

BOOTPRINTS

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Ridge of the Caps Trail, Mt. Jefferson (photo by Dick Forrest)

White Mountain Sampler: Mt. Jefferson

by Dick Forrest

Al Goodhind makes the White Mountain Sampler an annual event, and I'm glad he does! Every year, through his exuberance and enthusiasm, Al usually gets about thirty club members (this year it was thirty-four on the fourth weekend in June) to stay in the Briarcliff Motel in North Conway, New Hampshire, for two nights. The reason: we have easy access to the White Mountains and to outlet stores in North Conway. The White Mountains of New Hampshire are a hiking paradise compared to where we live in western Massachusetts.

We usually go up to North Conway on Friday, some take the day off from work and some come up to the motel after work. We generally have a meeting outside of Al's motel room at 9:30 p.m. to plan who's going on what scheduled hikes for the next day. The scheduled hikes are rated from

easy to difficult, and there's usually four or five options. Perhaps one easy hike, two moderate hikes, and one difficult hike are scheduled,

hike leader's preferences. Al, like the consummate, tour guide that he is, also goes over the latest news from the area on what are the preferred or recommended places to eat and/or to sightsee.

This year the difficult hike was Mt. Jefferson, the third highest White Mountain. Sixteen people appeared at the trailhead to climb Jefferson this year. The trailhead, the highest in the Whites, was at an elevation of 3009 feet. That meant that we had approximately 2700 feet of elevation gain to the summit.

Mike and Monica Gross were our hike leaders. The weather was iffy, and Mike, our resident, club weatherman, understandably, was hesitant about taking the group up to the top of the mountain, knowing that a cold front with showers was coming through from the west. In fact, on the way to the trailhead, it was raining cats and dogs. Surprisingly, the rain let up when we got to the Ridge of the Caps trailhead, where five club members



Bog Bridge Construction on the M-M Trail (photo by Pat Fletcher AMC)

depending on the year and/or the

met us who were not staying overnight in North Conway.

Undaunted, Mike led us up past the second of the two caps (false summits) before making a decision to proceed. I know that I was asked by Ed Laroche whether or not to go on, and said, "Let's go for it!" The weather seemed favorable. I know that the decision to go for the summit had already been made; I was just affirming it.

Sixteen of us made it up to the top of Mt. Jefferson, about 2700 feet of elevation over 2.5 miles. Sixteen of us made it down in a stronger rain - it had been drizzling on the way up. Three of the sixteen took a longer loop on the way down, a rugged, extra 1.5 miles down the Castle Trail and the Link Trail. It turned out to be a tougher day in the rain on the way down for both groups.

Overall, Mt. Jefferson was an excellent hike in the Whites, in spite of the rain. All sixteen of us got down safely, despite minor bumps, bruises and abrasions. A superb choice and good decision-making, Mike and Monica!

-Dick Forrest

Old Quebec City Trip

by Esther Dahill

The Quebec trip was just great! We stayed at a youth hostel at Auberge du Centre d'Arts, Orford. Twelve of us hiked up Mt. Orford on Saturday. It was sunny but breezy. A little chilly at the top, but that didn't stop us from having our lunch. The view was gorgeous - looking over the Eastern Townships of Quebec! Standing out so long and sleek was Lake Memphremagog. After descending the mountain we found we hiked a total of 6.5 miles. Later, some of the group went to a flea market. Ron and I drove around the little towns and enjoyed the countryside.

On Sunday we went to Quebec City. The morning started with rain and cool winds, but by noon we were taking our jackets off. The city is the cleanest I have ever seen. We visited the oldest street in North America, observed two murals, the



Hotel Chateau Frontenac, Old Quebec City (photo by Esther Dahill)

port and the old fort. Sitting proudly at the top of the cliff is the hotel, Chateau Frontenac. It was nice to have a long walkway constructed along the cliff for a gradual ascent to the old fort. While walking the 310 steps you could observe the St. Lawrence Seaway. It was a little scary to have an elevator that could lift you from Old Quebec City straight up the cliff to the plaza by the Chateau Frontenac. The elevator was encased with glass on all sides allowing a view of Old Quebec City and the St. Lawrence Seaway.

After walking some 6 miles, we took a carriage ride around the Parliament and the Military Academy. Louie B was the name of our horse, driven by Pierre. Diane caught up to Ron and me as we were being dropped by Old Quebec City! Needless to say, we then added another 2.5 miles of

walking, not feeling too guilty after all, since the total was only 8.5 miles for the day! The group joined up for supper together at a bistro restaurant in Old Quebec City. We were all tired, but were still willing to try anything new. I can't

close without mentioning a nice little restaurant named Jack O's. The food was so good we just had to revisit it! Monday we traveled back home, but heard that some of the group did one more hike before they left. Thanks to Marcia for turning us on to the area.

