



# A Special April Supplement of Footprints

## New Hikes Added to the Club's Schedule

by PaPa Smurf

- First up: the Flat-earthier "Edge of the World" hike series. We will be exploring new areas in search of the edge of the world. This series will be led by a member of the "Friends of the Flat Earth Society". Warning, these hikes are considered expert only. This is a dangerous series as we might get too close and fall off. You have been warned.
- And the sequel: "Finding Bigfoot". The exact location for these night hikes will be closely guarded to keep away crowds that might scare Sasquatch.
- And as a public service: I'll be leading a "Finding Maggots" hike. We will focus on where to find maggots in the backcountry and field use of maggots for treating toenail infections.
- Last up: our "Vintage Hiking" series. Get onboard with the latest technology trend. Returning to vintage, old-style hiking gear. No more plastics and synthetics, just down-to-earth, organic, chemical-free gear. Heavy leather hobnail alpine mountaineering boots, canvas floorless pup tents with heavy wood poles and rawhide guide ropes, virgin wool underpants, thick wool clothing layered for warmth, waxed gabardine trench coats, and a wooden ice ax with an iron ferrule. Get in on the latest vintage hiking trend.

--PaPa Smurf

Volume 29

April 1, 2025  
(April Fool's  
Edition)

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*~ PaPa Smurf*



## Trail Blazing

by PaPa Smurf

Blazes are trail markings usually displayed on trees so that they can be easily seen and assist in following a trail. The Appalachian Trail is marked with white blazes. Anyone who has hiked on the AT has probably heard the term white blazing. White Blazing refers to following the white blazes of the Appalachian Trail. In this article we will explore some of the lesser known types of blaze hiking.



*“White Blazing refers to following the white blazes of the Appalachian Trail.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

**White Blazing** – Following the white blazes of the AT.

**Blue Blazing** – It’s common to mark spur trails that branch off the Appalachian Trail with blue blazes. They typically lead to vistas, campgrounds and shelters, water sources, or alternate routes. If you are a blue blazer you don’t always follow the straight line, wandering off in alternate directions to find new sights along your thru-hike.

**Yellow Blazing** – Yellow blazing is when Appalachian Trail hikers “cheat” by short-cutting a trail by walking a road or getting driven further up the trail. It refers to the yellow dashed lines on highways.

See *Trail Blazing continued on page 3*

**Trail Blazing** *continued from page 2*

Walking, hitchhiking, or driving the highways. You might hitch a ride to jump ahead to a more interesting stretch of trail, or skip a boring section of trail. Yellow Blazers get a lot off grief from other hikers, especially purist thru-hikers, for jumping ahead without hiking all the miles.

Here are some of the more obscure blazes:

**Green Blazing** – The art of using marijuana while hiking the Appalachian Trail. Once a very common occurrence by college-age hikers, green blazing is when the hiker is constantly smoking pot along the trail. Today, it's more likely popping a gummy or edible but be sure to guard your emergency food when a Green Blazer comes by.

**Amber Blazing** – The simple activity of hiking into towns or off trail to a brewery or pub. It can be as simple as running into trail-side store for a six pack to taking an alternate road route connecting breweries along the way and returning to the trail farther north.

**Pee Blazing** – It's rumored that Pee Blazing started after a few hikers spent a week Amber blazing. All that beer required lots of pee breaks and the art of peeing on every turn was born.

**Bar Blazing** – Amber blazing on steroids. Every town stop is a party! Bar crawling from one town to the next, drinking and indulging along the way.

**Brown Blazing** – Brown blazing is when a hiker leaves the trail to dig cat holes when privies aren't around. It's also used to reference a hiker battling stomach viruses, diarrhea, or recovering Bar Blazers that causes them to stop every few miles and leave a brown deposit. You don't want to follow someone who is brown blazing. Beware the "Prairie Dog's" appearance; a brown trout may be on the way.

**Aqua Blazing** – There are those that bypass parts of the hiking trail using kayaks, rafts and boats. Aqua blazers travel alongside the trail using various rivers before rejoining the trail.

