits and another on their surroundings. These are health-conscious, social outdoors-y people. Isn't that who we are?

Anyways, I bring this up because I believe there is a way that we can incorporate some official walks without diluting our hiking mission. Why would I  
*See President's Corner continued on page 2*

Volume 25, Issue 5

Sept, 2021

**Inside this issue:**

Important Renew- 18  
al and Member-

Upcoming Events 19  
And The Usuals

Important Notices 19

**Special points of  
interest:**

- Jim Brown's  
President's Corner  
article on page 1
- Sandy Segó's  
article on page 3
- PaPa Smurf's  
article on page 5
- Lori Tisdell's  
book review  
on page 10
- Dick Forrest's  
book review  
on page 13
- Shari Cox's picture  
puzzle game  
on page 15



## Bootprints

**President's Corner** *continued from page 1*

do that? Because I believe we need to think to the future, and walks might be the "gateway drug" to hikes, meaning, if we get new members hooked on PVHC through walks, that might lead them to hikes.

So, if you're leading a Hike, don't be afraid to call it a Walk. We already advertise Dinner Walks (e.g., NoHo), City Walks (e.g., NYC), Reservoir Walks (e.g., Ashley) and many others. Let's make that clearer on our sites.

I also have an idea to start "Bird Listing Walks." It's not bird-watching, it's more about walking and identifying birds with an eye to finding those you have not previously listed in your book. I have done it somewhat on our hikes, but this would have a different emphasis. If you're interested or if you think this should or should not be in our scope, please let me know.

Participate, Enjoy, Grow.

Jim E. Brown, President

## Increasing Positive Emotions

by Sandy Segó

The statistics you see as a result of the pandemic are not good. The Kaiser Family Foundation reported in May that essential workers and young adults 18-24 reported mental health declines. The number of adults with signs of anxiety or depression have grown from about 10% to 30%. As we have been isolated at home, spending more time staring at screens, cut off from our social lives, people have ruminated on their loneliness and concerns of becoming ill. People may feel stuck; their lives aren't going anywhere.

So we need to work on our emotions. But how do emotions work?

For decades, the belief was that the emotion we experience causes a physiological response. So - to use a classic example - when you are walking in the woods and see a bear, you may experience fear. The emotion of fear caused our fight or flight response which is controlled by the autonomic nervous system to activate. Our bodies react by releasing adrenaline; increasing heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rates; our pupils dilate, and our bodies stop putting energy into digestion. The idea of the fight or flight response is to get us out of immediate danger. So the basic theory was that our emotion (fear) causes a physiological response (raising our heart rate).

Current research suggests that this old theory is not correct. In fact, it probably works the other way round. We are walking in the woods and see a bear, and that creates a series of physiological reactions which we label with an emotion. So seeing the bear, our bodies react by releasing adrenaline; increasing heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rates; our pupils dilate, and our bodies stop putting energy into digestion. We then label this combination of physical changes and objects in the environment as fear.

So emotions have a more cognitive basis than we previously thought. And our previous experiences can impact how we interpret these physical changes. So while one person may see the bear, experience  
See *Positive Emotions* continued on page 4

*"The number of adults with signs of anxiety or depression have grown from about 10% to 30%."*

*~ Sandy Segó*

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*“This means that emotions are not hard-wired into a given situation or stimuli that we encounter.”*

~ Sandy Sego

*“First, you can take care of yourself, physically.”*

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*“Second, you want to promote the emotions you want to have in the future.”*

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*“Focusing on a constellation of positive emotions, such as contentment, gratitude, pride, awe along with happiness, make us feel good and shift our focus from ourselves to include others.”*

~ Sandy Sego

**Positive Emotions** *continued from page 3*

the increased heart rate and other physical changes and remember stories of bears attacking and feel fear. Or, like me, you could see the bear, experience the increased heart rate and other physical changes, and interpret it as excitement while you reach for your camera.

This means that emotions are not hard-wired into a given situation or stimuli that we encounter. You can modify what you feel in a given situation (with practice).

There are two ways to modify your experience of a situation, so you are more likely to experience a positive or uplifting emotion.