- Esther & Ron

Canada Trip



Hiking Mt. Orford, Quebec (photo by Esther Dahill)

by Florinda Peck

A group of us, numbering ten in three cars, met up at McDonalds in Greenfield for the much anticipated

trip, at around 2-ish on Friday, May the 24th, all ready to go! It was a gorgeous sunny day, the first in a long time and all the new tender spring leaves were budding out on the trees. It was at least in the 70's-- --wow, really nice, we thought!

Our little caravan progressed up I-91 towards Canada. All excited and glad that we were going and that we were all packed and made it on time. As we got closer and closer to Canada, the temperature kept dropping and dropping, and soon, there were no nice green leaves on the trees - ugh.... I said, "What happened to the leaves?" By the time we got to Canada, the temp had dropped dramatically to the upper 40's.... And rain, and still no leaves on the trees.

When we finally arrived, it was pouring, and we, all in our summer clothes, were shivering. Another couple was due to arrive later that evening -- I think at least they were dressed for winter, making our total count of 12.

Our rooms were much nicer than expected for a hostel. They had warm made-up beds, private bathrooms, and rooms. Thanks, Marcia! After a wonderful dinner in downtown Magog, we all went back to our motel, and were anticipating our climb the next morning on Mt. Orford.

Saturday morning, we all finally arrived at Mt. Orford, and proceeded to climb up steep road ski trails. I was hoping for the beautiful woods trails, but alas, we happened to take up after a bunch of other hikers, and thus ended up on the road trail. As we kept climbing the trail got steeper and steeper, and the views got more and more beautiful and spectacular, but still, no leaves!

The majority of the group got ahead of us and went all the way to the top, but the three of us "stragglers" kept on trekking. Finally, after an hour of this, we decided to go back down, and down we went, especially me! We proceeded to literally fly down the steep hills at a fast pace. Only I couldn't really fly, but I went flying, though, when my right foot struck a hole and twisted. I fell right to the

hard ground on my hands and knees! My palms were burning, and my knees hurt badly, especially the left one. By the time I got to the bottom, my left knee was really sore, but we survived.



We all met for dinner again. The meals were fantastic and the restaurants that Marcia picked were reasonable and the service was A-1. Of course, with my ace bandage and anti-inflammatory drugs, I could limp around town pretty well with the rest of the crowd. One thing I learned on this trip, you have to heal really fast to keep up with the others--a true PVHC hiker!

On Sunday, guess what, there were torrents of rain, a literal monsoon, as our little caravan once again set out, this time for the beautiful city of Old Quebec. We searched over an hour for a place to have breakfast. I guess in Canada, Sunday morning breakfasts were unheard of. We finally got to have one at another, motel/resort-type establishment.

As we got closer to Old Quebec City, the rain subsided, and to our astonishment, the sun came out and it was a gorgeous day. We got to the city after a walk through parks and quaint streets, and lo and behold, millions of steps, all going down. My knee was still sore, so I put both feet on each step in order to get down without a lot of pain, or alternately, walked like a bronco rider with severe bowlegs to make it down the numerous steps. By the time I got to the bottom, I think my pain was almost gone, or numb, or something.

The trip, all in all, was wonderful, and ancient Quebec City was worth it. We stayed all day sightseeing, and headed back to our motel that evening. Monday was travel day, again, it was sunny, and we all went our separate ways back to the

States with a much more enriched knowledge and history of the Canadian countryside - but still no leaves!

Marcia worked hard at this trip by making sure everyone had a good time. Thanks again from a grateful and healing, fellow hiker.

- Florinda Peck

Tully Lake - June 1-2

by Ann Marie Visconti

Ten PVHC members (Ester, Ron, Mark, John, Norm, Brian, Leah, Katie, Dave and Ann Marie) spent a beautiful weekend at Tully Lake campground, which is managed by the Trustees of the Reservations. We did a day hike around the lake beginning with lunch at Doane's Falls. The water was really rushing this year after all the current rainfall. No kids were jumping off the rocks into the water below, like last year.

Brian and Norm day hiked with us, although Norm stayed with us until at least 9:30 p.m. He might as well have stayed with us all night. We went out in two canoes and one kayak on both days. The first day the lake had whitecaps, quite a work out. At night we had a nice fire and toasted marshmallows. Leah was making Ron burnt crispy black marshmallows, "mmmh."

The next day all of us took a 2-1/2-hour canoe and kayak ride around the whole lake. We saw a lot of wildlife, i.e., turtles and snakes. It was fun until John and Mark soaked Dave and myself in a water fight. Canoes have better paddles than kayaks for flinging water at people. We definitely owe them one. Last year and this year we had a great time. So if you want to enjoy a relaxing, fun, beautiful trip, join us next year.

-Ann Marie Visconti



Heublein Tower (photo by Rachel Bellenoit)

Heublein Tower

by Rachel Bellenoit

On June 8th, Dave Rotondo led several club members to Heublein Tower in Simsbury, CT. The easy 4-mile hike was accompanied by a very pleasant day. The stone wall climbing and steep hills were handled well by all (joke). After thoroughly taking in the Tower, it's history, the beautiful 360-degree view and the grounds, we headed back. Dave wanted to bushwhack between marked trails, but Norm Plante kept him in line. An interesting discussion on 'what is' and 'what is not' poison ivy ended the hike, after which we all had lunch and conversation at a local mom and pop restaurant.

