

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 6 Issue 2

March 2002

A Winter Hike in Westfield

by L.E. Merrill

Is it possible to have an easy hike on a snow-covered trail? On January 13, the weather was cold and windy. The sky was an ominous gray. Ten sturdy hikers without snowshoes or crampons set off on a trek through Stanley Park in Westfield.

The hike began in the parking lot by the soccer fields. Unknown Stanley Park hiking expert, Dianne Carey, led the group across the icy road and through the snowy picnic grounds. Then the group began a treacherous descent to the Three-Mile Loop trailhead. It was approximately a fifty-foot loss of altitude within one mile.

The group was soon on a trail that disappeared into the forest. The trees shielded the hikers from the brutal wind. The Loop Trail slopes down to the Little River and follows it for about a mile.

The trail was covered with snow or goopy mud. (The worst type of mud.) About halfway on the hike, it began snowing. The Leader allowed frequent rest stops so the group could maintain their high energy level under adverse conditions.

At the end of the trail, no one was exhausted so our fearless leader continued on to the duck ponds.

Finally, we arrived back at the parking lot with ten people. Hopefully, the same ten who began the hike. The group departed for a much needed food consumption function at Applebee's.

One of the club officers was on this easy hike. He shall remain unnamed so his reputation as a tough hiker and great outdoorsman



Just off the Summit and out of the wind on Moosilauke

(Photo by Shari Cox)

will not be tarnished. (and the editor appreciates your discretion!)

Brain Dead in the Whites

by Bart Estes

We began early - on the trail by 6:30, headlamps on, fast pace. Cloud cover delayed the morning light. The temperature hovered in the 30's. Ann Marie had pulled Ed over to the dark side, and we were out to bag Owl, the most remote of the 4,000 footers in the Whites.

The trail was level, often traveling on old railroad roadbed. First light found us ahead of schedule. Light snow fell. We saw

rain, sleet, and snow during the day; always intermittent, never of consequence.

We crossed streams and small rivers. We would have to cross Lincoln brook six times before returning to the road. When we reached the 2nd crossing, there was no way to cross on the stones. The brook was 50 feet wide. Although the central channel could be waded, it was at least knee deep and swift. We consulted our maps. The trail crossed

back to our side within two miles and so we decided to bushwhack to our right, along the banks, until we found a place to wade or the trail crossed back to us.

At first, the way was open. Other hikers had adopted our tactic. We lost the herd trail within a quarter hour. The underbrush became dense; the brook broke into threads surrounding islands. We found a series of shoals connecting a series of islets. The channel by the far bank was six feet deep. We returned to our side. I talked and whistled to the bears to let them know we were coming. Ed reminded us to watch for the trail and searched the "brook" for possible crossing places. "##@!*&?)?>#~!!," Ann Marie remarked cheerfully. "?:?>>)&&^% the &^&%^%%\$\$ -ing

water. *^\$\$\$## "I'm just going to wade across. My boots are wet anyway. **^\$##@!\$455&&{}}!!!~ ." Reason prevailed.

We continued to whack bush. Occasionally we glimpsed the bulk of Lafayette on our left. The brook had turned and we were headed north. We found the herd trail again and the going became easy. It was wide enough for us to walk two abreast and was so heavily used that deadfall was cleared from it. All we had to do was be sure to spot the regular trail when it crossed over to us. The Lincoln Brook Trail would continue in to the north. We needed to spot the cairn that marked the beginning of the trail up the slide on the west side of Owl.

The herd trail continues to impress us. It was better maintained than many of the regular trails. We were making up the time we had lost in the bush. The sky cleared a bit. To our left, what we had assumed to be the peaks of Flume and Liberty, revealed itself, instead, to be the elongated mass of Owl. It couldn't be. I said impolite things to the stones. A sign indicated 13 Falls campground was less than a mile away. We were on the wrong side of the mountain. We had lunch at 13 Falls campground. We were ahead of schedule, making great time, in good form, on the wrong side of the mountain.

What we had thought to be the 2nd crossing of Lincoln Brook had been only the first. When we had turned right, we missed our Brook completely (it had joined with Brook at the point where we turned). We were lucky. We stumbled onto and stayed on a regular trail until we found ourselves in a wrong but known spot. If we had succeeded in crossing the brook we would have been well and truly lost for the trail we expected to find on the other side was miles away. We had a pleasant hike out. There was rain, snow, and sleet. We had time for a side trip to remark Franconia Falls which were well worth the effort. Ages of rock bearing spring run off have carved sinuous, smooth channels in the granite over and through which the /// River flows.

