

Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

Review of Club and Board Meetings-March, 2021 by President Jim E. Brown

Hi fellow hikers:

OK, so we've had a kickoff and Board meeting in February and a Club meeting in March. What have we been doing?

I came up with a program I call "Simplify & Expand." That's "Simplify how we do things yet Expand what we offer as a Club." To "simplify" is to revise our processes and logistics, so that running things will be easier in the future. To "expand" is to ensure we are viable in the future, particularly to attract and retain new members.

On the "Simplify" side, we have changed several steps the Treasurer takes, combined multiple member lists, started a team of calendar schedulers and revised multiple documents.

On the "Expand" side, we have added a weekly bike ride, a weekly kayak, a 30th anniversary promotion, and started discussions for more social time and formal walks.

Any and all ideas for either Simplify or Expand are not only welcome, they are encouraged!

Yours in hiking,

--Jim E. Brown, PVHC President

Volume 25, Issue 2 Mar, 2021

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- Upcoming Events ¹⁸ And The Usuals
- Important Notices ¹⁸

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PVHC President Jim E. Brown

"I feel it is important to preserve this Club and help it grow in the fu-ture, to be the best option in the area." ~ President Jim E. Brown

Featured Club Member: **Simplify and Expand** by President Jim E. Brown

Hi fellow hikers:

For those who don't know me, I have been a member for a number of years but started hiking weekly when I retired four years ago. The Club saved me - I had something planned every week, getting exercise and meeting terrific outdoorsy people. Many thanks to Harry Allen and the rest of the Thursday morning group!

The Club saved me again when the pandemic hit - I had people to hike and meet with on a regular basis. So, thank you to the Thursday morning "Pod"!

I feel it is important to preserve this Club and help it grow in the future, to be the best option in the area. It is one of several hiking clubs in Western Massachusetts, and even bicycling clubs are now offering winter hikes to keep their members active. COVID has set the stage for many people to start hiking and walking multiple days a week.

I came up with a program I call "Simplify & Expand." That's "Simplify how we do things yet Expand what we offer as a Club." To "simplify" is to revise our processes and logistics, so that running things will be easier in the future. To "expand" is to ensure we are viable in the future, particularly to attract and retain new members.

I have a lot of ideas (Yeah, I know, not all good ones.) If we continue to work together, support each other, and make incremental changes, this is the best option for outdoor exercise and fun in the region.

Yours in hiking,

Jim E. Brown PVHC President

A Letter from the PVHC Treasurer by Peggy Tibbitt

Dear PVHC Members,

Jim Brown asked that I write a letter describing my responsibilities as treasurer of the PVHC. The duties of the treasurer are what you would expect, but I also keep the official membership list and update the club directory. So if you change your contact information and especially your email address, please notify me by email at: <u>pvhctreasurer@qmail.com</u>

I am also starting to coordinate weekly Thurs. club hikes. If you're willing to lead occasional Thurs. hikes I'd love to hear from you.

I think the most pressing issue before the club right now is how to get back to planning hikes, esp. weekend hikes. But we can't do that unless we have people who will lead hikes. As the weather warms up and more people get vaccinated I think we will have more people wanting to hike. Right now there are just a few people who are leading weekend hikes. I know that many people have been hiking in private groups or solo during this past year and many of us have found new places to hike and some people who have not led club hikes have been leading small groups. It would be great to get back our seasoned leaders and welcome new leaders. I understand from some people that the need to wear a mask is an issue. I will say from my own experience that when the mask mandate in MA changed to require a mask even if you could keep 6 ft distance it was uncomfortable at first. But it really did not take me very long to get used to it. Glasses fogging up remains an issue and I'll be happy when the mask is no longer required, but it really isn't that terrible. If you are willing to lead a hike please send the hike info to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

I hope to see you on the trail soon.

Peggy Tibbitt PVHC Treasurer *"I think the most pressing issue before the club right now is how to get back to planning hikes, esp. weekend hikes."* ~ Peggy Tibbitt



Take Care of Yourself

by Sandy Sego

We hear a lot these days about self-care. And we should. It is just as important to take care of yourself as you take care of your family. It can be challenging to set aside time to do things for yourself. We may be busy with jobs, caring for family members, and helping others who depend on us. And many people feel guilty about taking time for themselves. They feel it is selfish.

