

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

Pandemic Silver Linings and the New Hampshire 48s

by Acting President Jeanne Kaiser

Throughout the time of the pandemic, I have tried to be aware of the silver linings to the restrictions on our daily lives. For instance, I love to eat in restaurants, but I haven't been to a restaurant since March 1st. Silver lining — I am cooking a lot more and enjoying the farm share I never would have purchased back in the Before Times. You get the picture.

My highlight silver lining for 2020 came the week of the August 2nd. My original plan (remember plans) was to be hiking in British Columbia for the week. I instead traveled to the White Mountains with the tentative plan to finish my New Hampshire 48. I have never been quiet about my ambivalence about hiking all 48 of the 4,000 foot mountains in New Hampshire. I think I had hiked close to 40 of them before I finally committed to completing them. Nonetheless, I finally, once and for all, renounced the project in 2019, halfway up Mt. Isolation, on the obnoxious Rocky Branch trail. I decided to call it a day at 46.5 of the 48s.

But something about pandemic life made me think that trying again was a good idea. And it was. First, it was great to have something to train for throughout the pandemic summer. Next, I had forgotten just how beautiful the White Mountains are. Still, I did have to get up my nemesis mountain – Isolation - before I could finish on Mt. Moriah. Sandy Sego, Peggy Tibbett, and Cindy Hibert joined me on the condition that I wouldn't quit again part way through. I admit it crossed my mind once or twice during the hike. We had a memorable adventure scrambling over "the Monster," battling the wind, the mud, the water, the rocks, the branches, the gravity. Twelve hours later, all I had left was Moriah.

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Sept, 2020

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Moriah is a great mountain for finishing the 48s. It has glorious views and by White Mountains standards is "not horrible." We had perfect weather. I was truly touched by the club members who came along for the hike and celebrated with me. I appreciated that Lori Tisdell, who got me into this whole 48 nonsense in the first place, abandoned her own stated claim that she was finished with the 48s, and came along. It wouldn't have been the same without her. Gina came, too, even though the pandemic prevented her from training the way she normally would. Of course, being Gina, she stole some spotlight when we ran into a celebrity 48er who offered her a special patch for doing the 48s over age 70.

Finishing the 48s has really made me reflect on how much the PVHC has meant to me. I met every single person who came to the Whites with me through the PVHC. These are some of the best people I know. I don't know where I would be without them. So the silver lining to unexpectedly becoming club president, during a pandemic no less, is that it puts me in a position to help keep the club running during this very uncertain period. I know that not every organization is going to survive this period, but I believe we will.

I hope that everyone will do something to help keep us running during this period. If you can lead a hike — please do — we need you now more than ever. Not everyone will feel comfortable leading or even participating in group events right now. If you can't do that, please try something to keep our connection going. Contribute an article to *Bootprints*. Send me a link to hiking and nature-related, virtual events and I will send them out with the hiking emails. Use your computer skills to help set up a new hike scheduling system. Participate in our zoom meetings. I can't wait until we are back to "normal." In the meantime, let's all do what we can.

- Jeanne Kaiser

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~ Jeanne Kaiser

Silver Linings

by Sandy Sego

When I was at the grocery today, I saw a woman with a mask that said "2020 sucks." I could relate. Everyone can relate.

I remember back in February, when one of my colleagues and I were complaining about how that month was going by so slowly; the whole year had seemed to crawl by. Little did we know what was awaiting us in March, when that month would take 87 years, 11 months, 29 days, 23 hours, 54 minutes, and 37 seconds.

The United States hasn't suffered a pandemic in 100 years. We were not prepared; we didn't know what to do or how to react. Everyone was stuck at home and afraid to go outside. It felt like we were living in some post-apocalyptic science fiction world. We cancelled movies, travel plans, milestone events, even sports.

