

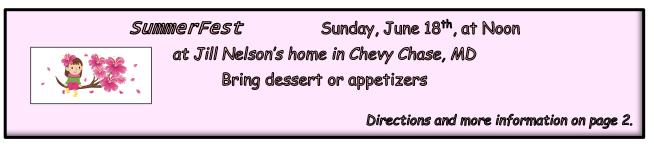
President's Message

In the PVS calendar, April is the time for transition. Many thanks to Barry Lake for his service as PVS president over the past two years, for his leadership, along with Kathy, of the Snowmass trip and the Val d'Isere trip this year, and for taking on the job of Membership Chair. We would also like to express our gratitude and thanks to Rosemary Schwartzbard for her many years of service as head of the Ski Trip Committee and Dave Warthen also for many years as Membership Chair.

A thank you as well for the retiring ExCom members, Jannes Gibson, Mary Rose de Valladares, and Manfred Boehringer and the continuing ExCom members Salli Diakova, Kathy Lake and Don Vierimaa. PVS is extraordinarily appreciative of the hard work of Events Coordinator Marianne Soponis, TOOT Coordinator and Secretary Ellie Thayer, TOOT Layout Editors Jan Marx (also PVS Historian), Kerry Hines, and Dave Warthen, Treasurer Dick Schwartzbard, Webmaster Mary Ellena Ward, and Meeting Records Chair Sue Lyon. We welcome to ExCom Rosemary Schwartzbard, Bob Knopes, and Inge Lesjak, as well as Bob Jablon, Vice President.

PVS is very grateful for members who opened their homes for meetings over the past two years, particularly in light of the risks posed by Covid. As we hopefully move past the pandemic, we hope that more members will host a meeting. Please let Marianne Soponis know if you are able to hold a meeting at your home – we usually do not have more than 20-25 people in attendance.

I look forward to attending our next meeting. I will devote the remainder of my column this month to a write-up of the short trip Bob and I took to Steamboat in March.



Steamboat Revisited

Over the years, Bob and I have made many trips to Steamboat, starting when our children were young during their Christmas vacations. Having had two trips to Snowmass/Aspen this season, I thought that a little trip to Steamboat would round out the season. Bob was willing to humor me, although he has not skied this year – generally, the restaurants are quite good in ski areas and he finds ways to amuse himself during the day.

Airline travel can be quite a challenge these days. We got up early for a morning flight from Dulles. The flight left almost two hours late, so we missed our connection in Denver to Steamboat. On arriving in Denver, we raced from gate B24 to B68 because the United App indicated that the Steamboat flight was leaving late. Of course, it had long since left. The only other flight to Steamboat on United was not scheduled to leave until 7:15 – about four hours after we arrived in Denver. -----Continued on page 2 -----

SUMMER FEST Sunday, June 18, NOON AT THE HOME OF JILL NELSON 7715 ROCTON AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MD

PVS will provide grilled food at SummerFest, our annual summer fun event where we talk about next year's ski trips and socialize. We ask that members and guests bring an appetizer or dessert. Members with last names A-M bring desserts and N-Z bring appetizers. Like all PVS events, there will be wine, beer, and soft drinks too.

We ask those who plan to attend to RSVP by Tuesday, June 13. It is important to know approximately how many will attend so that the host knows the appropriate amount of food to purchase. If you miss the RSVP deadline, then we still welcome you, but please call or email Jill (see number and email address below) that you are coming.

Directions to Jill Nelson's house: 7715 Rocton Ave., Chevy Chase, MD --- house is off East-West Highway, between Conn. Ave and Rock Creek Park. Call or email to RSVP or with any questions. 249-645-5285 or jillwnelson7@gmail.com

From Washington, DC: drive north on Connecticut Ave., pass Chevy Chase Circle – turn right on East-West Highway (MD 410) to 4th right on Rocton – go 2 blocks up hill, bear right, and white house is about 4th on the left.

From the Washington beltway: exit at Connecticut Ave. south, towards Washington DC, turn left on East-West Highway (after fire house on left), 4th right on Rocton, as above.