But it isn't selfish to make sure that you are physically healthy. It isn't selfish to make sure that you can be mentally present for friends and family when they need you. Self-care can help keep us from being stressed, anxious, and depressed. So really, self-care is an investment in your well-being that benefits you and the people around you.

One of the big things that many of us need to work on in the self-care department is getting enough sleep. Establish a sleep routine. Try to go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning. Unplug from electronics. Engage in some relaxing activities before bed.

Exercise each day. Remember that exercise can boost your mood and reduce stress and anxiety. You don't have to go to the gym. You can walk, do yoga, anything that fits into your schedule. And you don't have to spend hours. Even short bursts of exercise show benefits to people's mental health.

Eat right. We all know we need to avoid junk food and highly processed foods. Try to get fresh food into your diet. Eat your fruits and veggies. If you can, cook at home. You may find that it can be a relaxing activity to help you after a long day at work. Even if you cook once a week, you can control the ingredients and make a healthy meal for yourself or your family.

Go outside. Recent research has shown that getting outside can help See Take Care of Yourself continued on page 5

"Self-care can help keep us from being stressed, anxious, and depressed." ~ Sandy Sego

Take Care of Yourself continued from page 4

reduce fatigue, lower stress, lower blood pressure, and even help you sleep better. If you are active when you are outside – hiking, gardening, biking – you are even more likely to sleep better.

Say no. (This is my favorite piece of advice.) While many of us feel pressured to say yes when someone asks for our time or energy, this can lead to stress or burnout. But saying no politely can help you feel more confident and allows you to protect the time you need to care for yourself. Schedule time into your calendar for the activities to care for yourself. Blocking out time that you will be recharging your batteries will make it easier to protect that time and prevent other activities from encroaching on it.

Taking time to care for yourself is important. Experiment to find what works to re-energize yourself. Play an instrument, do a crossword puzzle, meditate, or watch your favorite movie. Carving out a short break to take care of yourself can yield major benefits. When you start to schedule taking care of yourself into your day, you will notice a difference in your mood. And you can make it into a positive habit.

--Sandy Sego

"Taking time to care for yourself is important." ~ Sandy Sego



Smurfy advice for the trail...

Hiking the Monorail

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

The start of spring brings some unique issues to hiking in New England. For one, it's the start of the famous "Mud Season." As the frozen ground starts to thaw dirt roads and paths become extremely muddy because the ground thaws from the top down causing melting snow and draining water to sit on top of the lower frozen soil and causing a supersaturated trail surface. Hiking on this saturated soil not only gets you really muddy, it can widen trails, cause irreversible damage to vegetation, compound trail erosion, and destroy the natural flow of the original trail drainage.

Mud season is a moving target, starting at lower elevations toward the end of winter and moving upward in elevation well into April and May where there is still melting snow. For the safety of both the trail and hikers it's best to avoid trails, especially at high elevations, when they turn to mud. In fact, The Green Mountain Club (GMC) in Vermont and the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) recommend certain areas and trails that are prone to mud damage be avoided during April and May. It is suggested that you stick to trails with durable surfaces at low elevations during the muddy conditions.

If you must travel on a muddy section try to just push through the middle of the muddy trail to avoid widening the trail and causing more damage and try to stay on rocks as much as possible.

Another common problem is snow depth. As spring arrives and snow melts it may appear from the trailhead that very little snow is still on the ground, leading to the assumption that you will not need snowshoes, microspikes or crampons. Keep in mind that snow can linger at higher See Hiking the Monorail continued on page 7

"For the safety of both the trail and hikers it's best to avoid trails, especially at high elevations, when they turn to mud."

~ PaPa Smurf

Hiking the Monorail continued from page 6

elevations and in shaded areas, hollers, valleys, and wind protected areas. Just because it appears to be safe to leave your snowshoes behind, you just might end up post-holing in deep snow at some point.