*See Trail Blazing continued on page 4*

*"Green Blazing – The art of using marijuana while hiking the Appalachian Trail."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*



*"Always keep your begging spoon handy when hiking near a Gold Blazer."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

**Trail Blazing** *continued from page 3*

**Gold Blazing** – Rich, snobby hikers that hike with top of the line gear and supplies, who eats and drinks like a king in town, and stay at ritzy resorts and hotels instead of fleabag hostels. Always keep your begging spoon handy when hiking near a Gold Blazer.

**Red Blazing** – Hiking with an injury, presumably only the type of injury that produces dripping wounds that leave a blood trail behind.

--PaPa Smurf

## **Tramp Stamps to be Required to Hike on All Federal Lands**

by Dick Lost & in the Forest

Starting April 1, 2025, in an effort to secure more revenue for the federal government, an announcement is forthcoming from the U.S. Department of Interior, that "tramp stamps" will be required to use any hiking trail on any federal land in the United States.

I know what you're thinking,,,tramp stamps? How could that be? Well, the U.S. government will allow you to purchase a tramp stamp, something similar to a hunting license, on their us.gov website. You pay for it online and then you can print it out online. Make sure you keep it on your person while hiking on any federal land, or you could be arrested and/or detained.

Additionally, if you have an original tramp stamp of the tattoo variety on your body, it's permissible to show it to a Tramp Stamp Officer. Tramp stamps of the tattoo variety will be grandfathered in, so you do not need to purchase an online tramp stamp. Just show what you have on your backside to the enforcing officer and he or she will give you the go-ahead to hike on government lands.

(So you want to be a Tramp Stamp Officer? How do you sign up? Go to the us.gov website and follow the links to get hired. Good luck!)

--Dick Lost & in the Forest

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## Earth's Changing Core

by PaPa Smurf

Experts are warning that the Earth's magnetic pole is changing more rapidly than ever before. The drifting of the Earth's magnetic north pole has been moving slowly for years. What has changed?

Scientists and experts are observing a rapid increase in the movement of the molten core of the earth. This is of grave concern since most of our navigation aids are based on the orientation of the magnetic north pole. The superhot inner core of planet Earth is both changing shape and the speed at which it rotates, according to a new study. Scientists say the core's behavior may alter the length of a day and the direction of magnetic north by significant amounts as early as April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. A total solar flip is expected by the end of the year 2026.

Some of the things we are now, or will soon see occurring, due to the solar flip:

- The sun will now be rising in the West and setting in the East. This will have profound effects on navigation and the environment.
- You may have noticed that toilets now are flushing counter-clockwise. A flushing toilet will no longer turn clockwise in the northern hemisphere and anticlockwise in the southern one. The solar flip will reverse this phenomena on April 1, 2025.
- Leaves on deciduous trees, being confused by the solar flip, will grow upside down before slowly dying off.
- Solar panels will need to be modified for polarity changes and have the positive and negative leads reversed to stay functional.
- Sunscreen products will need to be reformulated. Any old products you may have could actually cause more skin cancer due to the reverse poles.

See *Earth's Changing Core* continued on page 7

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*~ PaPa Smurf*

***Earth's Changing Core*** continued from page 6

- GPS units, compasses, navigation aids, including maps, guidebooks, and trail signs, will all need to be replaced or modified with the new N/S indicators.
- Hikers will need to purchase all new "solar flip-certified" backpacking gear.
- During the transition, which may take months to years, the changing magnetic north field will be in continuous flux. During the transition daily corrections for time and position will need to be added.
- Weather reports will now include time and magnet shift correction data on a daily basis.
- The "Sun" will be officially renamed "Daughter" after the solar flip.

--PaPa Smurf



PaPa Smurf

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*~ PaPa Smurf*



## **PVHC to Replace Most Hikes with AI-generated Virtual Hiking by Summer of 2025**

by PaPa Smurf

In an effort to attract new younger hikers to the club we will be adapting to the latest trends of Gen Z and Gen Alpha. Get the new hiking treadmill fitness app now. Join your fellow members on club-sponsored hikes from the comfort of your living room. Members will be able to customize hikes and select weather that is adjusted to their preferences.

*"Choose the hiking experience you want without worrying about physical ability level and in the comfort of your own home."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

Choose the hiking experience you want without worrying about physical ability level and in the comfort of your own home. No more sore muscles at the end of the hike and you can always pause your hike to get a refreshing drink, snack, or take a separation break, and return right back to any spot in your hike.