First, you can take care of yourself, physically. Based on the new theory, the brain creates emotions based on physiological signals and changes in your body. So by increasing your physical health, you increase the chance that your brain will create positive emotions and decrease the chance that your body sends distressing signals to the brain. So eat right, exercise, and get plenty of sleep.

Second, you want to promote the emotions you want to have in the future. Practicing particular emotions allows you to “rewire” the brain, growing new connections that make it easier for your to produce these emotions in the future. When you start to feel a negative emotion, you can substitute the negative feeling for a positive one, such as gratitude.

For example, when you are video calling someone, you can be annoyed at a bad connection, or awed at the technology that allows us to see and talk with people in distance places. Practicing these positive emotions allows them to become more automatic and occur with little thought. Practicing this sort of thing five to ten minutes a day can be all it takes to adopt a more positive outlook.

Focusing on a constellation of positive emotions, such as contentment, gratitude, pride, awe along with happiness, make us feel good and shift our focus from ourselves to include others. They can help us recognize the relationships that bring joy. They can aid us in recognizing that helping others feels good and aids us in developing more positive emotions. So be awed by nature on your next walk. Share that awe with others. Continue to do these sort of things each day and see the difference it makes.

--Sandy Sego

Smurfy advice for the trail...

## **Bulla Bulla Vesicle**

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

Blisters! Everyone hates blisters. It's the kind of foot problem that can really ruin a great hike. If you have ever tried to hike after a bulla (a large blister containing serous fluid) has formed on your toe or foot you know what I mean. Pressure, heat, and/or moisture are the leading culprits that cause blisters (bullae, and their small cousins, vesicles) to form on your feet while hiking. Sometimes called a friction blister, or water blister, it is a collection of clear, colorless fluid trapped between or beneath the top layer of skin. They can be very painful and if they pop or tear they can easily expose the tender underlayers of skin, exposing you to infection and creating an open raw wound that will bring tears to your eyes as you try hiking on it.

Trust me, you don't want to hike with blisters so your number one goal should be to avoid getting a blister in the first place. Since blisters are caused by pressure, heat, and moisture, your best defense is a good sock and shoe system to avoid pressure points, friction-causing heat, and damp, wet moisture on your feet. Eliminate these and you eliminate the cause of any blisters before they form. A well-fitting shoe and proper shoe lacing should keep your foot from sliding around in your boots and avoid allowing your heel to slide up and down. If your heel is rubbing up and down, or your toes are sliding forward or side to side, the rubbing will cause friction and heat, creating a hot spot. Given enough hiking time the hot spot will grow into a blister pretty quickly. So if you find yourself getting blisters frequently you should seriously evaluate the fit of your shoes.

See *Blisters* continued on page 6

*"Pressure, heat, and/or moisture are the leading culprits that cause blisters (bullae, and their small cousins, vesicles) to form on your feet while hiking."  
~ PaPa Smurf*

*"Since blisters are caused by pressure, heat, and moisture, your best defense is a good sock and shoe system to avoid pressure points, friction-causing heat, and damp, wet moisture on your feet."  
~ PaPa Smurf*



*“Remember, movement and/or pressure are the sources of friction that cause the blisters.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

*“My number one go-to method for hot spots, if you catch them early, is to simply place a layer of breathable athletic tape over the hot spot.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

*“The number one rule is don’t keep hiking with a hot spot forming.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

**Blisters** *continued from page 5*

Even with a good shoe fit some people are just prone to forming blisters. If this is you you might try a combination of a thin liner sock with a second thicker hiking sock over top. The thin liner sock slides against the outer sock avoiding the friction of rubbing directly against your skin. Since the other culprit in causing blisters is moisture you should also be sure that you are wearing a good hiking sock that wicks moisture away from your skin. Polypropylene, silk, and merino wool (smart-wool) are all good wicking materials for hiking socks. I like polypropylene or silk for a thin wicking liner sock with the padding of a light or mid-weight smart-wool sock over top. Be sure to wear a thickness of sock that fills the boot so that you don’t slide around but not so tight that it applies pressure to any area. Remember, movement and/or pressure are the sources of friction that cause the blisters.