We were out by 3:30. 17.5 miles in under nine hours and we only missed Owl by a couple of miles. We were lucky. In my personal rule book, right after "no falling", I have now written, "stay on the trail."

- Bart Estes

Soapstone Mountain

by *Mary-Beth Carney*

On November 17, 2001, at 10:00 a.m., a rather civil hour of the morning, nineteen hikers set out to hike around the perimeter of Soapstone Mountain in Somers, CT. Unlike much of the fall we all had experienced, with unseasonable temperatures, the day was crisp and bright, a perfect day for hiking. We met at the Longmeadow Friendlies and set off in a caravan arriving at Soapstone shortly before eleven. Fourteen were members of PVHC and five were guests. Shirley Porter and Mary-Beth Carney, led the hike.

We left from the parking lot on Gulf Street and crossed over to Sodom Road and then through the woods. While scouting out this

route earlier in the summer, we had noticed some work going on, cutting trees and the like. Little did we realize that the State of Connecticut was altering the trail. While it put us a little off course, we were able to find the connecting trail and continued around the base. We also found the trail very different with all of the leaves off of the trees. We had chosen this route because while it did have a few steep inclines and downgrades, for the most part it was a nice meandering trail. I think we all had a great time and the time of day worked well.

-Mary-Beth Carney

Membership Directory Update

Membership Directories were distributed to all active members in January. There is a very limited number of extra copies available. If you are a new member and would like one give John Klebes a call at 413.786.3620.

PVHC 2002 Election Results

PRESIDENT

Rob Schechtman

VICE-PRESIDENT

John Klebes

SECRETARY

Ann Marie Visconti

TREASURER

Shari Cox

At the January Meeting nominations were taken for club officers for the 2002 club year. Elections, normally held in February, were uncontested and the year 2002 officers were recorded by the secretary at the February Executive Board Meeting. We look forward to serving you during the coming year.

Upcoming PVHC Clinics:

by John Klebes

In March, just in time for the Bartholomew's Cobble Trail Maintenance Day, we have invited Don Reid back again for another of his always-fantastic slideshow's on Nature at the Cobble. Then, In April, the Winding River Land Conservancy will give a talk about development of the Sodom-Drake Mountain Trail. (See the next two articles about the Winding River and Sodom-Drake Trail -- and be sure to check out Joy Bunnell's hike on the property on May 19th)

What's next? How about helping out with some ideas for future clinics? We are looking for some interesting speakers for the May, June, and July meetings. Do you know someone that might be interesting and willing to share with the PVHC? Let me know your ideas. We don't provide any honorarium to invited speakers but as always the honor of a free PVHC T-shirt is something to be coveted. Send your ideas to John Klebes, Editor Bootprints.

A Message to Hikers from the Winding River Land Conservancy

by Joy Bunnell

Do you ever worry about local communities losing their balance between open space and development, thus ruining the qualities of life that made them attractive in the first place? We of the Winding River Land Conservancy (WRLC) do.

Land trust data show that too much development will change the character of a community forever, making it a less desirable and more costly place to live for all species, including humans. In Westfield alone, 2,084 acres of land were developed between 1971 and 1995.

Seven acres are lost to development each month. In the last 50 years Westfield's population has grown 80 percent.

The WRLC formed in 1998 with the mission to preserve, conserve and protect the natural diversity and character of Westfield and surrounding communities for present and future generations. We work closely with the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR) to encourage farming, we accept gifts of funds and of land to enhance open space, and we provide programs and materials to educate landowners and the public about environmental issues and tax benefits, and work with like-minded organizations and neighborhoods. Among our many projects are some that involve securing and maintaining hiking trails.

We are relatively young and need all the help you can give us. Please start by becoming a member today. Phone (413) 562-1386 to leave a message asking for a membership brochure.

Sodom-Drake Trail Steps Forward

by Joy Bunnell

What is the Sodom-Drake Mountain Trail you ask? Panoramic views, waterfalls and gorges are part of what will be seen once the Sodom-Drake Mountain Trail is completed. The trail conceived by Tom Fitzgerald of Southwick will traverse the ridge that runs along the western borders of Southwick and Westfield and the eastern border of Granville linking Sodom Mountain and Drake Mountain.