But we persevered. People learned new things – how to bake bread. Home projects were completed. We recognized that others were struggling with the same siren call of the refrigerator as we struggled with the COVID 10 or maybe COVID 20. And people shared amazing things they were doing. Running marathons in their backyards. Parodying songs about the pandemic. Becoming woke to the inequalities in our society. Learned to appreciate people who are working at hospitals, groceries, and other places that stayed open.

And I think we started to learn to appreciate little things again. Things that we normally overlook or opportunities that we were presented with because the year became so weird. I was far more excited than usual to see the spring flowers. Friends took on projects around the house, organizing photos, painting rooms, families had dinner together, spent less money on gas, didn't have to deal with that long commute to the office, and reconnected with old friends.

I have seen a shift in how people relate to each other. We are more patient when we need to be. We are more empathetic. No one gets See Silver Linings continued on page 4

"The United States hasn't suffered a pandemic in 100 years. We were not prepared; we didn't know what to do or how to react."

~ Sandy Sego

"And I think we started to learn to appreciate little things again."

~ Sandy Sego



Silver Linings continued from page 3

upset when a dog barks or a child cries in the background of a Zoom meeting. We all understand that each and every person is struggling. We try to help.

I think many of us have come to realize how lucky we are. If you have your health, your family, if you have kept your job. And we have an extensive network of friends through the hiking club - it has certainly helped me. Getting outside in nature is a great way to lower your anxiety, relax, and feel more positive about the world. Going hiking, and seeing people who don't live in the same four walls as you, can be a great thing. And many of us got to know the trails in our backyards better. We followed trails we hadn't been on, and found new and exciting things.

So take a few minutes to look for the silver linings to the pandemic: Less traffic; not dressing up for work; fewer colds; cooking a new dish; more walks with the dog; learning to bake bread; going on more hikes than usual; organizing a closet or bookshelf; exploring trails, supporting a local restaurant by ordering take-out more than usual; or seeing one of your friends (finally) finish the 48.

Being grateful and recognizing the positive things in our lives can really change how we see the world. I encourage everyone to think about the good things that have happened this year. Maybe they were small things, but they were meaningful. And these things might not have happened if it were "normal."

Sandy Sego

"So take a few minutes to look for the silver linings to the pandemic:..." ~Sandy Sego

"Being grateful and recognizing the positive things in our lives can really change how we see the world."

~ Sandy Sego

Smurfy advice for the trail...

The Ten Essentials for Hiking/ Backpacking

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

[Editorial note: This article has been previously published in *Bootprints* and a link to it is on our club website at pioneervalleyhikingclub.org.]

The "Ten Essentials" is a list of items that can save your life in the event of an outdoor emergency. In the 1930s, the Mountaineers, a Seattle-based hiking, climbing, and conservation organization, came up with a list of 10 essential items that no climber should be without. The list started showing up in training programs in the 1940s and 1950s, and has since become the standard starting point for hikers to guard against the unexpected.

Over the years this list, and many similar lists, have been passed on to new hikers as an essential insurance policy against the unexpected. You will not use these items on every trip but at some point during your hiking adventures you will be glad you have them along.

- 1. **Map** A map not only tells you where you are and how far you have to go, it can help you find campsites, water, and an emergency exit route in case of an accident or foul weather.
- 2. **Compass** and the ability to use it. A compass can help you find your way through unfamiliar terrain— especially in bad weather where you can't see the landmarks. Of course, it will not do much good if you don't know how to use it so take the time to learn some map and compass skills.
- 3. **Water** and a way to purify it. Without enough water, your

"The "Ten Essentials" is a list of items that can save your life in the event of an outdoor emergency."

~ PaPa Smurf

See Ten Essentials continued on page 6



Ten Essentials continued from page 5

body's muscles don't perform as well: You'll be susceptible to hypothermia and altitude sickness, not to mention the misery of raging thirst. Bring a minimum of 2 quarts and it's a good idea to carry a purification system such as iodine tablets or a filter to re-supply should you run short.

