

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 8 Issue 1

January 2004



PVHC Holiday Party

By John Klebes

This year's Holiday Party was filled with food, dancing, prizes, and fun and games – not to mention our awards ceremony honoring all those who helped make the year possible and Ann Marie's fantastic slide show showcasing the year of hiking and outdoor events. Please join me in thanking Frank Kamlowski, Gary Dolgoff and their committee for putting on a great party and Ann Marie Visconti for all the time and effort she put into putting on such an outstanding slideshow.

February Elections

Elections will be held for new club officers at the February 3rd Club Meeting. If you can not attend the meeting but still would like to vote contact our club treasurer, Kim Bruneau Stevens, by Jan 15th. (Kim Stevens can be reached at kimspaz1005@aol.com, 413-569-1970, or 32 Hastings Road, Southwick, MA 01077) Absentee ballots should be returned by January 30th to be included in the vote at the February 3rd meeting.



Holiday Party Committee



Chester Arches Hike – Dec 26, 2003

BILL BURGART'S HIKE & HALLOWEEN PARTY-EXTRAVAGANZA!

By Gary Dolgoff

On the 31st of October ('All Hallow's Eve', Bill- put on his annual [most years, anyway] - many-faceted all-day 'lead'...) - He invited our Club (which was very well-represented there), as well as the AMC & others...

About 30 folks showed up for his 'free lunch' (our club, loves food...greatly!), which included his delicious homemade bread. This was followed by an all-afternoon hike up & around the Mt. Tom area (attended by about 45 hardy souls), which left from his rambling, Easthampton home (we split up into 'easier' & 'more difficult'...the easier group got out of the woods later, before dark, barely!)

Early evening, ushered in his zany & varied Halloween party (about 60 attendees!), with folks dressed in all

Congratulations to our Year 2003 Recognition Award Recipients

Marcia Kelly
Richard Harris
Gary Dolgoff

What a fantastic year 2003 was for the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. During this year's Holiday Party Ann Marie and I started off by acknowledging the over 50+ Event Coordinators and Standing Committee Chair people who volunteered their leadership over the past year to put on over 230 events. Special recognition was given to our top three leaders Marcia, Gary and Richard, for their contributions in 2003. In addition, this year's "Volunteer of the Year" Award was given to Marcia Kelly for her years of volunteered leadership including over 65 scheduled trips on our schedule in 2003. Her evening hikes, Skinner summit concert series hikes, hiking trips to Ireland, Costa Rica, Canada, and the annual Christmas Revels trips demonstrate the breadth of commitment she has given to the club. Thanks to all of you that volunteer your time to make this club the best in the area. Sincerely, John Klebes.

manner of 'Halloween garb'...(the



dinner-food, was gone almost instantly, consumed ravenously!)

By 8pm, Bill was 'gone', his energy spent (after the tons of preparation, etc). He was slumped in a corner, as though the wicked witch had zapped him!

A splendid time was had by all! As always, gr-reat comraderie!

Walker's Haute Route

By Shari Cox

In September, Laurie Mahoney and I attempted to complete the Walker's Haute Route. The Walker's Haute Route is a 180-kilometer long route that starts in Chamonix, France, the home of Mont Blanc to Zermatt, Switzerland, the home of the Matterhorn. It is called the Walker's Route because it does not take technical mountaineering skills. It is still a challenge, as one needs to cross 11 passes, ascend 12,000 meters and descend 10,000 meters. This can be done in about 12-14 days. Laurie and I completed a speck more than half of it.

The book we used to guide us was called "Chamonix-Zermatt: The Walker's Haute Route" by Kev Reynolds, a Cicerone Guide. We also had two maps, which were very helpful at times, but the book is what we used mostly. The guidebook gives a day-by-day description with the route, places to stay and alternate

routes and alternate modes of transportation other than by foot if one happens to feel the need to skip parts.

Laurie and I started from Chamonix, France on August 31st. The trails go through villages that have accommodations and restaurants. A couple of places that we stayed at were away from the villages at places called refuges. Refuges are like the huts in the White Mountains and they have meals available. Since we were there in September, we did not have a problem getting a bed.

The trail comes close to glaciers and goes through small hamlets with chalets covered with flowers flowing from flower boxes. It is an opportunity to see many snow crested and glacier filled four thousand meter peaks, many glacier moraines, along with the wildlife of playing chamois and roaming ibex.

As I said Laurie and I only did a little more than half of the route by foot. One day it was raining and turning cold. It was a difficult day ahead and the elevation was high. We thought we could catch a bus to take us a little bit ahead passing the mountain and picking up the route later on. Unfortunately, we were having some difficulties with the bus schedule. After we had it all worked out and bought our bus tickets we ran into two Irish guys that we had met previously and lodged at the refuges together. They had told us that they were packing it in and just taking the train to Zermatt. Laurie and I easily talked ourselves into following their lead. We returned our bus tickets for train tickets and we were in Zermatt that day. I do feel a little guilty for quitting but I know I can always go back. It was a beautiful place to be and I hope to go back.

We stayed at a nice place in Zermatt and ran into other people that we had met on the trail. Actually, I was quite happy that I did, because one man had found my wallet that I had left at a phone booth when I first met them. I never thanked him properly, so this gave me the chance.

I will say though, Zermatt is a nice village but it is filled with tourists and is not as enjoyable as the other little villages we went through. The hike is one I recommend for anyone is going to be in that area.