The effort has taken a big step forward with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Winding River Land Conservancy and The Trustees of Reservations. The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) was founded in 1891 by Landscape Architect Charles Eliot.

The MOU spells out responsibilities of both organizations agreeing to work cooperatively with each other, the communities of Granville, Southwick and Westfield and property owners along the proposed trail route. Both organizations hope that the creation of the greenway will lead to permanent protection for the land surrounding the trail.

- Joy Bunnell

2002 Camping & Outdoor Show

by John Klebes

This year we had 24 people volunteer to help out staffing the PVHC Booth at the Springfield Camping & Outdoor Show. I'd like to thank each of you for helping out this year. I think everyone had a great time meeting new people and sharing the spirit of our club with potential new members. Over 40,000 people attended the show this year.

As in previous years Dave Rotondo put together a display of photographs and signs and we ran our traditional slideshow to let visitors see the kinds of hikes and activities we had over the past year.

Stephanie added an unusual wildlife flare to the display this year with a lighted reindeer and birds nesting in the PVHC Holiday tree. Something to do with wildlife seen while hiking I assume but it sure caught people's attention. Thanks again to all of you who helped put PVHC in such a good light.

- John Klebes

"Our ideals, laws and customs should be based on the proposition that each generation in turn becomes the custodian rather than the absolute owner of our resources - and each generation has the obligation to pass this inheritance on to the future."

-Quote from Alden Whitman



The Backpacking "Triple Crown"

What does it take to hike one of America's longest trails? Lot's of time, determination, stamina, and ambition. Not many that start out on a multi-state long trail make it. Now consider doing all three of America's North-South National Scenic Trails in a single year. That's the Backpacking "Triple Crown" and on October 27th, 2001 "Flyin' Brian" Robinson was the first person to backpack the Appalachian, Continental Divide, and Pacific Crest Trails within a single year.

October 27, 2001 - Brian finished the Triple Crown today! He has hiked 7,371 miles in 300 days:

On the AT: All 2,168 miles
On the CDT: All 2,558 miles
On the PCT: All 2,645 miles

Brain Robinson, a 40-year-old Californian stated; "I needed this kind of challenge, It's my Mt. Everest." A former computer engineer "Flyin' Brian" hiked as many as 40 miles a day with a full pack. He consumed 100's of packets of mac 'n' cheese, ramen, and giant Snickers bars and endured plenty of weather obstacles and physical hardships such as shin splints and having your gear stolen.

Asked what the biggest challenge was he said; the "intolerable" isolation. It seems that unlike the experiences of most thru-hikers, Brian missed one of the most meaningful of the rewards of thru-hiking - the friendships and shared experiences one has with people meet along the trail. His super-fast pace allowed for only the briefest human encounters. Still, finishing 7,271 miles in 300 days is a fantastic accomplishment and

based on the public's response to Brian's accomplishment I would expect he is more then making up for any loneliness he felt on the trail.

On January 1, 2001, Brian began his attempt to hike the Appalachian Trail, the Continental Divide Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, 7,371 miles, all in one calendar year. He finished the Triple Crown on October 27th.

- *Written by John Klebes and based on a newspaper clipping contributed by Bill Cichaski*



- PVHC Bog Bridge Project as seen last Fall during the dry season - Are you wonder what it looks like in the wet season? Come see how nice our work came out during our Spring trail maintenance walk through of the newly adopting M-M Trail Section 1 & 2. Join us on March 23rd, 2002 for some easy trail clearing and walking. Then on May 11th we will complete the renovations to the Bog Bridges you see above. (Check this month's activities schedule for details)



Spring
Photography Hikes
by Rachel Bellenoit

May 5th, Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

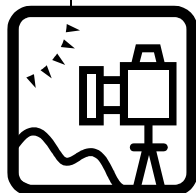
MT. HOLYOKE COLLEGE (weather permitting) Meet at 8 a.m. on campus – directions forthcoming. (1-mile easy hike)

Purpose: Photography hike/walk – working knowledge of your camera necessary; bring tripod if you have one, an extra roll of film and an extra camera battery.

Bring binoculars if you have them. Canada geese and their goslings roam the shoreline of the upper pond in May.

I'll be happy to share what I've learned and welcome any other club photographers who want to join in and add their own expertise.