- 4. **Extra Food** Any number of things could keep you out longer than expected: a lengthy detour, getting lost, an injury, difficult terrain. A few ounces of extra food will help keep up energy and morale, and feed your internal furnace to ward off hypothermia.
- 5. **Rain Gear and extra clothing** Because the weather can change at anytime, especially above treeline, bring along extra layers. You should avoid cotton, and always carry a hat.
- 6. **First Aid Kit** and the knowledge to use it. In addition to the basics you should also include moleskin or blister care kit, and include an extra day's worth of any medications you are taking or might need in an emergency. Also, allergy and bee sting kits if you need them. At least one person in the group should have a larger kit that includes a SAM split to immobilize a broken bone. Remember to replace anything you use during a trip so you have it again for the next trip. (Some people also include things like a little rope, safety pins, needle and thread, and duct tape to make emergency repairs)
- 7. **Flashlight** or headlamp, with spare bulb and batteries. For finding you're way in the dark and signaling for help. I like to bring a very small, spare flashlight instead of spare bulb and batteries. This way you don't have to try and change a bulb in the dark, and if you lose your main light you have a spare.
- 8. **Pocketknife** A pocketknife is the most useful tool you can own. It can cut strips of cloth into bandages, remove splinters, and perform a whole host of repairs on malfunctioning gear not to mention cut cheese and open cans.

See Ten Essentials continued on page 7

Ten Essentials continued from page 6

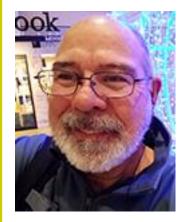
- 9. **Waterproof Matches and Firestarter.** The warmth of a fire and a hot drink can help prevent an encounter with hypothermia. And fires are a great way to signal for help if you get lost.
- 10. **Sun Protection** such as sunscreen, lip balm, and sunglasses. Especially above treeline when there is a skin-scorching combination of sun and snow, you'll need sunglasses to prevent snow blindness, and sunscreen to prevent sunburn.

Other Essentials - As with any list, everyone has their favorite additions. Here's mine:

- High intensity whistle
- Insect Repellent
- Note pad and pen or pencil
- Emergency blanket or a few plastic garbage bags
- 50' of cord
- Toilet Paper

Hike Participant's Responsibilities: In addition to the "Ten Essentials" each participant must take the responsibility of assessing his/her own abilities against the intended activity. Proper clothing, footwear, gear, etc. must be used to ensure adequate safety and comfort for all. If you have any questions about a trip, please call the trip coordinator for further information. Your preparation will ensure a safe and enjoyable trip for all. Enjoy the great outdoors safely.

- PaPa Smurf



PaPa Smurf

"In addition to the "Ten Essentials" each participant must take the responsibility of assessing his/her own abilities against the intended activity."

~ PaPa Smurf



Snakebite!

by Dick Forrest/John A. Baldwin

"One of John's passions in his life is geocaching; in fact, he is a worldclass geocacher." ~ Dick Forrest [Editorial note: My first cousin, John Baldwin, a retired Episcopal minister, lives in Virginia Beach, Virginia. One of John's passions in his life is geocaching; in fact, he is a world-class geocacher. For those unfamiliar with geocaching, geocaching is an international, outdoor recreational activity where you use GPS coordinates to find various objects, which are often hidden from view but may also be in plain sight. They may be placed in the woods or on the back of a stop sign – they can be hidden anywhere in the world. Geocached items come in various sizes and shapes. Some are larger than a breadbox and some are as small as a fingertip. Usually they are containers of some sort that include a place to log in/or sign in on a piece of paper to verify that you've actually found the item. There are millions of geocached items throughout the world. Well, if you go to geocaching.com, John (his geocaching name: Episcodad) is close to the top of the list of geocachers in the state of Virginia, where he lives. He has over 30,000 geocached finds.

Well, John had an interesting day of geocaching, to say the least, at the beginning of August of this year. I'm going to let John tell you in his own words from his *Facebook* page of what happened to him on that fateful day.]