So, you have the best fitting shoes you can find with a good pair of socks and still feel hot spots forming on your feet? Listen to them. They are warning you that you need to stop and avoid letting the hot spot form into a blister. My number one go-to method for hot spots, if you catch them early, is to simply place a layer of breathable athletic tape over the hot spot. If your hot spot is on your heel, wrap the tape over the heel area so that the collar of your boot rubs on the tape, not your heel. Same with other places on your foot where a hot spot is forming, including wrapping around a toe if the inside of the toe is getting sore. Be sure to use a breathable athletic or medical tape so you don’t trap moisture that can soften the skin, making it easier to form blisters. If you already have a blister forming you will not want to put the tape directly over the blister as it will tear it open when you try to remove it later.

The number one rule is don’t keep hiking with a hot spot forming. Hiking through the small pain is a sure way to get a much more painful blister to form. Perhaps it’s time to take a break. Take off your boots and

*See Blisters continued on page 7*

**Blisters** *continued from page 6*

maybe even your socks and let your feet cool off and socks dry out while you take a well-deserved lunch or snack break. Even better is to soak your hot spot in a cool stream or pond. The time you take enjoying a break will be well worth the time. You can't hike fast with painful blisters!

If a blister forms anyway it's time to get down to some serious first aid. It's not going to get better on it's own and continuing to hike on it will turn your foot into raw hamburger. If the blister has filled with fluid you need to assess if you think it will rupture or rip open if you continue to hike on it. Left alone it could rip open in such a way that it will tear the skin causing bleeding, expose the unprotected thin layer of skin below that can't handle the friction of hiking, and will turn into a gaping wound, exposing you to infections.

If you think it is not severe enough to pop or rip open you can pad it to protect against further damage. First, clean with soap and water or an antiseptic wipe just in case it does open, to avoid infection. You can use moleskin, special blister bandages, or simply pad it with a sterile dressing and then cover with a breathable athletic or medical tape to hold in place. The ideal technique involves cutting a donut-shaped hole in a piece of moleskin (a thick, adhesive-backed, padded bandage) and applying it so that the blister is protected within the hole of the donut opening. Another piece of moleskin or padded bandage is placed on top to seal it in place and pad it from further pressure. There are other types of blister bandages, such as second skin, also available from a pharmacy, which might work well, too.

Personally I don't find any of the blister bandage products like mole skin and the like very good at staying in place for long hikes so I usually add an additional layer of breathable athletic tape over top of  
See *Blisters continued on page 8*



PaPa Smurf

*“If the blister has filled with fluid you need to assess if you think it will rupture or rip open if you continue to hike on it.”*

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*“The ideal technique involves cutting a donut-shaped hole in a piece of moleskin....”*

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*“It’s really a trade-off of possible infection versus uncontrolled ripping of the skin over the blister.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

*“Hopefully you never have to deal with blisters but it usually happens to most of us at one time or another.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

**Blisters** *continued from page 7*

the blister padding to keep it from coming unstuck and moving around. In severe cases I’ve even been known to put duct tape over top to keep it in place, though, this is not ideal because it doesn’t breathe. In a pinch, if you don’t have anything else, I have had good success with just padding the blister area with toilet paper and wrapping duct tape on top.

If the blister looks like it’s going to tear anyway, or the pain caused by pressure on the fluid-filled blister is causing too much pain to walk on it, don’t be afraid to drain the blister before applying first aid. If it’s going to rip anyway it’s much safer to drain it carefully to leave the covering skin intact and minimize the entry area for possible infection, and consequently, the drained blister will be much less painful. It’s really a trade-off of possible infection versus uncontrolled ripping of the skin over the blister. Clean the area well with a disinfectant wipe. Then, using a clean disinfected sewing needle, safety pin, or knife gently pierce the blister, then massage the fluid out. Leave the skin that covers the blister intact. Cover the wound in antibiotic ointment to help prevent infection and bandage as described above.

Hopefully you never have to deal with blisters but it usually happens to most of us at one time or another. If you find you always get hot spots or blisters in the same spot try performing some prophylactic protection. Before your next hike, simply tape over the blister prone spot with athletic tape ahead of time. It’s cheap insurance and works very well. Tape that toe or heel before the hot spot even forms. For problems between the toes you might also consider silicone toe caps or sleeves that slip over your problem toe to avoid blisters.