- Rachel Bellenoit



View from Heublein Tower (photo by Rachel)

Memorial Day Weekend on the Franconia Ridge

by John Klebes

It all started when Rob Schechtman gave Shari and me word that the Greenleaf Hut was selling out fast for the Memorial Day Weekend. In the spirit of our great club, seven, hearty soles volunteered to split our trip between the Lonesome Lake Hut and Greenleaf Hut on Saturday night, in order to free up a few spots for more people to enjoy the long weekend in the White Mountains. That decided; the seven of us broke up into two smaller groups to meet up on Saturday night at Lonesome Lake. Bill Cichaski and Dick and Sue Forrest choose a more direct route to the hut to allow a day hike without packs to the summit of Cannon Mountain. The remaining four of us, Shari Cox, Jan Barlow, Mike Carrier, and John Klebes, along with Bart Estes, who came for a day hike, headed in from the west up the Mt. Kinsman Trail.

About halfway up the Mt. Kinsman Trail we took a side trail to take in the views from Bald Peak (2470'). We continued up the Mt. Kinsman Trail to the junction with the Kinsman Ridge Trail. During this time we saw few people and felt like we had the mountains to ourselves, despite this being a very popular hiking weekend. Many thanks to Shari for picking such a secluded and quiet trail. All that changed at the Kinsman Ridge Trail. People passed left and right as if we were at Grand Central Station.

It was at this point that Bart, busy ticking off his 4000-footer, peak-bagging list, talked Mike and me into diverting our plans for an early arrival at the hut. Off we went south on the Kinsman Ridge to take in the

fantastic views from the

rocky summits of North and South Kinsman. Backtracking, we returned to the junction and picked up the Fishin' Jimmy Trail down to the Lonesome Lake Hut. Why Fishin' Jimmy ever picked such a steep, wet, and rocky trail we will never know; but let's hope Jimmy caught some nice fish because my feet were sure tired after passing down this trail on the last leg of our 8-mile journey into Lonesome Lake.

Meeting up again at the hut, the seven of us, plus Bart, were reunited. We wished Bart well as he headed down the trail to his car, and we settled into our bunks before supper. Shari had planned a group feast for the night consisting of cheese, crackers, and pepperoni as appetizers. Hamburgers, garlic stir-fried, green beans with almonds (exquisitely prepared by Chef Klebes), chips, and Mac-n-cheese. Despite feeding a few of the AMC hut volunteers we still had more than enough food to counteract any exercise we got that day. After dinner some of us had an evening hike around the Lonesome Lake. (One particular person, who will go un-named, thought it was a boring idea) Great views were had of the Franconia Ridge, the mountain peaks we would be hiking in the morning, as we crossed the many bog bridges that made up the lake trail.

After our hike we were the envy of the hut when Shari broke out strawberry shortcake for dessert. Due to the perseverance of Jan, who built up her arms whipping cream by hand with a wire whisk, we had fresh whipped cream to top it off. I heard the Greenleaf Hut group had a nice dinner also, but, of course, ours was better!

On Sunday morning Shari, Mike, Jan, and I got an early start as Dick, Sue and Bill slept in for their hike over to Greenleaf Hut. We had a long, 12-mile day ahead of us from Lonesome Lake to Greenfield Hut via the Franconia Ridge. As we headed down the Cascade Brook Trail in rain and mist we made good time past the sometimes treacherous, brook crossings. As we headed up Liberty Springs Trail the pace slowed, since the terrain



Lonesome Lake (photo by John Klebes)

became steep and difficult. When we stopped at the Liberty Springs tent sites for a snack and a breather we met up with several individuals and small groups that had turned back from the summit due to ice and snow on the trail. While this was not encouraging, we were determined to make a go of it. It turned out that after about a tenth of a mile of icy conditions the snow and rocks allowed for some pretty good footing, and we made good enough time to make another diversion south to enjoy the windy summit views from the 4459-foot summit of Mt. Liberty. We then backtracked north to pick up our hike over the Franconia Ridge Trail.

Much of the trail between Mt. Liberty (4459') and Little Haystack Mountain (4780') was in the mist, and we traveled over snow and ice with an occasional foot post-holing through the snow. Nothing really bad, but enough to keep you on your guard and stressed out watching your footing, so much that it really tired one out. Things really got exciting after Little Haystack as we came out of the wooded sections and into the very exposed rock ridgeline that the Franconia Ridge is known for. Despite the poor visibility we got some minor views; but, mostly, we had wind and rock scrambling to contend with.