Continued from page 1 ----

That flight was at Gate B15, so we headed back in that direction. Of course, the gate was then changed to B65. Guess what – the plane at Gate 65 had a small mechanical problem that turned into a larger mechanical problem. Amazingly, United found another plane – but it was back at Gate B17. We flew into Steamboat in the snow and got to the hotel – the Grand – close to 11 pm. So much for our restaurant planning for the first night. By the way, we made our restaurant reservations three weeks in advance, and had trouble getting the times we wanted for some of the restaurants.

There have been a number of changes at Steamboat since we were last there – the year we ran a PVS trip. The most positive change is the addition of an escalator from the end of the path from the Grand down to Gondola Square. The gondola, however, is no longer on the square, but farther up the hill, the prior location now housing an ice skating rink. There is a new gondola on the left side – currently it only goes as far up as the Thunderhead lift, but next season, they will connect it with Sunshine Peak. The area will expand next season by 600 new acres to make Steamboat the second largest ski area in Colorado. However, I believe that most of the new acreage will be devoted to "extreme" skiing.

On the negative side, the city has imposed a massive tax on lodging, making Steamboat much more expensive than it was previously. The ski area has dropped the free Over the Hill Gang guide service (I think it may just meet on Tuesday, but there is a charge). Likewise, there are no more daily free mountain tours given by the Ski Ambassadors – tours are only offered on certain days for a small number of people (you have to sign up on the website) and cost \$20 per person.

Over the course of four days, I skied a good assortment of the blue and blue/black slopes along with a few groomed blacks. My first day of skiing was cloudy and cold with low visibility in the morning. The mountain was largely ungroomed because of 8 inches of snow the previous day. There were little piles of mini bumps everywhere. For part of the day, I skied with Cassandra and Charlie, people I met in the Four Points Lodge in the middle of the morning. We did quite a few runs on Longhorn off the Pony Express lift. I was exhausted by 2:30. That night, Bob and I had dinner at the Mahogany Ridge, which was excellent. I had an Asian Caesar salad and ribs (the half I could not finish travelled back with us and became dinner the night we arrived home); Bob had fish tacos and tuna. We shared an apple crisp for dessert. If you go to Steamboat, I strongly recommend this restaurant.

The second day was cold and sunny. The slopes had been well groomed, but there was an underlying slickness because of rain the day before we arrived. I enjoyed skiing Norther, one of my favorite little bump runs, as well as Cyclone and Rolex, both groomed blacks. Dinner that night was at Harwig's, where we had our group dinner on the PVS trip. The restaurant owner is scaling back and the restaurant is only open on Friday with a limited menu. I had their fabulous dates, stuffed with cheese and wrapped in prosciutto, along with escargots and a lamb slider. Bob had a salad, onion soup and venison. Their olive bread was extremely good. We shared a unique toffee cream for dessert.

Day three was also cold and sunny. Again, the slopes were well groomed, but there was still a slickness underneath in places. I again did some runs on Norther, and Cyclone and skied some of the little bumps on the side of Two O'Clock as well as the first half of Surprise. For lunch, I had a very good large potpie at the Four Points Lodge. For dinner, we went to Mazzola's, which had good online reviews, but which we thought was nothing special. Bob had a shrimp appetizer and chicken piccata (he thought it was tough) and I had bison lasagna (half of which also came home with us and served as a lunch). A strange and amazing thing happened to us – after dinner, the waiter came over and told us that a large group at another table had paid for our dinner. We don't know who they were or why they did this – perhaps because we were so old compared to the other people in the restaurant.

The last day the snow conditions on the mountain were much better. Again, the morning was cold and sunny, but, by the afternoon, the temperature was considerably higher. I skied most of the morning with Armando, a Cuban-born dentist who lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. We skied intermediate runs, but I did do part of Norther again. At the end of the morning, somehow Armando skied into me and I went splat on my left elbow and left thigh. My elbow had a nasty cut and bruise, and my thighs were bruised, but, overall, I was fine (the cut on the elbow still is healing). Thank goodness for helmets. Despite the cuts and bruises, I managed to ski another six runs after lunch and I stayed out until 3:15. I discovered that the best way to get down at the end of the day may be Valley View, a black groomed run. I was a little intimidated by a sign at the beginning of lower Valley View, which said "Seriously Experts Only." In fact, the run was groomed and without bumps, had decent snow conditions, and was not particularly steep. This end of the day run was recommended by a local couple sitting next to us at Harwig's.