I remember one hike I led near Mt. Tekoa in Russell, Massachusetts, where we left snowshoes in the car because the sunny side of the mountain at the trailhead had no snow. To our surprise after cresting the ridge the opposite side of the hill had deep snow causing us to post -hole all the way down the other side. On the next ridge we again had no snow but plunged into deep snow on the other side of the next hill. Turns out the shadow of the hill protected the snow from melting on one side. We were all tired with wet pants and shoes by the end of the hike. So be prepared.

If you do find yourself post-holing in deep snow it's best to be sure you are up to the challenge, or else you should turn around. You can expect to get wet and tired in a short distance. Take turns breaking trail as it's a lot of work and turn back if it gets to be too much. If it's soft and wet be prepared for the possibility your shoes will soak through and you will have wet and cold feet. In an emergency you can slip a plastic bag over your feet after putting on some dry socks and using the plastic bag as a water/heat barrier between your socks and boots. Bread bags work well or invest in some waterproof socks.

If you find yourself hiking on a steep trail where the tread-way has been packed down and has turned to ice, or the melting snow has flowed over a shaded area of step trail causing an ice flow, be careful. Use microspikes or crampons if you have them or try stepping just left or right of the main trail where the snow may be softer, giving you better traction. Use only sturdy branches if you need a handhold and avoid grabbing small and fragile plants. *"If you do find yourself post-holing in deep snow it's best to be sure you are up to the challenge, or else you should turn around."* ~ PaPa Smurf



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"The monorail, is that perilous balance beam of ice and packed snow rising above fluffy snow on either side of the trail." ~ PaPa Smurf

"Another concern as the snow starts to melt is the rising water levels of stream crossings." ~ PaPa Smurf

Hiking the Monorail continued from page 7

At higher altitudes that have had a lot of snowshoe traffic all winter in deep snow you just might find yourself "Hiking the Monorail." The monorail, is that perilous balance beam of ice and packed snow rising above fluffy snow on either side of the trail. As spring melts the uncompacted snow on the sides of the trail the highly compacted snow in the center melts much slower and usually hardens into narrow ridge of ice overnight. In the afternoon it can soften and become a post-hole nightmare. You just may find yourself trying to balance on the narrow center of snow on the trail while occasionally sliding off either side. Plan lots of extra time and be ready for changing conditions. You might need microspikes/crampons in the morning on a slippery icy monorail. By afternoon you might be returning on a soft, mushy post-hole balance beam that you sometimes can stay on, slip off, or sink into. Sometimes the best approach is to duckwalk or place your feet sideways on the center of the monorail to avoid sliding off. It's a unique experience.

Another concern as the snow starts to melt is the rising water levels of stream crossings. Even a stream that seems easy to cross in the morning can become a raging deep water crossing by afternoon. As the sun warms and melts snow a stream you crossed early in the day will swell with the melting water that feeds into it. It might be much harder to cross on your way back. Special care needs to be taken when crossing frigid streams. Keeping in mind that even if you plan a loop you might have to recross the same stream later in the day when the water is higher if you have to turn back for any reason. And streams that a guidebook, or past experience, has been shown to be easy to ford can be very different in early spring with the rising water levels of snow melt.

See Hiking the Monorail continued on page 9

Hiking the Monorail continued from page 8

Enjoy the warmer weather but keep aware of the many changing conditions as the snow melts. Be prepared to turn back if conditions are not safe and consider continuing to carry full winter gear such as snowshoes, traction devices, face mask/goggles/balaclava, gloves and warm clothing, and a plan for the unexpected.

Fortunately mud season, and hiking the monorail, only lasts for a part of the spring season. Plan accordingly by hiking alternative areas, going prepared, and being able to change your plans as conditions warrant. But most of all enjoy the sunshine and warming weather!