*See Blisters continued on page 9*



**Blisters** *continued from page 8*

Now take a minute to go through your first aid kit and make sure it's stocked with a couple of Band-Aids, blister padding, tape, disinfectant or alcohol wipes, antibiotic ointment and a sewing needle. Good luck out on the trails.

~PaPa Smurf

(If you have a suggestion for future topics or a hike-related question you would like covered in this column send a note to [john.klebes@gmail.com](mailto:john.klebes@gmail.com))



Book Review:

## **The Last Traverse**

by Ty Gagne

Book Review by Lori Tisdell

I looked forward with great interest to reading *The Last Traverse; Tragedy and Resilience in the Winter Whites* by Ty Gagne. A book detailing the White Mountain winter rescue and recovery of James Osborne and Fred Fredrickson. This is Gagne's follow-up book to *Where You'll Find Me: Risk, Decisions, and the Last Climb of Kate Matrosova*, also about a winter rescue in the White Mt's. *The Last Traverse* takes place in February 2008 on the Franconia Ridge Hike that includes Little Haystack, Lincoln, and Lafayette. It is on the National Geographic list – "World's Best Hikes: 20 Dream Trails" and is arguably one of the most popular hikes in the White's due to its spectacular views and mile and a half plus above tree-line ridge walk. A winter hike of the ridge is among the most spectacular in the White's and sought after by many White Mt. hikers.

Most of the PVHC club members I hike with regularly have hiked the Franconia Ridge. I have been up there a few times but only in perfect weather conditions and in the summer. This book recounts the experiences of two hikers on a winter hike in the worst possible weather conditions and the decisions that led to their being stranded on the ridge. Part of Gagne's inspiration for writing the book was his own experience hiking the Franconia Ridgeline in less-than-optimal conditions 8 days before Osborne and Fredrickson's mishap. Gagne acknowledges he could have had a similar fate.

In describing the hike and the decisions Fredrickson and Osborne made as weather conditions deteriorated that day Gagne remains non-judgmental while analyzing those decisions. It is one of the reasons I appreciate Gagne's books so much. So many of us have been on hikes  
See *The Last Traverse* continued on page 11

*"Most of the PVHC club members I hike with regularly have hiked the Franconia Ridge."*

*~ Lori Tisdell*

*The Last Traverse* continued from page 10

where we had to make decisions about whether we should continue or turn back. The analysis of the reasoning behind decision making abilities helps to see how we can make better decisions in challenging circumstances.

In the case of Osborne and Fredrickson's, as well as Gagne's, experience on Franconia Ridge, there was a less experienced hiker and a veteran one. Oftentimes we will defer to the perceived expert in the group. But the expert can have his or her own preconceived notions of how a hike will play out based on previous experiences. Fredrickson had solo hiked Franconia Ridge in challenging weather conditions the prior week and had completed the hike without issue. This played into the decision to keep going despite warnings from other hikers coming down that it was not a good day to be on the ridge.

Though we know early on that one hiker survives and one does not, it makes for a gripping account of the hiker's hours long overnight stranding on the mountain in a severe snowstorm with high winds and freezing temperatures, and their efforts to save themselves. It wasn't until the next day that co-workers discovered them to be missing and rescue volunteers began the search. The N.H. Fish and Game, Mountain Rescue Service, Pemigewasset Valley Search and Rescue and National Guard Blackhawk pilots were all dispatched to find Osborne and Fredrickson.

When the rescuers set out the storm was still raging. They hiked up the mountain in these terrible conditions to the ridgeline three miles and three thousand feet up. Meanwhile a Blackhawk helicopter was making its way to the ridgeline. The story of finding the hikers is an edge of your seat read. The description of the two light landings on Little Haystack in gale force winds in the dark made by the amazing pilots of the Blackhawk helicopter to pick up victims and rescuers is gripping.

