



Pimiteoui Trail Association Hiking Club October– December 2016

President – Cindy Alexander – 309-231-2190
Vice President – Mike Bohn – 309-688-2791
Secretary – Angie Madison, 309-453-2097
Treasurer – Linda Kent – 309-263-8500
Newsletter Editor – Jerry Gegel – 309-266-7533

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES

Gear Swap Site

Check the PTA website (ptahike.org) for hiking or camping gear offered for sale by fellow PTA members. If you would like to sell something, submit a short description, price, your name and contact number to John Jackson at j.jackson1954@yahoo.com. The PTA reserves the right to reject or edit all listings.

Donation to PAMBA

PTA will be donating \$100 to the Peoria Area Mountain Bike Association (PAMBA) to help them continue the much-appreciated work they do to build and maintain multi-use trails in the Peoria area. According to their website, "PAMBA volunteers average more than 2,000 hours annually" and "maintain 50+ miles of trails" in parks such as Black Partridge, Dirksen, Farmdale, Independence, Jubilee, Wildlife Prairie, and the new Kinsey. When we visit these places, we are utilizing trails that contribute greatly to our hiking enjoyment, and so we thank PAMBA for their work.

PTA Hiking Club

1. Hikes shall start promptly with no more than a 10-minute grace period for late arrivals.
2. The newsletter will be "published" quarterly. Hike leaders; please email your Event Reports to geraldgegel@comcast.net within two weeks after completion of your scheduled events. A single photo (jpeg file format) for inclusion in the Newsletter may be attached to your report.
3. Hike Leaders are to register all attendees for a hike/bike/paddle event using the "official" Pimiteoui Trail Association Liability Waiver form. These may be obtained on our website at WWW.PTAHIKE.ORG.
4. If an area allows dogs, they must be on a leash at all times. Also, please be prepared to pick up and dispose of pet excrement
5. In case of bad weather, contact the hike leader to see if the hike/event has been cancelled.

EVENT SCHEDULE

2016-22, October 9, Sunday, 2:00 pm, Independence Park, Marquette Heights

Let's begin our Fall hikes by returning to Independence Park in Marquette Heights. This area is wild and forested and has a vast number of paths that are shared with mountain bikers. We'll mainly walk Trail 3*—one that the club may not have done—with total hiking covering at

least 2.5 hours and 4-5 miles with two slightly shorter options possible. The terrain is mainly rolling with a few steep hills, and there are several minor creek crossings. Wear hiking boots, long pants (preferred), bring trekking pole(s), carry a cell phone, bug spray is recommended by the creek, and have water. Dogs are okay on leashes, although most trails are single file and narrow. Indoor restrooms are at the beginning & end. Drive there directly. Independence is located off Route 29. Turn south onto LaSalle Blvd, which is at the closest stop light south of the I474 exit. Drive on LaSalle up the hill 1.1 miles and turn left (no turn lane, just a median separation) between a pavilion and the main baseball diamonds. Move forward into the paved lane and back to the parking area. If there are no open parking slots there—since they may be preparing for next weekend’s adjacent Spook Hollow—park in the lot on the other side of the pavilion, in front of the ball diamonds on LaSalle, or on the gravel lot at the far end on the ball fields. After the hike, we may eat out together. ***Trail Map Link:**

<http://www.pambamtb.org/independence-park>

Hike Leader: Jay Meinrich 309-472-0165 (call or text), email: jmeinrich@comcast.net

[2016-23, Oct. 22, Saturday, 9 AM, Hike the “Sue & Wes Dixon Waterfowl Refuge”.](#)

We will meet at 9:00 am in the Lacon, IL Marina parking lot and car pool to the refuge. The parking lot is across the Illinois River Bridge on the right, as you enter Lacon. The hike starts at the Refuge at 10:00 am. The Waterfowl Refuge at Hennepin and Hopper lakes has a flat to rolling terrain. Climb the lookout tower; a portion of the area has a boardwalk. Lunch afterward at the Pizza Peel, in Lacon, IL.

Hike Leader: Roger John, (309) 231-9191

[2016-24, Nov. 12, Saturday, 8:00 AM \(car pool\), Hike the Rock Springs Nature Center](#)

Join us to hike the Rock Springs Conservation Area in Decatur, IL. We will meet at the **Cracker Barrel in Morton at 8:00 AM to car pool**. For those who choose not to car pool, the hike will start at approximately 9:30 AM. In May, I hiked the 2.5 mile trail labeled (difficult) and the 1.25 trail labeled (moderate, difficult). Neither one of them was too bad. Any questions, call me.