Dick Forrest

In John Baldwin's words from Facebook.

Forgive this long post, but I wanted to update my friends and family on recent impactful events in my life.

On Sunday, (8/2) I went up to Richmond, VA (about 2 hours away) for a lovely day of geocaching. The weather was beautiful, and I was having a great caching day, having found 21 caches before 11 am! While searching for my next cache on the Ashland Trolley Trail, I spied a likely See Snakebite continued on page 9

Snakebite continued from page 8

looking hole under a piece of concrete, and stuck my right hand in to see if I could find the cache. What I found was (apparently) a nest of baby copperheads; I didn't stick around to make a positive ID. I knew I'd been bitten by a snake immediately, but only felt the first bite. I was about ½ a mile from my car, so I booked it out of there, asking a passing cyclist the location of the nearest medical facility. I got in my car and started driving the 3 miles to the nearest urgent care. Unfortunately, after turning onto Route 1, my eyesight got very blurry, and I blacked out. I came to when I felt a BAM! Then another BAM! I'm told that one was a pole, but the other was a vehicle ahead of me – a car with four passengers. I don't remember seeing either, before or after the crash. Fortunately, no one was badly injured. I had a few scrapes and bruises, and the passengers from the other car seemed to be okay. Unfortunately, my car did not fare as well. (But more on that later.) The police and an ambulance arrived pretty quickly, and I was taken to a nearby hospital.

The trauma team seemed much more concerned about my injuries from the crash than the snakebite, so after a CT scan, blood tests, and a bunch of other tests and treatments, it was determined that I had no serious injuries. Well, except for having been bitten at least twice on my index and middle finger of my right hand by one or more copperheads. My fingers and hand had started to swell up at that point, and my hand was extremely painful. After the doctors consulted with poison control, I was admitted to the hospital for observation overnight. Since I hadn't actually seen the snakes, and couldn't be sure they were copperheads (but my symptoms all pointed that way) they held off on giving me any anti-venom serum.

The next order of business was to contact my wife, Ann, who was expecting me home for dinner. As luck would have it, since I was pretty dazed after the collision, I had left my cell phone (and glasses) in my totaled car, which had been towed off to who knows where. And you'd think I could give them her cell number to call her, but it seems that she was right, as she often told me, that relying on her number being in my cell phone and not in my memory was a problem. I did See Snakebite continued on page 10

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~ John Baldwin

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hand and fingers continued to swell and the pain kept getting worse."

"In the meantime, my

~ John Baldwin

"By Monday morning, my affected fingers, hand, and much of my arm were extremely swollen and the bitten fingers were looking very grotesque due to large blood blisters." ~ John Baldwin

Snakebite continued from page 9

manage to give them her email address, so that's how she found out where I was, several hours later, and what had happened.

In the meantime, my hand and fingers continued to swell and the pain kept getting worse. The nurses came in every couple of hours to measure my hand, and were regularly in contact with poison control. At 3 am, they decided it was time to administer the anti-venom serum, so they put it in my IV drip, and almost immediately, I started to get some relief from the pain.

Ann and my daughter, Ashley, drove up to Richmond the next morning, and went and cleaned everything out of my poor little car, and took pictures to show me. The hospital was only allowing one person to visit at a time, so they took turns, coming to my room, and tag teamed the many necessary phone calls to the insurance adjusters (one for liability, one for collision), our local insurance agent, the hospital billing department, and setting up appointments with my PCP and an orthopedic hand surgeon in Virginia Beach. Fortunately, the Ashland police had come and interviewed me the night before, and (one look at my hand!) determined that the crash was caused by a medical emergency, and I would not be charged with reckless driving. That, and knowing that the occupants of the other car didn't suffer any serious injuries, was a great relief!