We knew we were at the home stretch as we peaked over Mt. Lincoln (5089'), and, finally, the summit of Mt. Lafayette (5260'), our highest point of the hike. With almost no really good visibility on the ridge the whole rainy day, we were treated with a few quick patches of blue sky, and the clouds parted to let us see the Greenleaf Hut from the summit. As our tired party headed down, I was really starting to feel that 40 lb.-backpack at the same that we met Bill Cichaski heading up the trail to greet us.

It was a great feeling of camaraderie as the rest of the club at Greenleaf greeted us -- just in time for dinner, naturally. In the club's tradition Rob's group had set out a fantastic dinner of salad, pasta, meatballs, just-baked bread, and brownies. After dinner the sky cleared, and some folks headed up to the Lafayette summit for sunset views. But the long hike had taken its toll on me, and I stayed at the hut to relish the mountain views in comfort. We headed down the next morning via the Old Bridle Path Trail, and took back another weekend of fantastic memories and friendships.

- John Klebes

Greenleaf #2

by Lisa Frigo

This was my second time up to Greenleaf Hut with my boys. A big thank you to Rob Schechtman for leading such a fun-packed weekend. We started our weekend at Indian Head Resort - we stayed in a roomy house there. We swam, went into the whirlpool, and had a great potluck dinner that evening. John, Bill, Shari, Ann, Carol, Dick, Sue, Marybeth, Jan, Mike and Mike were the adults that went. The kids were Mitch, William, Calli, Stephanie, Traci, Michael and Leah. The kids were great! Shari led a group out to Lonesome Lake and hiked all day. The next day some came to Greenleaf by way of Liberty Springs, along the beautiful Franconia Ridge. On Sunday we hiked up to the summit of Mt. Lafayette. Our morning hike was one of wind and fog, so we went up again that evening after a dinner of pasta and meatballs. We all saw a beautiful sunset. Maybe some of you will try Greenleaf next year.

- Lisa Frigo



This Body Climbed Mt Washington

by Lisa Frigo

This year I decided to try Mt. Washington with my boys and the rest of our group. It was a great weekend led by Ann Marie Visconti. The adults were John, Rob, Ed (welcome home Ed!), Jan and myself. The kids were Mitch, William, Leah, Calli, and Traci. Ann Marie led most of us up the Ammonoosuc Ravine Trail, a pretty good workout.

There was nothing like going to Lake of the Clouds. The snow up there looked beautiful against the lakes. A lot of the group had climbed Mt Washington many times, but this was my first with my boys. I can't stop thinking about it. It was one of the best trips I have had with the club. Of course, I'm proud that my kids did it, too. It was so nice to get the full-service meals at the hut, which included minestrone soup, homemade oatmeal bread, salad, Caribbean vegetables, Dijon chicken, and banana cake with butter cream frosting. We only had to backpack some clothing and very little food, just snacks, really.

At the summit the next day some of us had a nice hot lunch. It was good to come out of the drizzle, fog and wind. Some of us were fortunate to take the 1-hr. walk up to the summit the night before to catch some magnificent views. Some of us walked down the Jewel Trail the next day. I really enjoyed those nice slopes down, I know my knees did. Well, if anyone wants to do it again, I'm ready. Let me know. Thanks to everyone in the group for making it a super weekend.

- Lisa Frigo

Two Days across the Presidentials

by John Klebes

On June 8-9th, Ann Marie Visconti put together a club trip to the "Lake of the Clouds" AMC hut on Mt. Washington. While Ann Marie and company were busy leading a gang of excited kids up the Ammonoosuc Ravine, Ed Laroche and I decided to turn this opportunity into a long warm-up hike for our Mt. Rainier adventure in August. We decided to hike the full, Presidential traverse, and touch each of the Presidential peaks of the White Mountains in a two-day marathon, meeting up at Lakes for dinner with the group.

We got a good start on Saturday around 7:45 a.m. and the views were spectacular all day. We went up the Webster/Jackson Trail where

our first views were of a pretty waterfall and pool called the Silver Cascades, similar to the Gem Pool on the Ammonoosuc Trail. We picked up the Webster-Cliff Trail, part of the Appalachian Trail, and summited the rocky boulder of Mt. Webster. We traversed a wooded area and up the steep cone of Mt. Jackson. The summit of Mt. Jackson is breathtaking, with views of the many surrounding mountains and valleys. We descended the steep, bare, rock face of Mt. Jackson, and followed the winding trail through open alpine meadows and scrub before ascending the ridgeline up to Mitzpah Spring Hut. We had the trail almost to ourselves all the way to Mitzpah Hut, but then we caught up with the weekend crowds on the trail and on most of the peaks. It was a fantastic weather day and the peaks were swarming with people. We made great time first climbing the steep ascent of Mt. Pierce, then over to Mt. Eisenhower. From Eisenhower, we descended through switchbacks into the col with magnificent views of Mt. Monroe ahead. We took a herd path over to the Mt. Franklin summit, and then on to Mt. Monroe with a fantastic view of the "Lakes of the Clouds" Hut. The view of the Lakes, half-covered in ice and surrounded on one side by snow, was great with Mt. Washington in the background. We covered the peaks to Monroe and down to Lakes in a little over 7 hours. I think we got in to Lakes just before 3:20 p.m.