Hike Leader: Pam Brandt, 309-256-2354

[2016-25, November 27, Sunday 2:00 PM, Northwoods Park, Morton.](#)

The trails are mainly flat and wooded. Rarely, one may have to climb over an obstacle such as a tree across the path. It can be muddy in places but most is grassy. Meet at the parking lot at Northwoods Park in Morton. **Directions:** I-74 East to Exit 102. Turn left, going onto N. Morton Avenue. Turn right (east) onto Courtland Ave. (WalMart will be on your left) and then left (north) onto Main Street. Stay on Main Street until passing Oakwood Park on the left. The entry to Northwoods is on the right hand side of Main Street, at the curve in the road. Dining choices are very limited on a Sunday afternoon in Morton. I will probably bring treats.

Hike Leader: Angie Madison, (309) 453-2097; ap.madison84@gmail.com

[2016-26, Dec. 11, Sunday, 12:30 pm \(lunch\) and/or 2:00 pm \(hike\), Rock Island Trail-Wyoming, IL](#)

Meet at **One Eleven Coffee**, 111 N. 7th St. (Rt. 91), in Wyoming at 12:30 pm if you would like to eat lunch. The menu includes soups, salads and sandwiches. They also have a selection of coffee drinks and desserts. At 2:00 pm, we will meet at the Rock Island Trail depot, 311 E. Williams St. (about 2-1/2 blocks east of One Eleven Coffee) to begin the hike. If restrooms are not open behind the depot, go to Casey's on 7th Street. Originally, we were planning to go north from Wyoming toward Toulon. However, one mile down the trail there

are "Trail Closed" and "Do Not Enter" signs warning of severe trail erosion near the Spoon River bridge. Instead, we will hike south where we will experience both woods and prairie segments. This will be 6 miles round-trip, but you can decide how far you want to go since it is an out-and-back linear hike. We will also play Mile Marker Poker as we hike, with some simple prizes awarded at the finish for the best hands. Come out and enjoy the late autumn on the trail.

Hike Leader: Cindy Alexander, 309-231-2190, cahiker@mtco.com

2016-27, Dec. 17, Saturday, 7 PM, Christmas Party at Home of Bonnie & John Jackson

Please join us as we celebrate another Christmas season at the Jackson home, 15 Waldheim Rd., Morton, Illinois. The party starts at 7:00 pm. Feel free to bring your favorite libation or enjoy the drinks provided. Tasty treats and fellowship abound, so be sure to mark your calendar for this fun and festive event. **Special note:** If there is rain or snow, leave your boots at the door and bring your favorite Christmas shoes to change into. We'll keep your boots safe and sound while you celebrate the season!

Please RSVP by Friday, December 16th to bon1jon2@yahoo.com or 309-696-1955. You can also text your RSVP.

Hosts: Bonnie & John Jackson; 309-696-1955

EVENT REPORTS

2016-16, July 15, Friday 6:00 PM, Granite City Social

Several hikers gathered at Granite City Restaurant for an evening of fellowship and fine dining. We dined on the patio and watched the boats go by on the Illinois River.

Attendees were: Mike Bohn, Angie & Loren Madison, John & Bonnie Jackson (Organizers), Celeste Hansen, Mary Riter, Jay & Brenda Meinrich, Eric Hutchison, Mareike Kraatz, Susan Hood, Cathy Jones, Dave Grebner, Rob & Cindy Alexander, Sam & Linda Kent, Barb & Homer Gurtler, Jerry & Joyce Gegel, Arthur Ching, Judy Bartow, Roger John, Andy & Cherie Schull, Laverne Wilson.

2016-17, Saturday, July 30, 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Jubilee Prairie Tour

Jubilee Prairie Dawgs hosted their annual prairie tour on at a little-visited segment of Jubilee State Park located on the north side of Brimfield-Jubilee Road. Ten PTA members joined with others at this event to see and learn about various plants that are native to our area.

Members of the Prairie Dawgs led us along paths through both tall grasses and shaded woods where various plants in bloom can change in a matter of weeks. The Prairie Dawgs' hard work, including clearing areas of invasive plants, seed-collecting, and nurturing native species has produced colorful results. We were also treated to yummy refreshments and could take home milkweed starter plants to help encourage the butterfly population.