By Monday morning, my affected fingers, hand, and much of my arm were extremely swollen and the bitten fingers were looking very grotesque due to large blood blisters. I will spare you pictures of my injuries, but anyone curious to see them, message me privately, and I'll send them. Apparently those in the medical profession find my injuries fascinating, because I've had a number of doctors approach me asking if I minded them taking pictures of my hand!

In the car ride home from Richmond, we discussed the purchase of a new / used car. Ann reminded me that every time I've lost / damaged a cell phone (and there may have been just a few such mishaps... mostly geocaching related, of course!) I would inherit Ann's old phone, as she See Snakebite continued on page 11

Snakebite continued from page 10

takes very good care of her things, and she would get the new one. Apparently this "replacement policy" applies to cars as well. I was informed that Ann's Ford Edge will be much better suited to transporting kayaks and bikes for future geocaching adventures. Apparently she had already been looking at car dealership websites.

Well we got back home by dinnertime, but both Ann & Ashley were concerned because even though my pain was very minimal, the hand continued to swell, so after consulting with my PCP (thank you, Dr. Eric Madren!) I went to Sentara Leigh Hospital ER to be checked out. Poison control was again consulted and after some tests, I was given the all clear to go home and wait for Hurricane Isaias.

I'm told that it may take at least a month or more to fully recover and regain use of my hand. I am now figuring out how to navigate the world with only one hand, and my non-dominant hand at that. There are lots of challenges, but with the help of my devoted family, I'm managing. As you may have figured out already, typing on a computer isn't feasible at this point. How fortunate I am to have such a sweet, helpful, witty, verbose and thoughtful wife to write my posts

for me. [©]
— John A. Baldwin

[Editorial note: The following quote was in an email (about 1 month after the snakebite) from John's wife, Ann: "John's hand is coming along very nicely - he's being diligent about doing his hand exercises in order to hopefully regain full use of all his fingers. The hand is still quite swollen, but he's getting good range of motion in his index finger, although the middle finger (which we think got bitten multiple times) doesn't show as much progress. Hopefully, time and hand therapy will help with that."]



John's totaled car



John with his birthday cake which reads: "70 years of crashin cars & wranglin snakes!"

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 2020 PVHC Holiday Party multimedia slide show to the following email address: pvhcpictures@gmail.com

Acting President Jeanne Kaiser requested that members contribute to *Bootprints* by telling the club about their favorite hikes. Here's a member's response:

I found a trail not on the map of the Holyoke Range State Park. If you start from Harris Mt. Road and go over summit of Long Mt. on the Metacomet Trail then continue down toward Mt. Norwottuck and keep bearing to the right on all trail intersections, some are not marked, it will take you back to Harris Mt. Road within 50 or a 100 ft. from where you started. I think the loop is about 3 miles. I thought that this would a nice hike to add to our club's list of hikes. Thanks and happy trails.

- - Dan Harrington

Important PVHC Notice

This is a copy of our club's release form as it relates to our Covid-19 pandemic. It's required of all members who wish to participate in clubsponsored activities. It must be **electronically sent (and signed)** to our treasurer, Erin Squires at pvhctreasure@gmail.com, to be placed on file with her, before you can go on any club hikes. You can find an online copy at: http://pioneervalleyhikingclub.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/covid-agreement-final.pdf

PIONEER VALLEY HIKING CLUB

Post Office Box 225 West Springfield MA 01090-0225

THIS IS A RELEASE AND AGREEMENT. READ IT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGN-ING.

The Pioneer Valley Hiking Club ("PVHC") is a social and recreational club for people who enjoy participation in outdoor activities centered around hiking with others. Our officers and event leaders are enthusiastic amateurs who volunteer to serve without compensation. The event leader(s) will attempt to provide a good faith description of the event and its difficulty and will answer questions concerning it based on whatever level of personal knowledge the leader(s) may have. Leaders may deny the right to participate in the event to any person, including club members, if the leader has a good faith belief that the person's participation in the event will be unsafe or detract from the safety or enjoyment of other participants or the timely completion of the event or the person fails or refuses to sign this form. However, no representation is made that the PVHC or its members or leader (s)

have any particular level of knowledge, experience, training or ability with respect to this event or situations that may arise during it. Each participant in this and other PVHC events acknowledges his/her agreement with the statements made above and further acknowledges and agrees that each participant is responsible for his/her own safety, determination of fitness to participate in the event and determination of what food, water, clothing and equipment is necessary to safely participate in the event.