--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)



PaPa Smurf

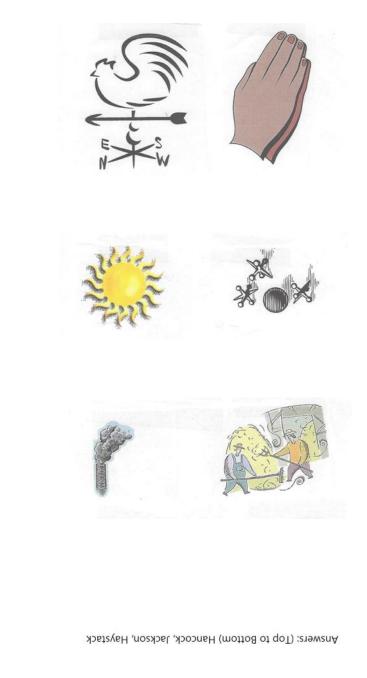


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Northeast Mountain Puzzle Game

by Shari Cox

(Answers to January's White Mt. NH puzzle game: (top to bottom) Moosilauke, Isolation, Adams) Name the three northeast mountains below (includes the White Mts. of New Hampshire and the Adirondack Mts. of New York):



Adirondac: The magazine of the Adirondack Mountain Club by Dick Forrest

Club member Ann Mundy is responsible for introducing and taking members of our hiking club to the Adirondack Mountains of New York. After retiring from teaching mathematics at Westfield High School in Westfield, Massachusetts, she decided that she wanted to become an Adirondack 46er (ADK 46er). Ann, having grown up in Washington County, New York, not far from the Adirondack Mountains, did climb all 46 high peaks in the Adirondacks and then started to take members of our hiking club to the mountains she loves. My wife, Sue, and I often went with her, along with others, over the years, and both of us, as well as other members, also became ADK 46ers. That's also why I wanted to become a member of Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK). As a member I receive their magazine, which is the title of this article.

Like Pioneer Valley Hiking Club's bimonthly *Bootprints* newsletter the *Adirondac* bimonthly magazine has some regular contributors. One contributor to *Adirondac* that I am fond of reading is AdironDOC's regular column. "AdironDOC" is Tom Welch, M.D., who is a physician at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, and a member of the Wilderness Medical Society, as well as a licensed professional guide. His articles are both interesting and enlightening. Here's a couple of examples from his latest columns:

His January-February, 2021, article in *Adirondac* is entitled "Immunization Update." In this article Dr. Tom Welch talks about non-Covid immunizations which are highly effective and shouldn't be forgotten about. He considers that the number one immunization for wilderness travel should be your annual influenza shot. He says that influenza is a nasty virus that is able to change its properties from year to year, when immunization is effective for one year but may not be the next. Dr. Welch is often asked about tetanus but he says that it is *See Adirondac continued on page 12* *"Club member Ann Mundy is responsible for introducing and taking members of our hiking club to the Adirondack Mountains of New York."* ~ Dick Forrest

"One contributor to Adirondac that I am fond of reading is AdironDOC's regular column."

~ Dick Forrest

"He considers that the number one immunization for wilderness travel should be your annual influenza shot." ~ Dick Forrest Page 12

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extremely rare. However, it is important to have an up-to-date booster and its often given with diptheria and pertussis (TdaP) immunization. Pertussis (whooping cough) is a disease that small infants get which can result in fatalities. Adults can get it too as an upper respiratory infection with a prolonged cough. Dr. Welch says that it's important to prevent pertussis transmission to infants and may be more important than the tetanus component of the vaccine. Other immunizations that AdironDoc touches on are for Hepatitis A, which can be combined with one for Hepatitis B. Hep A can occur in small clusters and can be spread guite easily in groups of people. And Hep B is a more severe form of liver inflammation spread by contact with blood or other bodily fluids. Two other immunizations he highlights are the pneumococcus vaccine and the shingles vaccine. The pneumococcus vaccine, he says, protects against "a variety of severe bacterial infections that are frequent causes of death in adults." The shingles vaccine "protects against a very painful condition associated with the reactivation of childhood chickenpox."