I highly recommend *The Last Traverse* to anyone who hikes in these  
See *The Last Traverse* continued on page 12

*"The analysis of the reasoning behind decision making abilities helps to see how we can make better decisions in challenging circumstances."*

*~ Lori Tisdell*

*"The story of finding the hikers is an edge of your seat read."*

*~ Lori Tisdell*



*“It is also for anyone interested in reading a true-life story of heartbreak as well as astonishing resilience in the face of insurmountable odds.”*

*~ Lori Tisdell*

**The Last Traverse** *continued from page 11*

mountains. It is also for anyone interested in reading a true-life story of heartbreak as well as astonishing resilience in the face of insurmountable odds. And portrays the undeniable dedication, courage and selflessness of the volunteer rescuers who put their own lives at risk to save others.

As a search and rescue volunteer, risk management expert and White Mt hiker, Ty Gagne is especially suited to tell this story. And he does so in a way that makes it relatable, riveting, without judgment and teaches us to learn better decision-making skills in our own hiking adventures.

--Lori Tisdell

Book Review:

**Forest Bathing Retreat: Find Wholeness in the Company of Trees**

by Hannah Fries

Book Review by Dick Forrest



It's kind of ironic that I am reviewing a book about forest bathing and finding wholeness in the company of trees and that my last name is Forrest. By nature, I'm not a treehugger but I am a lover of trees. And like the words on a tee shirt that I bought in Bar Harbor, Maine: May The Forest Be With You

Forest Bathing Retreat is a delightful little book (it measures 6 in. x 6 in.). It's written by a poet from western Massachusetts. The book is not scientific, though it alludes to some scientific studies, but is primarily both poetic and spiritual in nature. The author, Hannah Fries, says in her book: "This book, however, is for those who love the company of trees." It's beautifully illustrated and has numerous quotes from famous writers/poets and some poems from well-known poets in it.

The book is divided into four sections: Breathe, Connect, Heal, give Thanks. From those four headings you get a sense of what the book is about. The term "forest bathing" (known in Japanese as "shinrin yoku") was coined by the Japanese government in the 1980's. It refers to the therapeutic benefits, both physical and spiritual, of being in the company of trees, and, at the same time, removed from the stresses imposed upon us by our urban environments.

This book intentionally has a spiritual feel to it. The first section, "Breathe," is about being "in the present" among the trees of the forest. It has a Zen Buddhist quality to it and a Shinto (animistic) quality to it. By being in tune with nature among the trees of the forest, you experience "the joy and healing power of nature."

From this book I have learned a number of words which I've never encountered before: **psithurism** - the sound of wind in the trees and  
See *Forest Bathing Retreat* continued on page 14

*"This book, however, is for those who love the company of trees."*

~ Hannah Fries

*"This book intentionally has a spiritual feel to it."*

~ Dick Forrest



**Forest Bathing Retreat** *continued from page 13*

rustling of leaves; **petrichor** – the smell of earth after rain; **komorebi** (Japanese) – sunlight filtering through the leaves of trees; **dendrophile** – someone who loves trees and forests; **frondescence** – the time at which a plant or tree unfurls its leaves; **phytoncides** – antimicrobial chemicals given off by plants in the air to defend against harmful insects and germs; **solivagant** – a solitary wanderer; **waldeinsamkeit** (German) – the feeling of being alone in the woods; **yugen** (Japanese) – a profound awareness, beyond words, of the universe’s beauty and mystery.

*“As hikers, we naturally feel many of the things that this book talks about.”*

*~ Dick Forrest*

As hikers, we naturally feel many of the things that this book talks about. We hear the birds and other sounds of life in the woods, the rustle of leaves from the wind in the trees, and feelings of a connection to wilderness, as well as a closeness with our fellow hikers. As hikers, we instinctively feel that we have to repeatedly get back into the woods where we feel alive. We hike to stay healthy and to be whole. Hannah Fries writes about a Vietnamese Buddhist monk who is famous for his “walking meditation.” Like him, our walks in the woods are our form of forest bathing, whether we realize it or not.

Finally, I like this quote from the author, Hannah Fries:

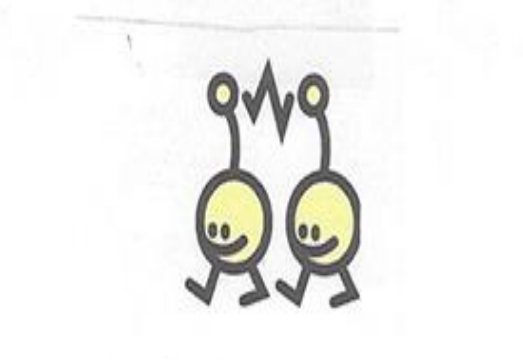
May the readings in this book draw you to the woods, remind you of the sensory experiences you encounter there, and encourage you to find your own wholeness and wildness among the trees.

