



# A Special April Supplement of Feetprints

## **Busy Beavers Wreak Havoc with Bog Bridge**

by Castor Canadensis  
Associated Press

Southwick, MA - A busy colony of beavers took it out on a 250-foot long, 5-foot wide, newly assembled bog bridge in Southwick, Massachusetts, this past month. The bog bridge was assembled by Pioneer Valley Hiking Club with the assistance of crew members from the Appalachian Mountain Club. The bog bridge is located on the first section in Massachusetts of the New England Trail (formerly, the M & M Trail).

The beavers built a dam right next to the bog bridge. And with the spring runoff, the beaver dam is preventing the bog bridge from rising with the water level, as intended. Consequently, the bog bridge is underwater and will remain that way until the  
*See Busy Beavers continued on page 4*

## **Two PVHC Members Offer Dance Lessons**

by Bruno Tonioli  
DWTS Judge

"Dancing with the Stars" has nothing on PVHC members Gina Geck and John Fortune, mind you. Surprising several other PVHC members on a recent hike, they have teamed up to offer dance lessons "on snowshoes." PVHC member Rick Ricci documented some of their signature moves (see photos on page 5). DWTS Judge Carrie Ann Inaba: "First, Gina goes down, then sits on the ground in a upright position, then John  
*See Dance Lessons continued on page 4*

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## Featured Club Member: The Human Toboggan

by Ed Marrone

*"It all happened so fast  
that I didn't have any  
time to react."*

*~ Ed Marrone*

Yes, call me "The Human Toboggan," and let me tell you how I got that moniker. I was hiking in Monroe State Forest on the Dunbar Brook Trail. Several PVHC members were on this hike - we started hiking along a side-hill path about 40 feet above Dunbar Brook. The trail conditions were snowy and icy. I was about the fourth person hiking down the trail, a few minutes into the hike, when all of a sudden, my foot slipped on a patch of ice on the trail, I took a 90-degree turn facing downhill, landing on my day pack, and then started to pick up speed while lying back on my pack going down the steep hill. It all happened so fast that I didn't have any time to react. I just missed a large tree about half way down the hill. And I hit the bottom of the steep incline, where it leveled off and where the brook was frozen. I didn't get hurt, but it shook me up a little. It also spooked some

*See Human Toboggan continued on page 4*

## "The White Mountain Sampler" to Change Name to "The Whitman Sampler"

by Allen Goodmind

*"...the new club event  
will be called The Whit-  
man Sampler, a choco-  
late-eating contest."*

*~ Allen Goodmind*

PVHC has decided to change the name of "The White Mountain Sampler" hiking event to "The Whitman Sampler." It's been noted in recent years that PVHC members are getting older. Therefore, the club leaders no longer want to focus all club activities exclusively on hiking. So, in that vein, the new club event will be called The Whitman Sampler, a chocolate-eating contest. The club member attending the event who eats the most chocolates in one sitting will be declared the winner. Club members will still be going up to North Conway, New Hampshire, every June, but the only coupons available to our members this year will be for the Bavarian Chocolate Haus in North Conway.

– Allen Goodmind

## Hike Local/Eat International – Scotland

by Cindy and Gary Dolgoff

After a brief hike in Northampton, MA, club members are invited to the Dolgoff house for a hearty meal of haggis, Scotland's national dish.

From Wikipedia:

Haggis is a savoury pudding containing sheep's pluck; minced with onion, oatmeal, suet, spices, and salt, mixed with stock, traditionally encased in the animal's stomach, though now often in an artificial casing instead.

Cindy will be cooking haggis for the first time – unfortunately, we couldn't find a Scottish restaurant nearby. Haggis: a mix of sheep's innards, oatmeal and spices, all wrapped up in a sheep stomach – yum!

More from Wikipedia:

Although the name "hagws" or "hagese" was first used in England c. 1430, the dish came to be considered traditionally Scottish, even the national dish, as a result of Scots poet Robert Burns' poem, "Address to a Haggis," of 1787. Haggis is traditionally served with "neeps and tatties", boiled and mashed separately, and a dram (a glass of Scotch whisky), especially as the main course of a Burns supper.

Neeps and tatties? Those are turnips and potatoes. We'll be serving those, too, but most especially drams of Scotch whisky.

Gary is game for anything edible, and is salivating, as I write, and dreaming about eating haggis. Please sign up early for this fabulous and delicious, uniquely Scottish meal, as space is limited.