Our final dinner was at Café Diva, one of Bob's favorites. He had steak tartare and beef tenderloin. I had sweet potato soup and duck confit. The pinot noir was excellent. This is another restaurant that I highly recommend.

For breakfast the day of our departure, we ate at the restaurant in the hotel. I had good eggs benedict and sampled some of Bob's very good pancakes. I actually had skipped breakfast all my skiing days because I was not hungry in the morning and wanted to get in line for the gondola. I was planning to eat something for breakfast at the Thunderhead Lodge, but didn't find anything of interest. I did enjoy their pizza for lunch on several days.

The flights home were uneventful. The airport at Hayden/Steamboat has a long runway and standard size planes fly in and out. We left in the snow and fog (not possible at Aspen) for the short trip to Denver, where we arrived just as our flight to Dulles on a huge 777 was boarding.

Although I did not ski any of the challenging terrain at Steamboat, I had a good time. Steamboat is an interesting mountain with a lot of variety. The mountain is laid out well and it is very easy to get from one side to another. I did look with some amazement at some of the slopes that I had skied there in the past and will probably never ski again. However, I certainly was challenged at Aspen on my three-day bump clinic adventure in February. I have determined that it takes me about three days of skiing to work up my strength to the point of comfort. Perhaps, next year, I will try to train better in advance and actually get on the exercise bike that has been sitting in our basement for years.



PVS - BYOB (Bring Your Own Book) group

Still reading! There are always a few minutes before bed or on a lazy afternoon to pick up a good book. After you do, bring what you've found to our little group to tell us about it. We meet virtually by Zoom on the second Thursday of every month at 4 pm. Consider joining us! See the info at the bottom to join in on Thursday, June 8th from 4 to 5 pm. Here's what we chatted about in April:

Bonnie Sweeney brought us "Cloud Cuckoo Land" by Anthony Doerr. Bonnie "couldn't put the book down" and described the complex interweaving of five characters across places and generations leading back to a fictitious Ancient Greek story about the search for utopia.

Karen Knopes told us about "Moth", a book of historical fiction by Melody Razak. "Moth" takes place in India during the 1940s era split with Pakistan. The upcoming marriage of a 14-yearold girl brings up themes relating to the caste system and the rights of women - all within the tumult of the times.

Mary Ellena Ward has been "binging" books by author P.D. James, in this case "Innocent Blood." Not the typical "who-done-it," the protagonist is an 18-year-old adoptee in England who tries to find out about her biological parents, whose story is complicated by murder.

Marianne Soponis picked up "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow" by Gabrielle Zevin. The story begins with two pre-teen video gamers whose friendship and entangled work lives span many years showing how friendships can grow through repeated redemption and rehabilitation.

Bob Jablon has been reading "Until the End of Time" by physicist Brian Greene, who tackles humanity's quest to find meaning in the universe. Bob also brought "Waking Lions" by Ayelet Gundar-Goshen in which a hit-and-run accident presents complex moral dilemmas.

Ellie Thayer gave a middling rating to "The Midnight Library" by Matthew Haig. It's the story of a depressed woman whose suicide attempt allows her to see how she would have lived had she made different life decisions along the way.

Jan Marx picked up "Census" by Jesse Ball, a story of parental love as a father and his son with Down syndrome travel the land taking the census and meeting a wide range of people in the dystopian landscape.

Nancy McKinley chose "Hamnet" by Maggie O'Farrell. In this excellent novel, the author takes a great deal of license to fill in the large gaps of what we know about Shakespeare's life and that of his son who died at the age of 11 in the late 1500s.

The next BYOB Zoom call will be held on Thursday, June 8th from 4 to 5 pm. Let Marianne Soponis know at <u>marianne.soponis@gmail.com</u> if you're interested in joining us and she'll put you on the list to get the link to the Zoom call. No commitment! Questions or comments? Contact Nancy McKinley at <u>nancymckin@gmail.com</u> or 703 595 8375.

Special Event !!! Join us at PVS' 31st (*not* annual) STEAK AND SWIM



At the HINES' Saturday August 5, 2023 - - 3pm Rain or Shine



This is PVS' oldest annual club event, except that it's not quite annual! Celebrate summer in the Blue Ridge foothills in Delaplane, VA. Enjoy good food, camaraderie, open space, and maybe even a dip in the pool!

Limited to 25. Reserve Now! Deadline to sign up or cancel is July 30th.