During the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, PVHC has imposed certain conditions upon individuals who wish to participate in club -sponsored activities. By signing this agreement, and participating in a PVHC sponsored event, individuals agree to adhere to the following rules:

-members will not participate in PVHC events if they know or believe they have an active covid-19 infection or symptoms of such an infection, or have been in recent contact with a person who has developed symptoms of, or

Release Form continued from page 13

-participants will adhere to social distancing guidelines during events when it's safely possible and not environmentally destructive to do so, including remaining a minimum of six feet from all other individuals; moving off the hiking trail when passing other groups and individuals; and avoiding all physical contact with non-household members at the event, except in an emergency.

- -participants will bring a face mask to all events to use in the event social distancing is not reasonably possible;
- -participants agree to notify the hike leader if after their participation in an event, they suffer symptoms of, or test positive, for Covid-19 or learn they have recently been in close contact with a person who has developed symptoms of, or tested positive for Covid-19.
- -participants agree to permit hike leaders to provide their name, contact information, and the fact of their participation, to contract tracers from a department of public health seeking to track infections of Covid-19.
- -participants will adhere to state and local government rules or recommendations for the area where the hike is taking place and all additional rules for individual events that may be imposed by the leader of the hike.

In consideration for the services of the PVHC and the event leader(s) in organizing this event, each participant hereby releases the event leader(s), the PVHC, its members, officers, agents,

servants, employees, volunteers and the other participants from any and all claims and liabilities, of every kind and nature, for bodily injury, personal injury, property damage or other form of loss or damage arising from or relating to any involvement in this event.

This agreement is valid for participation in all events between June 17
2020 and December 31,
2020.

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Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

Sept Renewals	Oct Renewals
Shari Cox	Janet Beach
Jane Garb	Lara & Lianne Zana Curtis
Debi Garlick	John & Regina Fortune
JoAnne Gebski	Jacki Gadbois
Lisa Golob	Barbara Graf
Cindy Hibert	Marco Louvitakis
Carolyn Keeffe	Karen Markham
Laurie Mahoney	Pamela Peck
Thomas Pedersen	Robert Pomeroy
Marty & Meg Schoene-	Martha Pomputuis
mann	Maria Rocco
	Al Roman
	Christopher & Sarah White
	Sharon Woodin

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:

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club
PO Box 225
West Springfield MA 01090-0225
(Dues are \$25 member, \$40 family, and \$15 for students)

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Jeanne Kaiser, Acting President

Erin Squires, Treasurer

Gina Geck, Secretary

Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Chip Pray & Jeanne Kaiser

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: Jeanne Kaiser

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

August

Patricia Davison

Joseph and Judith Haseltine

Dori Neuwirth Susan Quinlan Catherine Saltzgiver

Beth Willis

September

Dan Klimoski Ann VanDyke



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

Every Mon. (MA) Mornings w/ Chip

Every Tues. (MA) Evenings w/ Lori/Karen

Every Wed. (MA) Mornings w/ Deb &

Cheryl

Every Thurs. (MA) Mornings w/ Harry

(MA) Evenings w/ Erin

Oct 6 (MA) Club Meeting

(tentative)

Nov 3 (MA) Club Meeting

(tentative)

Dec I (MA) Club Meeting

(tentative)



IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:
October 6, 2020, 7 p.m. at **FBC**November 3, 2020, 7 p.m. at **FBC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next *Bootprints* is October 20, 2020

** Check out our club website at: www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com





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