We had lots of time to kill at Lakes and had a great time playing the dice game, Cosmic Wimp-out, with Rob and some of the kids. I checked out the dungeon under the Lakes Hut and it was full of ice. It was sure nice kicking back and having someone else cook dinner and breakfast.

Sunday started in deep fog and mist. Got to the top of Mt. Washington with no views and gusting winds of 55 mph. No views at all on Mt. Clay, but then as we left Clay, there were glimpses of blue here and there. The wind was still strong in places and we had dark clouds and a few sprinkles,

even a quick hail splatter. But actually, overall, it was pretty good views, especially in Edmonds Col and from the tops of Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Adams and Mt. Madison. We crossed an ice/snow field, maybe 50 yards wide, where we could have used an ice ax. Just took it slowly and carefully. Guess the terrain was worse, or we were tired, but we didn't make as good time as Saturday, but still did well. Hiked out by way of Valley Way, and met up with Ann Marie and Leah at the waterfalls near the trailhead around 5:15 p.m. Very tired, but it felt good to get a hard workout. With a dinner break we didn't get home until after 11:30 p.m. It was sure tough going into work on Monday.

- John Klebes

NEWPORT CLIFF WALK- A WET ADVENTURE!

It was only- for, the 'brave [foolhardy?] ones...

by Gary Dolgoff

Diane Carey and I led this outing, and we liked it so much when Al Goodhind took us there last December that we decided to give it a 'spring lead'! We went there, in the coldest, wettest, & windiest conditions imaginable. And it was May 18th! On the way to Newport, Norm kept prophesizing that the weather was sure to clear up. Unfortunately, it only seemed to get worse. As we clambered out of the cars, I said to myself, "I can't believe that we're going out in this." But we made it; and as the weather slowly cleared up, we departed those dramatic, oceanside vistas for the pleasures of 'town walkin' and eatin.' Diane's clear planning of the day, plus her good cheer and good company, helped make all us 'rainy travelers' feel a bit better, while we wandered through that rainy day. And of course, an hour before sunset we saw through the second floor, restaurant window a clear, beautiful, ocean sky. Why, oh why, couldn't it have been like that, this morning? Oh well, methinks the participants enjoyed themselves.



Overlooking the Hudson - Breakneck Ridge Hike (photo by Dick Forrest)

THE BREAKNECK RIDGE HIKE

by Gary Dolgoff

And 'What a hike it was!' 'Twas a beautiful day on May 4th. Seven of us 'intrepid hikers' ventured forth to upstate New York (about 55 miles north of NYC) to go on this hike. I scouted this hike prior to 1997, when I lived in New York City. I led hikes there for the NY-AMC Singles & Sociables Chapter. I remembered this one as one of the more memorable and challenging hikes within an easy day's drive of the Big Apple. I was now looking forward to sharing that adventure with my PVHC comrades; plus, I wanted to include my 'old mates' from the NY area in this escapade. I ended up co-leading the hike with Carson Tang (of the AMC), a 'cool fella' from Brooklyn, with whom I've hiked and kept in touch with over the years. Carson, accompanying us on another walk, also helped with one of our NYC events by leading us PVHCers around the Bronx Zoo with 'information galore.' The hike was a joint one with the New York AMC. It feels good to me when I bridge the NY group with our own

PVHCers, since both groups have a natural chemistry.

Anyway, the hike was challenging as befits its name, Breakneck Ridge. We scaled 1200 feet in less than half a mile! The views were fantastic. I was happy to help a few of the hikers from both groups clamber over the many rocks. None of it was insurmountable - each hiker just took 'one step at a time.'

We hiked over 5 miles. This expedition, which, by the way, had some fantastic, sweeping views of some hills or low mountains with carpets of green, plus beautiful views of the mighty Hudson river. Some of the 'hard-rock hikers,' were surprised that I had the 'mojo' to lead such a 'climbing hike,' and 'go through it, fine.' Yeah, it's just like leading Northampton dinners and walks that precludes me from doing these 'full-bodied outings.' Ho-ho-ho! After the hike, a number of us from both groups went to the nearby town of Cold Spring, where we ate at an outdoor place. It happened to be down by the river right next to railroad tracks with a train occasionally whizzing by the restaurant. I hung out with the New York club for awhile during the meal, since I was in no hurry to head back with the hike, the

scenery, the camaraderie, and the ambiance of that eating establishment. After the hike and being together with my fellow hikers - it was grand! John Klebes came over to Carson, shook his hand and thanked him for leading such a nice hiking event...