BRING: Your own bathing suit and towel and either an appetizer or dessert.

INCLUDED: steaks, baked potatoes, salads, fixings, beverages and (hopefully) sunshine!!

Cost: \$20 per person.

To sign up or for directions phone Kerry or Marianne at 540 364-4810, or email <u>mchines@erols.com</u> and tell us what you'll bring. Also, let us know if you need directions.





SKI TALK

May/June 2023

Several PVS members (the Jablons and the Lakes) attended the PRW Ski Travel Show at the Tysons Marriott Friday May 5th, where vendors from many ski resorts (such as Snowmass, Steamboat, Taos, Telluride, Mt. Bachelor, and several others) had booths and provided brochures, maps, and other information about their resorts. This was an opportunity for the attendees to talk to several of the tour operators and resort personnel to gather ideas for future potential club trips. One of the highlights of the show is that at the end of the show, there are door prizes awarded to those that are still there. Those can range from multi-day stays at some of the presenting resorts (look for a future Members' Corner article about one such trip that Kathy and Barry Lake won at last year's event), multi-day lift tickets at some of those resorts, to branded clothing and other such merchandise. At this year's show, Cara Jablon won a nice winter vest from Steamboat, and Bob Jablon won a pillow from Stratton Mountain along with a slate cutting board.

The following Saturday Tom Tycz, Barry and Kathy Lake went to the spring BRSC meeting where we got a review on this past year's BRSC ski trips, received updates on the planned 2024 trips, and discussed the locations identified for 2025. The event was attended by a wide range of BRSC ski clubs' members such as Richmond, Fredericksburg, Black Ski, Frederick, SCWDC, SSS, Snow Searchers, Pentagon, and Baltimore.

A summary of the day's events is as follows:

2023 ski trip presentations/debrief:

Winterfest – Lake Placid – It turned out to be a great trip with excellent snow with approximately 105 participants.

Western Carnival – Crested Butte, CO – It too was a successful trip, but one that faced some challenges dealing with air travel, trip size limitations due to both air travel and lodging, and resort planning and trip guarantees. All told, there were over 200 participants, from seven ski clubs, that went on the trip.

Eurofest – Val-d'Isere Club Med – What can be said about the success of this trip that wasn't described in the April TOOT about our experience. A wonderful trip with great participation, although only approximately 75-80 people from around five different ski clubs participated.

2024 trips updates:

Winterfest: This year's trip will be to **Sunday River, ME** March 3rd to March 8th 2024, run by Banchi Outdoor Adventures. Might be an interesting trip for our club to think about joining.

Western Carnival: Lake Tahoe, NV – February 3 - 10, 2024 - This could be a good trip for both skiers and non-skiers with all of the casinos. There are already nine clubs signed up for this trip with over 300 participants planning to attend. Final pricing is still a bit up in the air with the airlines playing some pricing games ever since the pandemic ended and travel volumes increasing.

Eurofest: Kitzbühel, Austria – March 15 – 23, 2024 - There are four or five clubs signed up for this trip with over 129 participants planning to attend. As with the Tahoe trip, the airlines are playing pricing games affecting the final price.

If you are interested in participating in any of these trips, please let us know.

2025 venue selection:

Western Carnival: There was much discussion about how pricing negotiations have been going with trying to get a trip into Steamboat, and it was the consensus that a trip to Steamboat should wait at least another year. Discussions took place on candidate resorts, and the selections were Park City (#1), Breckenridge (#2), and Banff (#3).

Eurofest: The site for this was selected at the meetings last year and so no discussion or votes were needed. The trip will be Chamonix/ Mont Blanc, France.

2026 and beyond:

Western Carnival (Banff, Beaver Creek, or Breckenridge are possibilities), and Eurofest may end up being a Japan/AsiaFest. More on this will likely be discussed at the Spring Meeting.

Other Discussions:

Website report – The current webmaster has stepped down and there wasn't any kind of status made available. The BRSC board asked for volunteers to take over the site maintenance, and Ken Eng of SCWDC stepped up to take it over. So, it should be updated with upcoming club trips shortly.

Potential Request for Proposal change/discussions – Will likely include being cash bars at all events (instead of drink coupons) and monitored/supervised buffets to avoid over-consumed food at the sponsored events.