- Rachel Bellenoit



May 19th, Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Whiting Reservoir, Easthampton (Rt. 141) (weather permitting) Meet at 8 a.m. at Brooks Pharmacy in Holyoke. Parking is limited at the reservoir. (3.5 miles, easy)

Purpose: Photography hike/walk – working knowledge of your camera necessary; bring tripod if you have one, an extra roll of film and an extra camera battery.

Bring binoculars. You never know what creatures will pop up.

I'll be happy to share what I've learned and welcome any other club photographers who want to join in and add their own expertise.

- Rachel Bellenoit

Block Island Day Hike (day trip)

by Rachel Bellenoit

I'd like to plan a day hike to Block Island, RI, late September or early October. Indian summer is the ideal time to go. I've been going there since I was a child and lately I try to get out there once a year. I'm going out there this spring to scout it and gather information to plan a fall hike. I'm looking at a photographer's hike, a bird-watching hike, a bike tour and whoever wants to lead a strenuous hike, well, you can do the 5x7 mile island a few times in 1 day. I'll need leaders for the separate hikes. If you're interested, let me know. I can only do one and that is the shutterbug one.

We can carpool to Galilee, RI early on a Saturday or Sunday morning, take the ferry over (possibly a few cars), do our individual hikes, meet up late afternoon for some chowder and clam cakes and take an early evening ferry back.

The island, if you're not familiar with it, is a short ferry ride from Galilee, RI. It has over 100 fresh water ponds and a Great Salt Pond in the Center. There is a lighthouse on the north point where the water currents meet. The southeast end of the island has beautiful bluffs (the Mohegan Bluffs) where it is said that you can hear the wailing of Indians being pushed off the cliffs at night (during tribal rival battles). Not far from the bluffs is the other lighthouse (of a different architectural style that then typical white tower).

There are 3 basic trail areas, one that heads from the main beach on the northeast part of the island all the way to the northern point lighthouse. This trail followed is on a bluff where you can see hundreds of butterflies, dragonflies and ocean views. To the west of the bluffs is Rodman's Hollow (Devil's 'cave'),

which is a large depression in the ground with trails.

For those of you who like to surf the net, here is one of the Island's websites:

<http://www.ultranet.com/block-island>

I'd like to get an approximate number of how many would be interested, so please email or telephone if you think you'd like to join us. If we can pull this off (and have fun, and I'm sure we will), we could plan an overnight trip next year.

Rachel Bellenoit

Email: rollei_flex@hotmail.com

Home phone: 413.594.6322

Think it's too COLD to Hike? - Try an Electric Parka!

The North Face had an unexpected hit during this past holiday season -- a battery-powered fleece jacket called the MET5. Just imagine sitting atop Mt. Monadnock while everyone is freezing and you're toasty warm. Thanks to the U.S. Army's Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Mass., and no doubt lots of our tax dollars, we can be thankful for this space-age technology coming to the commercial market.

Malden Mills (which co-developed the technology for the Army) developed the stainless steel conductive fibers that are thinner than strands of human hair. With these tiny fibers woven into cloth panels on the MET5 fleece jacket, and wired to two 4-ounce lithium-ion batteries, you can be a toasty 114 degrees Fahrenheit for as long as two and a half hours.

Even at \$500 you had to get lucky to find one because they sold out in January. I think I'll wait for the electric gloves.

- John Klebes

PVHC Snowshoe Rentals:

The club has purchased for the use of our members 4 pairs of snowshoes; we have 2 Tubbs, Altitude 25 & 35, and 2 Atlas 833s. Our Quartermaster, Jack Leary (413-562-0264), will assist you in renting these items under the following conditions:

Snowshoe Rental Process

Rental: \$5; 1-5 days (i.e. pick-up Thurs return Monday)

Deposit: \$25 to be refunded upon return (separate check)

Max. Rental length: 5 days, Must be current member, one pair only, and one reservation at a time.

Procedure:

1. Call Quartermaster place on hold for dates.
2. Send \$5 min of rental/deposit fees, Quartermaster will confirm receipt. Reservation dates forfeited if money not received within 4 days.
3. Arrange for pick-up with quartermaster, pay-in full upon pick-up, sign release.



Where your PVHC Dues went in 2001

For the year 2001 the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club had an average membership of 197 members with each of you supporting the club through annual dues.