Dr. Welch's second article in the March-April, 2021, edition of Adirondac is entitled Trekking Poles: Essential Tool or Silly Affectation. In this article Dr. Welch, after initially having disdain for the use of hiking poles in the 1980's or thereabouts, has been sold on the use of them after climbing Aconcagua in the Andes many years ago. He has looked at several studies. His first observation (confirmed by many studies) "seems paradoxical" and finds the use of hiking poles "increases cardiovascular work." Perhaps, he says, using the upper body is the key to cardiovascular improvement. Other benefits of using hiking poles: "reduction of lower back pain and in muscle soreness." Dr. Welch says that the benefit to a person's joints has been better studied. Benefits from studies cited by Dr. Welch: improvement in pain and function of the lower joints (especially knees); using poles increases one's stride and decreases the number of steps taken, and therefore stress on the joints; also, balance is improved with the beneficial effect of reducing falls. Dr. Welch says that "with obesity, balance disorders such as Parkinson's disease, those with low back pain, and older adults" can benefit by using hiking poles.

See Adirondac continued on page 13

observation (confirmed by many studies) "seems paradoxical" and finds the use of hiking poles "increases cardiovascular work." ~ Dick Forrest

"His (Dr. Welch's) first

Adirondac continued from page 12

[Editorial note: I remember one study cited by club member John Klebes (published in *Bootprints*, May, 2002, entitled *Hiking Poles*, <u>http://pioneervalleyhikingclub.org/blog/wp-content/</u> <u>uploads/2012/01/bp2002may.pdf</u> on pages 6 and 7. It was joint study by the University of Massachusetts, the University of Wisconsin, and the Steadman-Hawkins Sports Medicine Foundation in Colorado. The researchers in the study determined the benefits of using hiking poles. John cited these benefits from the study: fewer injuries, less pounding, relief from ailing knees and joints, fewer falls, and less fatigue. John also writes about the *Proper Use of Trekking Poles*, which Dr. Welch purposely does not cover in his article.]

--Dick Forrest

"I remember one study cited by club member John Klebes (published in Bootprints, May, 2002, entitled Hiking Poles,...." ~ Dick Forrest

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

Important PVHC Notice

PIONEER VALLEY HIKING CLUB — THIS IS A RELEASE AND AGREE-MENT. READ IT CAREFULLY BEFORE AGREEING.

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 tested positive for Covid-19;

-participants will not drive to hike locations with non-household members; See Release Form continued on page 16

Release Form continued from page 15

-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 and wear it on events until the MA requirement changes.

-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.

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Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

Mar Renewals

Apr Renewals

Debbie Bombard & Cheryl Stevens Jeff Briggs Kay Byington Patty Carmody Mike & Gail Carrier Theresa Corey Ray Girard Alan Goodhind Dan Harrington Pamela Kennedy & David Launchmen **John Klebes** Keli Kuklewicz Tim & Dana Malone Edmund Marone **Rachel Naismith** Patricia Osborne Lorraine Plasse Dave Poulin Linda Quesnel Melissa Stello Maryellen Sullivan David Tarducci Susan Willis Kevin & Robin Withers

Marianne Baush lacki Barden Karon Belunas Virginia Brown Daniela & Augusto Espin Campuzano Norma Casillas Michelle Dechristopher Shari & Mark Dorman Jane Glushik Bryan Goodwin & Joan DelPlato Donna Henderson Sharyl Hill Eunice Jones Susan McGurk Lori McMahon **Bob Morgan** Asa & Per Nilsson **Thomas Pospisil** Kathryn Ruhf Albert Shane Lynne Shapiro Jacqueline Sheehan Gwen Shook Ed Watson Susan Young Kathy Zeiben

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)

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Jim E. Brown, President Erin Squires, Vice President Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer Sandy Sego, 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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS February

Ed McCarthy



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

Every Mon.	(MA) Mornings w/ Chip
Every Tues.	(MA) Evenings w/ Lori
Every Wed.	(MA) Evenings w/ Erin
Every Thurs.	(MA) Mornings w/ Lori
Apr 6	(MA) Club Meeting (tentative)
May 4	(MA) Club Meeting (tentative)
PVHC Schedule of Events	https://teamup.com/ ksz8qkbizhndt3qjt7

IMPORTANT NOTICES

<u>Next Club Meetings:</u> April 6, 2021, 7 p.m. at **FBC** May 4, 2021, 7 p.m. at **FBC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next Bootprints is April 20, 2021

** 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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