Rotating destination schedule – This has been a discussion item the last couple of years around the candidate resort locations that have the air availability, lodging, and "conference" facilities, sufficient to handle groups the size of BRSC's. Ron Kaltenbaugh has put together a fairly comprehensive spreadsheet of the resorts for future planning purposes.

Future Meetings:

2023 Fall Meeting – This is being coordinated by Karen Noakes of the Richmond Ski Club, and will likely be October 28th at the Wintergreen Resort.

2024 Spring Meeting – This is being coordinated by Dave Karczmarek of the Baltimore Ski Club, and will be at a TBD location and time, in or around Baltimore.

Real ID Reminder - The Real ID will be required for travel starting in May 2025. It would be a good idea to get this sometime next year, if you don't already have it.

Barry and Kathy Lake

Snowmass, Colorado 2024 Save the Date! January 10-17, 2024

We are already planning to go back to Snowmass next year from January 10-17, 2024! Once again we will be staying at our favorite Snowmass Mountain Chalet, which offers a convenient ski in, ski out location. As in recent years, it will be a "Land Only" package that will include lodging and a 5-day senior lift pass. Pricing and other details to follow.

- Snowmass offers direct access to 3,100 acres of skiing, just outside the door.
- The skiing terrain totals more than 5,000 acres, with interchangeable lift tickets and free bus service to Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands & Buttermilk ski areas.

For further information, please contact us at <u>KathyLakehomes@yahoo.com</u> or 703-625-2715. Hope you will join us!

Kathy & Barry Lake, Trip Leaders

Past Event

Annual Meeting April 8, 2023

Our crazy weather was nice to us and gave us a lovely day for our annual meeting. Reg Heitchue and Susan Sinclair provided the lovely venue in the party room of their condo complex.



Including our hosts, 26 members gathered to explore tasty appetizers while visiting each



other. One could find a spinach dip bread bowl, shrimp with interesting sauce, Magic Good Dip for crackers, salmon and cream cheese, and other home-made delights.

Barry Lake, our outgoing president, led the meeting with

announcements. Look for SummerFest and Steak and Swim events elsewhere in this TOOT. For the Snowmass 2024 trip, it was reported that it is too early for definite pricing and other details.

Barry presented the new slate of officers for the annual election.



Members unanimously voted in our new President, Cara Jablon, and Vice President, Bob Jablon, and three new



ExCom members, Bob Knopes, Inge Lesjak, and Rosemary Schwartzbard. Barry has volunteered to be our Membership Chairman.

Many homemade dessert choices followed the meeting's adjournment. Among them were a berry tart, two kinds of cookies and a lemon cake. Members also found mini Eau Claires and a sheet cake.

Of special note: we learned that this day was Bob and Karen Knopes' 62nd Wedding Anniversary.

Some PVSers had a chance to examine two club scrapbooks brought by the club historian.

Thank you Reg and Susan!!

Submitted by Jan Marx







Membership Alert – Biennial dues cycle starts July 1, 2023

The PVS biennial dues renewal period for 2023 – 2025 will begin July 1, 2023. Renewal notices will be sent out via email to the current membership in late June. This alert will serve as the only advance notice before the renewal distribution emails go out to membership.

MEMBERS' CORNER, by Jannes Gibson **Revisiting the Himalayas at 80**

In April 2020, we were scheduled to visit daughter Kate in Kathmandu where she had taken a job teaching early childhood at The Lincoln International School. Of course we cancelled that trip and she was evacuated on March 21....tourists also could not visit Nepal during the worst of the covid pandemic.



So, how could I resist my daughter's plea to celebrate my 80th birthday, November 5, 2022, with her? I agreed to come thinking of the possibility of viewing the Himalayan Range just after the rainy season. It would be my third trip to Kathmandu and I thought of our friend Tazeena whose birthday was just before mine on Nov 1 she was turning 87. We met in Afghanistan in 1968 when she was travelling on her way from London to India. A week before I left she emailed that she would meet me there. From

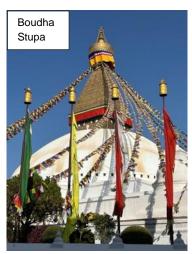


1967-1970 we lived in Kabul, Afghanistan just 1/2 hour away from a ski hill expats had been skiing on for years...we even had a rope tow and small dwelling to get warm.