TRAIL MAINTENANCE- M&M BOG BRIDGE

(led by Ann-Marie Visconti)
by Gary Dolgoff

Since joining the club a couple of years ago; Ann Marie Visconti is continuously showing 'much initiative,' leading 'mucho good events;' and 'with vigor!' On one fine morning (Sat., May 11th), a bunch of us PVHCers went and built a section of 'trail bridge.' May not sound like a blast, but it was! It was serious, diligent work, but relaxing in its own way. Borrowing Rob Schechtman's waders, I waded up to a foot or two in the bog, helping out. At first, I felt a bit awkward, trying to 'step around' in the muddy waters; but, after a while, with the help of the good, ole 'club camaraderie,' I was soon actually enjoying this work! Sue Ziff had it verbally 'penned right' when she gleefully said to me, "You enjoy it, admit it!" I would heartily recommend joining up for any of our trail maintenance events. It's truly 'giving something back.' Plus, at least, with our club, it's fun!



WHITE MOUNTAIN SAMPLER - WHAT A GRAND TIME!

by Gary Dolgoff

On June 21st, about 34 of us PVHCers gathered for our annual White Mtn weekend. Year after year, it's graciously led by Al Goodhind, an even-keeled, friendly, good-natured, and 'fun to be around' fellow. The event in North Conway, where we reside in a clean, comfortable motel, makes those 'hiking-days' complete. There's always a hard hike or two. I did the Mt. Jefferson hike, a 2700-foot elevation gain, with views of 'seas of mountains, and mist,' and all of it above treeline. There were some moderate hikes, as well as an easy hike. This year's easy one led to a 200-foot waterfall, the largest in New Hampshire, I'm told. We went to various places for dinner Saturday night. There are some excellent eateries in North Conway. Many of us went in various-sized groups to various restaurants. A few of us PVHCers went dancing that night to the nearby Upcountry Saloon, where the live music was performed well and was 'rockin.' The next morning, many of us went to a huge buffet breakfast across the street from the motel. I, myself, scoffed up mounds of lox, melon, waffles & strawberries. After the meal and picture taking among friends, we said our good-byes, for the long and scenic drives home. Thanks again, Al, for this White Mountains weekend. It's been a grand time!

Backcountry Scavenger Hunt

by John Klebes

Letterboxing - it's the latest recreational craze to hit New England. Letterboxing combines navigational skills and secret clues to locate treasure boxes hidden by others in some of our most scenic, outdoor hideaways. Once you



Bartholomews Cobble Trail Maintenance Day - April 13th, 2002

figure out the clues and locate and dig up the buried "Letterbox," you will discover the treasure inside. Letterboxing is like a scavenger hunt for hikers. Inside the buried box is a logbook and an ink stamp used to document your successful discovery.

Letterboxing originated in 19th century England when, in 1854, James Perrott set up a small cairn at Cranmere Pool on north Dartmoor. In the cairn he placed a glass jar where visitors, who successfully ventured to this lonely, bleak spot could leave their visiting cards. Thus was born the sport of Letterboxing.

Modern Letterboxes no longer contain visiting cards (postcards), but, instead, hold a journal and a rubber stamp. The treasure hunters also possess their own journal and a personal rubber stamp, and travel from box to box leaving their mark and taking the mark of the found box with them. Part of the "art" and "craftsmanship" is in the uniqueness and design of the individual stamps created by the participants.

While Letterboxing started and remains popular in England today, it didn't catch on in this country until the 1990's, when a

New England man used it as an educational activity for schoolchildren. In only ten years we now have thousands of people participating in the US version of the sport.

Check out the webpage <http://www.letterboxing.org> for a list of clues that hikers can follow to find some of the thousands of boxes hidden out in nature all over the country. Check out the list before your next hike - there just might be a letterbox hidden near your next adventure.

- John Klebes

Congratulations to the following club members that successfully completed the SOLO Wilderness First Aid Certification Program:

- Ann Marie Visconti
- Ed Laroche (renewal certification)
- John Klebes
- Esther Dahill
- Ron Nunley
- Leah Visconti gets special recognition since she is too young for an official certificate, but certainly was deserving.

(Story on Page 10)

UPCOMING HIKES AND EVENTS

Indian Hollow Camping

By Esther Dahill

It is time to send in your reservation for the Indian Hollow Campground trip, Aug 23-25. The campground is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers and is located in Chesterfield on the Huntington line directly behind the Knightville Dam Basin area. The cost per person is \$10. Mail checks to Esther Dahill, 24 Ross Road, Holyoke, MA 01040.

Two hikes are planned, one to the Pinnacle, which is 1.5 miles from the campground, and one to the Chesterfield Gorge, which is about 4 miles from the campground. Bring water shoes, or shoes that you don't care if they get wet for this hike, because we have to cross the river. The river is wide but very shallow. There is approximately 20 miles of circuit road to bike or hike - most of it is pretty easy. The campground lies between the Dead Branch and East Branch of the Westfield River.

The Cummington Fair is open on this weekend. It is about 6 miles from the campground. There is a store in Chesterfield called The Chesterfield General Store. They have a full deli, great sandwiches and other food items. It's about 3 miles from the campground.