The attached pie chart represents a summary of how your dues contributed to the many activities that the club supported in the year 2001. The club provides our members with a subsidized summer picnic, holiday party, and liability insurance to hike leaders each year. In addition we have an active trail maintenance program that promotes conservation and land stewardship. Your dues also make it possible for you to receive new activity schedules by mail, if you cannot attend a meeting, and provide for publishing our club newsletter "Bootprints". Volunteers run all the executive board positions and the clubs activities.

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

March Renewals:

Dian Behringer
Fay Borgatti
Kay Byington
Dianne Carey
Mike Carrier
Jerry Cyr
Maurice Davis
Lisa Frigo
Alan Goodhind
M. Chris Guevin
John Klebes & Family
Jennifer Lamothe
Theresa Mahaffey
Cynthia Mahlau
Angela Orlich
Celeste Roselli

April Renewals:

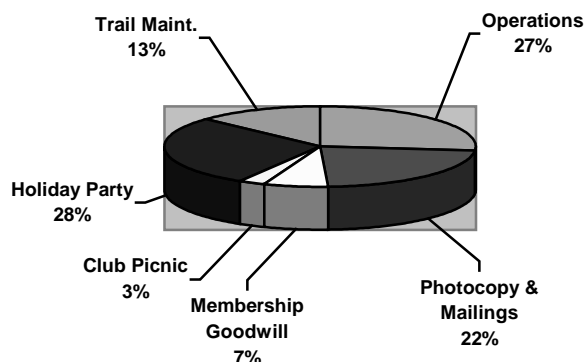
Scott Aschenbach
Becky Beeman
Helen Bowers
Karen Brothers
Bill & Dianne Chiba
Rosemary Colegrove
Esther Dahill & Family
Stephen Fitts
Cynthia Fugere
Jane Glushik
Bryan Goodwin
Mike & Monica Gross
David Koerber
Charlotte Lee
Michelle Mathieu
Susan McGurk
Patricia Miller
Jeff Mills
Dick Munsell
Michael O'Donnell Family
Mike & Karen Rattelle
Gordon & Andrea Swift
Marty Tilden
Frank Vania
Stanley & Linda Warren
Charles Williams

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

Where PVHC Dues Go

(Jan to Dec 2001)



Operations:	Liability Insurance, Office Equipment & Supplies, Guest Speaker Gratuity T-Shirts, etc.
Photocopy & Mailings:	Meeting Agendas, Schedules, Newsletters, Club Brochures, Membership Kits, Labels, Postage
Trail Maintenance Activities:	Support For Activities: Trail Maintenance, Purchasing Trail Maps & Guide Books, etc.
Holiday Party:	Includes Food, Hall Rental, Door Prizes, & Entertainment
Club Picnic:	Includes Food & Misc Expenses
Membership Goodwill:	Special Awards, Donations, And Charity

COLOR the PATCH Contest

Deadline March 23rd, 2002



Here's your chance to show your creativity. Help us colorize the PVHC Logo. The winning design will be made into an embroidered club patch. Not only will your creativity be forever captured in the patch but the winner will get a free one to boot.

Pick one color to represent the background material and you can use up to seven additional colors. Act quickly -- the deadline is March 23rd, 2002.

Mail Entry to: Shari Cox
223 Gifford Street
Springfield, MA 01118



Battenkill Canoe Trip -- Payment Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Amount	Total
Canoe (per person)	\$24.00	
Kayak (per person)	\$28.00	
Saturday Bar-B-Q (per person)	\$9.25	
Sunday Breakfast Roll W/coffee	\$ 3.75	
Sunday Breakfast (coffee only)	\$.50	
<u>Camping (Tent)</u>		
Adult	\$10.00	
Child	\$ 5.00	
Sub-total:		_____
7 % New York Sales Tax:		_____
Total Paid:		_____

All payments to be in full
All payments must be made by checks only!!!
All checks made out to PVHC

All checks to go to:
Terry or Sandy Cripps
60 Silver Lake Drive
Agawam, MA. 01001-2350
You can reach us at: 413 786-0335
Bakpak.Javanet@Rcn.Com

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:
 April 2, 2002, 7pm at WEU
 May 7, 2002, 7pm at WEU
- ❑ Next Hike Planning Meeting:
 April 9, 2002, 7pm at WEU
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: April 30, 2002

*** 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