For five days we were quarantined in Kate's apartment because Tazeena tested positive for covid and Kate stayed in the hotel she had booked for us in Old Patan. It was Tihar (Festival of Lights) and Kate was anxious for us to see all the decorations outside the homes with Lakshmi's footprints leading into the homes for good luck.



Strolling the streets our first morning out, merchants were delighted with Kate's Polaroid camera. Her infectious spirit draws people to her and her knowledge of Newari culture is amazing. We are invited to Mha Puja at Cozy Nepal- a great way to



end our guarantine. Favorites were the Patan Museum (just opened after repairs from the 2015 earthquake) and the Golden Temple. The documentary found on Netflix "Aftershock" is a stunning four-part film about the earthquake in 2015. Kate's friend is one of the Nepali producers. (It is the first film about Nepal that includes Nepali input as most have been done by foreigners.)

Next, we escape the dust, bundles of wires, and motorbikes of the city for The Farm at Nagarkot, a small Tibetan run hotel, to be up in the hills where we can see the range of mountains. An extended Tibetan family was also visiting. Boudhanath Stupa is our next stop back

in Kathmandu and we circumambulate three times around the stupa surrounded by interesting temples

and shops. It was special to celebrate Tazeena's 87th birthday at Utpala Vegan Café that evening.

Out of town again, we visited Bhaktapur, always described as the best preserved city, plus not many cars are allowed so it is pleasant to walk around all day. Mila Guesthouse was so convenient. Tazeena had taken several treks into the mountains – Mt Kailash and Langtang Valley in the past - but hikes were not easy for us this trip and this city was a charmer. She was focused on her tattered guidebook while I was looking forward to our next stop – Namo Buddha. Here is a book recommendation for trying to understand Nepali politics - Forget Kathmandu, An Elegy for Democracy by Manjushree Thapa.

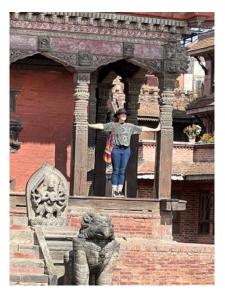




Namo Buddha Resort is an organic farm

resort built in traditional Newari style just outside the Kathmandu Valley so we are again in the beautiful countryside.

This was our second view of the mountains and it was truly amazing. My dream – to see those Himalayan mountains just appearing like a roof to the world. Early on my birthday I went out to sit under the trees gazing at the sun hitting each mountain. All of a sudden I was flicking off a hairy caterpillar that landed on the cuff of my shirt. My first Happy Birthday on my 80th was that stinging caterpillar. It gave me reminders for a good two weeks of our journey. Thanks to Kate and her marvelous taxi driver, Shankar, who flowed with all our changes and desires.



Bhaktapur



Tazeena, Jann and Kate

<u>Calendar</u>:

May	23	Tue	ExCom, Zoom, 7:00 PM
June	18	Sun	SummerFest, Noon , Jill Nelson
Aug	5	Sat	Steak & Swim, 3pm, Kerry & Marianne Hines, Delaplane, VA.



<u>Ski Trips:</u>

Snowmass January 10 - 17, 2024

Officers, Board Members, and Chairpersons

Officers:	Chairpersons:
President – <i>Cara Jablon</i>	Events – Marianne Soponis
Vice Pres – Bob Jablon	Membership Records – <i>Barry Lake</i>
Secretary – Ellie Thayer	Ski Trip Committee – Vacant
Treasurer – Dick Schwartzbard	
Ex Officio – Barry Lake	TOOT Coordinator – Ellie Thayer
Board Members:	TOOT Layout Editors – Jan Marx, Kerry Hines
First Term 2022-2024:	& Dave Warthen
Salli Diakova	TOOT (E-Distribution) – Barry Lake
Kathy Lake	
Don Vierimaa	Webmaster – Mary Ellena Ward
Second Term 2023-2025:	
Bob Knopes	Meeting Records – Sue Lyon
Inge Lesjak	
Rosemary Schwartzbard	Historian <i>– Jan Marx</i>

Useful Ski "Links" Potomac Valley Skiers BRSC Sanctioned Trips DC Ski Online News

Reminder: It is club policy that contact information in the club's roster not be used for promoting personal business, for advertising, or for personal financial gain without the advance permission of the individual member to be contacted. Membership contact information shall not be distributed outside PVS.