- Cindy and Gary Dolgoff

*"Haggis: a mix of sheep's innards, oatmeal and spices, all wrapped up in a sheep stomach – yum!"*  
~ Cindy and Gary Dolgoff



*"We might have to trap those damn beavers and find them a new home."*

*~ PVHC President  
Chip Pray*

*"PVHC member Harry Allen also chimed in: '1,2,3 o'clock, 4 o'clock, rock!'"*

*~ Bruno Tonioli, DWTS Judge*

*"Now I am gearing up for the 2018 U.S. National Toboggan Championships in Camden, Maine."*

*~ Ed Marrone*

***Busy Beavers*** continued from page 1

water level goes down to previous water levels when the bog was relatively dry.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club President Chip Pray was reached for comment: "Every time I go down to the bog, a beaver will menacingly slap its tail on the water. I'm going to lodge a complaint with the town of Southwick. We might have to trap those damn beavers and find them a new home."

Evidently, those irate beavers must have thought: "We'll see who's the boss of our bog, damn it..."

- Castor Canadensis, AP

***Dance Lessons*** continued from page 1

pulls her to her feet, they each display some incredible footwork on snowshoes, and then John goes down to the ground and makes a snow angel. Sensational! Bravo! My score is a 10!" PVHC member Harry Allen also chimed in: "1,2,3 o'clock, 4 o'clock, rock!" Tom Bergeron of DWTS also joked about Gina and John going head to head against other dance couples, saying, "They are so good, things could get ugly for the other contestants." If you have any interest in learning modern or ballroom dancing techniques on snowshoes, contact either Gina or John immediately, while the snow lasts.

- Bruno Tonioli, DWTS Judge—**(See Dance Lesson Photos on Page 5)**

***Human Toboggan*** continued from page 2

others on the hike, who quickly turned around and left the trail. After this incident, I continued hiking, as if nothing had happened.

Now I am gearing up for the 2018 U.S. National Toboggan Championships in Camden, Maine. The 2017 event has already taken place, but I did not enter that event. I need to get in a few practice runs before next year's competition. I'm going out to Dunbar Brook as soon as I can, while it's still icy. Would anyone like to join me? It will be a trip. - Ed Marrone

## PVHC Dance Instructors in Action! (photos by Rick Ricci)



The dance starts with Gina in a sitting position in the snow.



Gina is next brought to an upright position by John.



Gina and John display slick dance moves on snowshoes. Look closely at John as he exudes confidence.



The dance concludes with John doing a snow angel. What a magnificent display of form and grace!

## Selected Hiking Quotes

1. "Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity." ~ John Muir
2. "There are two kinds of climbers, those who climb because their heart sings when they're in the mountains, and all the rest." ~ Alex Lowe
3. "Walking: the most ancient exercise and still the best modern exercise." ~ Carrie Latet
4. "May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds." ~ Edward Abbey
5. "Now I see the secret of making the best person, it is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth." ~ Walt Whitman
6. "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like falling leaves." ~ John Muir
7. "One step at a time is good walking." ~ Chinese proverb
8. "I dressed and went for a walk - determined not to return until I took in what Nature had to offer." ~ Raymond Carver
9. "With beauty before me, may I walk  
 With beauty behind me, may I walk  
 With beauty above me, may I walk  
 With beauty below me, may I walk  
 With beauty all around me, may I walk  
 Wandering on the trail of beauty, may I walk."  
 ~ Navajo: Walking Meditation
10. "Walking is a man's best medicine." ~ Hippocrates



**UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS**

- Every Mon. (MA) Monday Morning Hikes w/ Chip
- Every Thurs. (MA) Thursday Morning Hikes w/ Harry
- Every Thurs. (MA) Ashley Reservoir Evenings w/ Erin
- Apr 1 (MA) April Fool's Hike - Good Luck!
- Apr 8 (NYC) Bus Trip
- Apr 15 (CT) Your taxes are due!
- Apr 22 (NH) Awards Banquet
- Apr 29 (MA) Trail Maintenance - Hooray for EB's!
- May 6 (CT) AT and Mohawk Trail
- May 13 (CT) Watch out for the Sleeping Giant!
- May 20 (VT) 11 miles on the AT!

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:  
Apr. 4, 2017, 7 p.m. at **FBC**  
May 2, 2017, 7 p.m. at **FBC**

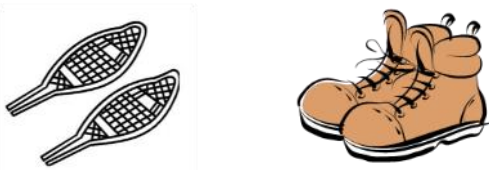
**FBC - First Baptist Church, 337 Piper Road, West Springfield**

This issue of *Footprints* is dedicated to my Mentor-in-Jest, John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes, former *Footprints* Editor ~ Dick Lost & In the Forest

Deadline for submissions to the next *Bootprints* is April 20, 2017

**\*\* Check out our web page 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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