Short on time, simply fast forward to the summit, or your favorite point of interest, without stressing or waiting on other hikers. While the app is free there are fees for add-on options, such as virtual trekking poles, traction devices, and snowshoes.

Note the club is not responsible for poor performance due to lagging internet connections or any additional fees or charges from your data carrier during group hikes.

--PaPa Smurf



## Block Island News

by PaPa Smurf

Block Island's Mooring breaks free. The Island has broken free and worries that it will drift into Cape Cod are not exaggerated. We may have to cancel Mike Reed's PVHC hiking trip. Officials have said the one of the several main anchor moorings that keep Block Island in place was severed sometime early spring by Russian fishing vessels. The moorings, which were secretly installed around 1910, are tethered to bedrock and in place to keep the Island from free-floating around Block Island Sound. All the remaining moorings have now failed due to the stress of the Russian fishing vessel collision.

It's clear that the remaining cables will not be able to hold the floating island from hitting Cape Cod sometime in 2025 without immediate repairs that are not in the current budget.

The Block Island Ferry service says it's ferry has been arriving later and later for what was originally a much shorter trip. They have had to re-calibrate the GPS location for the Block Island dock by approximately 200-300 feet each day as the Island has started to drift. The Army Corp of Engineers, which is responsible for keeping the Island from hitting Cape Cod, has suggested we add warning signs to swimmers on all Cape Cod beaches to be on the lookout for the rogue island. If you see the Island, get out of the water and take shelter. A collision may be imminent.

Stay tuned for updates on the status of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Block Island Hike.

--PaPa Smurf

*"The Island has broken free and worries that it will drift into Cape Cod are not exaggerated."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*



## New Hiking Signs

by PaPa Smurf

The following warning signs will be added to many Federal and State Parks to address environmental regulations enacted due to climate change:

**Water symbol:** Hikers may encounter flooded coastline from rising sea water

**Cellphone symbol:** No cellphone coverage zone next 20 feet. Be prepared to be unconnected for up to 2 minutes.



**Food/taxi symbol:** No Grub-hub or UBER Service Area

**Fallout Zone:** Do not filter water. Remove dust from clothing and gear, use of gas mask and hazmat suit recommended.

**Gate Symbol:** Turnstiles for high occupancy hiking trails and dedicated "High Occupancy Trails" for large groups.

**FKT Lane:** Fastest Known Time, High-Speed Hiking Lane. Please yield to competitive hikers.

**Island Symbol:** Floating Island Danger Zone. Unsafe beach conditions due to possible Floating Island Collision Danger.

--PaPa Smurf

## Werewolf Warning for Full Moon Hikes

by PaPa Smurf

As a reminder our hiking club does not discriminate. As an equal opportunity hiking club we have a diversified group of members. With the recent incident on Karen's full moon hike, please be advised that we do have some members with Werewolf DNA. HIPAA rules do not let the club disclose who they are but all hikers are welcome.



If you know that you are prone to Werewolf Outbreaks we kindly suggest that you let the hike leader know, in advance, if you will be attending one of our moonlight hikes. Hikers in general, are advised that there are certain inherent dangers in any sport and by attending our moonlight hikes you accept the possibility of sharing the trail with Werewolves.

--PaPa Smurf

*"...please be advised that we do have some members with Werewolf DNA."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

**UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS**

- Every Mon. (MA) Monday Morning  
Hikes w/ Chip
- Every Tues. (MA) Tuesday Morning  
Hikes w/ Various Leaders  
(MA) Tuesday Evening  
Hikes w/ Lori
- Every Wed. (MA) Wednesday Morning  
Hikes w/ Deb & Cheryl
- Every Thurs. (MA) Thursday Morning  
Hikes w/ Various Leaders
- Every Sat. (MA) Saturday Morning  
Hikes w/ Various Leaders
- Every Sun. (MA) Sunday Morning Hikes  
w/ Various Leaders
- April 1 Club Meeting
- May 6 Club Meeting

# IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:  
Apr 1, 2025, 7 p.m. at **ROC**  
May 6, 2025, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

**ROC - Red Oak 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, 2025

**\*\* 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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