Attendees: Cindy Alexander (Coordinator), Rob Alexander, Brenda Shay, Larry Shay, Kathy Jones, Eric Hutchison, Mary Reiter, Jay Meinrich, Paul Hodge, Connie Williams

2016-18, Saturday, August 13, 8:00 am, Merwin Preserve Hike,

Despite thunderstorms the previous day, our trip to Merwin Nature Preserve near Hudson was a "go." After meeting outside the Washington Kroger, our small group of four headed east on Rt. 24. Due to repairs being made to the bridge spanning the Mackinaw River, it was necessary for car traffic to reach the West Gate from the north. Fortunately I learned about this detour when Rob and

I scouted the location a few days prior. We were the only cars in the lot, so we had the trails to ourselves. We followed the numbered markers on the nature trail loop and learned about some of the preserve's unique features. Along the way we saw late summer flowers, tall grasses, restored prairies, savannah and glacial remains. Also, the "annoying" pokeweed was plentiful this time of year. We then drove to the South Gate taking a round-about route and hiked the out-and-back trail to the river. Toward the end of the hike, we sidetracked to a small pond where we saw a "mountain lion" (which turned out to be a deer) slip through the underbrush. Following the hike, we went to Lake Road Inn by Lake Bloomington for lunch before heading home.

Attendees: Cindy Alexander (leader), Mary Greenhood, Linda Kent, Sam Kent

[2016-19, August 28, Sunday, 2:00 pm, McNaughton Park, Pekin, IL](#)

A hot, humid day greeted twelve hikers at McNaughton Park in Pekin. Since most of the woodland trails were very muddy, we walked mostly on prairie trails along the tree line. We did take one stretch into the woods that wasn't treacherous. Also, we stayed on the north side of Lick Creek since high water would have made crossing difficult. Deer, young and old, were frolicking and didn't seem that scared of us. Some hikers returned early, but those who finished went 3.5 miles in 2 hours. And we just beat the rain that passed through.

McNaughton continues to be a great local destination for the club.

Attendees: Jay Meinrich (Leader) John Jackson, Barb Gurtler, Homer Gurtler, Pam Brandt, Dave Grebner, Scooby Grebner, Arthur Ching, Rob Alexander, Cindy Alexander, Andy Shull, and guest Vicki Gilliland.

[2016-20, Saturday, September 10, 10 am - 12 pm, Rocky Glen Hike.](#)

The Friends of Rocky Glen led their monthly tour of Rocky Glen on Sat., Sept. 10. Our group consisted of three FRG members, eight PTA members and five others. After meeting at the Jimmy's Bar parking lot, we were shuttled by van to the park's entrance along Kickapoo Creek Road. As we followed the stream and progressed further into the wooded ravine, our hosts shared some very informative historical, geological and botanical facts about the area. At the terminus of the canyon, a waterfall flowed through the sandstone bluff while both old and new names and dates were found inscribed in stone. We were also informed that the parking lot to be constructed on Creek Road may be completed by the end of this year and that future trails and stairs for public access to the canyon are being planned.

Attendees: Cindy Alexander (coordinator), Celeste Hansen, Connie Williams, Mareike Kraatz, Eric Hutchison, Andy Shull, Cherie Shull, Arthur Ching

[2016-21 Forest Park Nature Center, Sunday, September 25. 2:00 pm](#)

Twenty-one hikers divided up and headed for the trails on a very sunny, hot Sunday afternoon even though the weather service tried to scare us off. We had a 50/50 chance of thunder storms but, as usual, most hikers are not scared off so easily. Linda led 12 members to the top of Grandview Dr. and back. Sam led 9 members on an easier hike through the shaded area behind the Center. It was very hot and humid and the shade did not really cool us. A couple of hikers turned back early. Afterward, twenty-three members met for a good meal and socializing at the No Wake Zone sports bar on Route 29. Four members who did not hike came to dine and visit.

Attendees: Chris Sweet, Rob and Cindy Alexander, Michael and Carol Pantier, Jerry and

Joyce Gegel, Joan Bonnet, George Schini, Brian Cunningham, John Jackson, Dave Grebner, Maggie Ambrose, Joe and Linda Piper, Arthur Ching, Andy Shull, Lavern Wilson, Michael Fortune, and Linda and Sam Kent (Leaders).

Treasurer's Report

Checking & Savings
Account Total
\$1382.21

Balance, Sept. 7, 2016