If any one needs a tent please contact me. We will try to help out. I know I have a couple extra tents to loan out. The club has also voted to purchase two tents, so they may be available for this trip.

I am looking for a minimum of 20 people to reserve by the July meeting, but we can have up to 100. So far I have 10 ... looking for at least 10 more. The campground is very clean. There are flush toilets and showers. Cook fires are allowed. Wood that is down on the ground can be used for burning.

This is a nice place, you can hike, bike, swim, bird watch, look for wildlife, or just plain, relax. The best part is of it is "group camping only," so our group will be the only group in that area. There will be one other group at the other end of the campground. Only groups are allowed to camp at Indian Hollow Campground.

I will keep everyone posted as to the meeting times and any other updates.

Thanks, Esther.

NEW YORK CITY- BROOKLYN BRIDGE WALK & GREENWICH VILLAGE!

(CO-LED BY JANE GLUSHIK
and GARY DOLGOFF)

These NYC events are gr-reat! We will be walking across the Brooklyn Bridge, hiking miles up downtown Manhattan, touring a museum of individual choice, visiting and eating in Greenwich Village, and going to Ground Zero (for those who may wish to). We will make bus arrangements in advance, and will need payment for a group bus well before the October trip. Call Gary Dolgoff for details.

BASH BISH FALLS (8/17)

A beautiful, thundering (hopefully!) 40-foot (or so) waterfall on the NY- Mass border! A 5-mile walk with a 'not-too-long' uphill, and a 'good downhill,' are rewarding with a nice, leisurely break at the falls themselves. On some days you can feel the spray-mist of the falls, which is refreshing on a summer's day! Gary Dolgoff

MT. MONADNOCK (9/7)

The most visited mountaintop in the country, I'm told. Still has plenty of room for a nice hike and an awe-inspiring view from the top! Steady rain cancels; if in doubt, call me. Gary Dolgoff.

NORTHAMPTON DINNERS AND WALKS!

(Wed., July 24th, and Thurs., Aug 15th) - 6:30pm, Thorne's entrance - Northampton. It's always a nice time, and a great place to meet and greet fellow 'clubbies.' Whether new to the club or a 'grizzled vet,' in a very 'mellow' setting! Come with us to a hearty, dining place in diverse Northampton. And, if you like, stick around for a nice 2-mile (or so) walk. Afterwards, it's good, social fun! Gary Dolgoff





Blue Jays in New England

by Rachel Bellenoit

Over a 4-week period, the 80-year old rhododendron bush on the side of my front porch was host to a blue jay family. It took them about 5 days to build the nest, which was made with rough twigs on the outside, with a softer inside bed made of smaller twigs and animal hair.

The daily routine consisted of the mother sitting on the nest most of the day. The father would come early in the morning and feed her. Then he would guard the nest while she flew around the yard for her daily exercise. The routine would be repeated in the early evening. Before the eggs hatched (about 2 weeks later), the male jay would give out his 'jaay' (warning) call whenever one of our cars pulled into the driveway, or whenever someone would walk up on the porch. After 2 weeks of this routine, I noticed early one morning both parents feeding 4 tiny little jays. As the following days proceeded, the mother became higher and higher on the nest, as the little ones were growing daily. At one point, I noticed there were only 2. I'm not sure if they remove the dead ones from the nest or not. As the 2 remaining ones grew, the parents were away from the nest more often. The little ones were fed on an hourly basis.

One interesting behavior was, when the baby's eyes were still closed, the parents would tap their beaks on the branches of the bush when returning to the nest with food. Immediately, the little heads would point up straight and the mouths would open.

My vantagepoint was great. I left a porch screen window open and was only 2 feet from the nest. Not only was I able to take close-up photos, I also taped them with the camcorder. Once the little ones eyes were open, they would hide in the nest when they saw me. It took them a few days to get used to me.

It only took another week and a half for the remaining 2 to grow up. They mimicked all of their parents' movements and, though gray at this point, you could see the blue feathers filling in. After 4 weeks, it only took a few days for the two little ones to venture away from the nest. One day, they were at the tip of the outside branches, and the next day they were gone.

I see them occasionally in my yard and at the birdfeeders. Once, I saw one of the parents on top of my neighbor's house giving out the warning 'jaay' sound again. The bird was looking down at the lawn.



Photos by Rachel Bellenoit

There was a cat. It was warning the rest of the family. It was also, at that time, that I heard the other sound blue jays make. It's a very melodic 'queedle.' All in all, this was a delightful experience, and I've been told that blue jays often nest a second time in the summer. I hope they come back. The bush

was a safe haven for them. They only had me to tolerate. We did a lot of staring at each other. It was wonderful to have a "birds-eye view."