--Dick Forrest

# Northeast Mountain Puzzle Game

by Shari Cox

Name the three northeast mountains below (from the White Mts. of New Hampshire):



Answers: (Top to Bottom) Pierce, Hale, Twins



# A Blast from the Past

Photo by Shari Cox



## **Fun Pin Awards for Completing Hikes**

PVHC has started a new Fun Pin Award for participating in hikes with the club. There are three pins that members can earn:

1. **10 Hikes with PVHC**
2. **10 Mountains/Summits with PVHC**
3. **10 Trails with PVHC**

There is no double or triple dipping. One hike can be used for just one hike or summit or trail. You can count weekly hikes, summits or trails more than once if you do them on different dates. Examples - the Monday Morning hike can be used several times in the hikes log as long as you do them on different dates, Mt Holyoke can be listed several times as long as it is hiked on different dates, same with trails.

We hope you have fun hiking with PVHC and earning your Pins!

The logs for each pin are posted on the club website. Once completed you may turn it in at a club meeting for your pin award.

## **Slide Show Photos**

Please send all slide show photos for the 2021 PVHC Holiday Party multimedia slide show to the following email address:  
pvhcpictures@gmail.com

## Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

### Sept Renewals

Sharon Buika  
Shari Cox  
JoAnne Gebski  
Lani Giguere  
Lisa Golob  
Cindy Hibert  
Carolyn Keefe  
Laurie Mahoney  
Martin and Meg Schoenmann  
Ann VanDyke

### Oct Renewals

Janet Beach  
Isabella Forest  
John & Regina Fortune  
Barbara Graf  
Lisa Grenier  
Betty Lempke  
Marco Louvitakis  
Karen Markham  
Maria Rocco  
Janine Roberts  
Al Roman  
Marcy Thomas

### Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Jim E. Brown, President  
Erin Squires, Vice President  
Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer  
Sandy Segó, Secretary  
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

### Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Jim E. Brown & other club members  
Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs  
Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman  
Club Website Editor: Dick Forrest  
Non-Member E-mail Coordinator: Rob Schechtman  
Club E-mail Coordinator: Jim E. Brown  
Quartermaster: Mike Carrier  
*Bootprints* Newsletter Editor: Dick Forrest

*Bootprints* is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Please email your story/event contributions to Dick Forrest at: [dforrest@charter.net](mailto:dforrest@charter.net)

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

#### July

Matthew Dinatel  
Denise Lauze  
Alexander Nee  
Bill Wright  
Amy Cohen  
Diane Berg  
Andrea Dustin

#### August

Stephanie Bustos  
Linda Chastain  
Dave Giese  
Kara Knott  
Carol Geoffrey  
Lou (Lutze) Lomet

Please renew early, and renew by mail. (Make checks payable to PVHC) Mail your renewal with your name and any address or phone number changes to:

Peggy Tibbitt  
413 South Gulf Rd.  
Belchertown, MA 01007  
(Dues are \$15 member, \$25 family, and \$10 for students)



**UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS**

- Mondays Morning hike
- Tuesdays Morning bike, evening hike
- Thursdays Morning hike
- Saturdays Morning hike
- Sundays Morning hike
- Sept 7 (MA) Club Meeting
- Oct 5 (MA) Club Meeting
- PVHC <https://teamup.com/kszb8qkqbizhndt3qjt7>
- Schedule of Events

# IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:

September 7, 2021, 7 p.m. at **FBC**  
October 5, 2021, 7 p.m. at **FBC**

**FBC - First Baptist Church, 337 Piper Road, West Springfield**

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is October 20, 2021

**\*\* Check out our club website at:**  
[www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org](http://www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org)

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to:  
[pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com](mailto:pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com)



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A publication of the  
**Pioneer Valley Hiking Club**  
P.O. Box 225  
West Springfield, MA 01090-0225