- Rachel Bellenoit



Solo Wilderness First Aid

by John Klebes

It was a wet, raw, rainy, June 15-16th weekend at Noble View when a dozen members of the PVHC and AMC met for sixteen hours of intensive Wilderness First Aid training from the renowned SOLO organization. Perfect conditions to simulate the real-world accident scenarios that are the heart of this hands-on course. Six members of the PVHC put forth a significant investment in both time and money to acquire and hone skills in accident prevention, assessment, and treatment.

Very few first aid programs address the issues unique to backcountry emergency care where help can be hours or days away. This course gave special focus to the unique issues of extended, long-term care, prolonged, transport situations, improvisation, weather and terrain, and group safety that are unique to backcountry emergencies.

The leadership and emergency management skills of these six club members will be a great asset to our club. Thanks to Ed Laroche for setting up this great opportunity, Ann Marie for her help in organizing, and Wayne Rodrigues, who helped out as a SOLO Instructor-in-training.

**White Mountain Sampler's
(Christmas in July on Mt. Jefferson)**

Day of the Solstice

by Bart Estes

T'was the day of the solstice
And at the trail head,
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even an Ed.

The hikers then huddled,
all lost in the fog,
While visions of lattes
danced in Gare's nog.

All the gear was assembled
in backpacks with care,
In hopes that Miss U Turn
soon would be there.

And I with John's duct tape
and my lost Nalgene bottle
Was wondering when Mike Gross
would turn down the throttle.

We ran up the hill
to where Mike had led.
I talked to the boulders';
Norm stood there and bled.

Then what to our wondering
eyes should appear,
But darkening skies
and cliffs that were sheer.

On boulders with lichen we slipped
out our maps.
We knew in an instant,
t'was the Ridge of the Caps.

The summit was Jefferson;
we arrived in the rain.
The shutters were snapping;
we could not refrain.

As clouds gathered in,
we hurried back down.
Ann Marie with a fork
and Ed with a frown.

Rick, Dick, and Long John
went off to the Castles
Looking for a waiter
who's said to wear tassles.

We slipped and we skidded.
We sat on our butts.
Even the dogs that we passed by
knew we were nuts.

On Eva, on Eva, with hair out of place.
On Sue, you descended with wonderful grace,
On Don with a nose strip that stayed on your face,
On Laurie and Monica you kept up the pace

And kept up with Michael all through the race.

And now, here comes John Paul
who never did fall.
And hike away, hike away,
hike away all.



FOR SALE:

Equipment for Sale:

- Gregory Reality Backpack - size Small (16-17.5" torso) 3900 c.i. condition: excellent +, \$ 135.00
- Gregory Reality Backpack - size Medium (18-19.5" torso) 4350 c.i. condition: very(very) good, \$ 135.00
- The North Face "Tundra" (-20 Degree) Sleeping Bag Delta Polarguard size reg (6') Never used (hanging in closet) purchased in February @ \$239 \$ 170.00

Ken Lamothe (new member June) 413-821-1307

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

July Renewals:

Douglas Borgatti
Rick Briggs
Robert Church
Deborah Fila
Kris Fontaine
Rene Houde
Donna Ingalls
Marcia Kelly
Arlene Lawler
Cathy Lyon & Family
Norm Plante
Robert Schechtman & Calli

August Renewals:

Harry Allen
Marie Bienvenue
Joy Bunnell
Connie Fogarty
Frank Grabinski
Dana Hachigian
David Keith
John D. Leary, Jr.
Sandy Lisella
Ann Mundy
Jim O'Donnell
Florinda Peck
Donald Saberniak, Jr.
Gail Schoonover
Ann Marie & Leah Visconti

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:

Shari Cox, PVHC Treasurer
223 Gifford Street
Springfield, MA 01118

¹ “***&%\$##@!!!!”

see also Visconti, “Bootprints” 3/2002.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Rob Schechtman, President (860) 668-1321
 John Klebes, Vice President (413) 786-3620
 AnnMarie Visconti, Secretary (413) 547-2729
 Shari Cox, Treasurer (413) 796-1326
 Scott Cook, *Wilderness Experiences Unlimited*
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Planning Coordinator: *Dick & Sue Forest*
 Backpacking Coordinator: *Ed Laroche & Mike Rattelle*
 Trail Maintenance: *Scott Aschenbach & AnnMarie Visconti*
 PVHC Web Page Editor: *Ron Gaudreau & Dick Forrest*
 PVHC Email List: *John Klebes*
 Quartermaster: *Jack Leary*
 Bootprints Editor: *John Klebes*

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: klebes@aol.com (Email) or by USmail to John Klebes, 157 Thalia Drive, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
August 6, 2002, 7pm at WEU
September 3, 2002, 7pm at WEU
- ❑ Next Hike Planning Meeting:
August 13, 2002, 7pm at WEU
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: August 23, 2002
- ❑ Club Picnic - August 18, 2002
Have you signed up yet?

*** Check out our web page at:

<http://www.geocities.com/pvhcweb>

Join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to: pvhc2000@hotmail.com

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 526 College Highway
 Southwick, MA 01077