Check out the website at www.geocities.com/hikearoundtheworld/

Dominica- Hiker's Paradise

By Laura Aubrey-Cook

The island of Dominica is situated in the West Indies chain of the Caribbean Islands. This lush and mountainous island is located between the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Many people mistakenly think this island is the Dominican Republic. Not true. The Dominican Republic shares its landmass with Haiti and has a Spanish heritage. Dominica was French, then British until its independence ten years ago. Dominica's official language of the country is actually English! The island's second language is Creole (broken French). The Northeastern part of this lush island is still inhabited today by the Caribe Indians, who were the original natives to this paradise.

Dominica has more than three hundred waterfalls with trails of various degrees of difficulty. The second largest boiling lake in the world is located here. It takes a strenuous three and a half hours of hiking to reach it. An experienced guide is recommended, as it requires a whole day to experience this one trail. Other trails such as Emerald Pool, Titou Falls and Trafalgher Falls are less rigorous, but equally beautiful.

There are several sulfur spring sites in Dominica and their healing properties have become known throughout the Caribbean. The terrain of this island is quite mountainous with the central portion consisting of mostly rainforest. The island itself is on volcanic rock so there are few sandy beaches here. Regardless, the beauty is boundless. Multitudes of hibiscus and many other colorful, lush plants and flowers cover the island's peaks and valleys. The ocean is a beautiful turquoise blue with its visibility coming close to 70 feet. The marine life and corals are interesting to watch and the intensity of the colors resembles a painter's pallet. Hard to believe, you're thinking, but it is richer in color than any other place in the

Caribbean. We came here to scuba dive, but the landscape has so much to offer, that we spent one day hiking and exploring the many waterfalls and sulfur pools.

The locals were incredibly friendly and genuinely glad to see us and show us their island homeland. We soon found the local bakeries filled with sweet rolls and fresh breads that melted in your mouth and remind you of your grandmother's kitchen. However, I must warn you, renting a car on this island is not the best idea. The streets lack appropriate signs and the roads resemble a roller coaster complete with hairpin turns. Even the most experienced driver will be greatly challenged here. We left the transportation to our guides and shuttle drivers. I rather enjoyed being the passenger for a change of pace.

Dominica also has a very large population of spinner and spotted dolphins, which inhabit its surrounding waters as well as a few pilot and sperm whales. Whale watches are available two times a week in the afternoons. Sightings tend to be more common during the spring and fall seasons. But, the dolphins are present by the dozens. Pods of dolphins followed our dive boat, swimming right along side of us, jumping out of the water and flipping their tails. It reminded me of Flipper, but these were wild dolphins! They appeared to be showing off for us. We came to a complete stop to observe the pods and they vanished in just moments! The boat's motor started and again the dolphins surfaced and began to race along with us. I couldn't think of a better way to spend our surface time between dives.

No story would be complete if I didn't tell you about the Caribbean style cooking in Dominica. We had most of our meals at our hotel, which was a very small family run establishment. The cooking staff has been with the hotel for more than a decade and we were pleased with the variety and quality of our meals. Native plantain, bananas, grapefruits, lemons, avocados and papaya were just a few of the local produce available. Fresh tuna, swordfish, local beef, goat and poultry were some of the entrées. Homemade soups, breads, desserts and local vegetables

rounded out main part of each meal. In other words, we didn't go hungry. The drinking water comes from the mountains and is filtered and purified, so we did not have to stock bottled water.

This was one of the most relaxing and enjoyable trips to the Caribbean. Dominica is certainly a place I would return to again and again, not just for the diving, but because of the beauty, climate and the West Indian people. For any information regarding the island of Dominica, our next trip is scheduled for April 24th -30th, 2004. Please feel free to call Laura Cook at 413 568-8764.

Down Under in Australia

By Laura Aubrey-Cook

I recently returned from the best vacation ever in my life. It's true, in the past 10 years I have traveled to many exciting places, but it is hard to believe that Australia is the place I would return to again and again. It has something to offer everyone. The smallest continent, Australia proves to be more diverse and friendly than any other continent/country, I have visited to date. The flights are timely and the variety of tours available cannot be matched anywhere else in the world!

I had the privilege to escort a trip of twenty travelers to this land referred to as down under this past summer for seventeen adventure filled days. Australia, rests below the equator between the Pacific and Indian oceans. Their seasons run the opposite of ours with June, July & August being winter months and September, October, & November being spring. December, January, & February is summertime and March, April & May is their autumn.

The terrain of Australia varies, with the northeast part of the continent known as North Queens land, contains miles and miles of rainforests with tropical weather to match. The western part of the continent is desert with dry, arid weather. To the south are cooler temperatures and the island of Tasmania. Central Australia is termed the outback, where the vastness of this continent appears to

never end. The trip to Australia causes one to lose a day of time by crossing the international dateline. Don't worry about the loss however, because on return you get it back! The time difference between Australia and the west coast of America is fourteen hours. Calling home was a challenge, considering the time changes. It was at least inexpensive to call the states. Internet was accessible everywhere.

It is always an extra pleasure when traveling to a faraway place to have everything go smoothly. Our Australian Adventure was just that. Continental Airlines impressed us with their decent meals and short layovers. All connections were on time and the personal televisions, which were built into our seats helped to pass the long flight times. Our Adventure began in late June when we headed off for the trip of a lifetime Australia and the Great Barrier Reef. We booked several days with the Mike Ball Super sport, which is rated the number one dive company in Australia. We lived aboard the Super sport for 4 days and 3 nights. The service was exceptional, the food incredible and the scuba diving among the best I have encountered.

We dived among Minke whales, giant gentle creatures whose curiosity kept them returning to our area for a couple of days. They range in size from 15 to 30 feet in length. They were quiet and non-aggressive bringing their young calves close to have a look at our divers. The crew orientated us to our required behavior, which was conditional for us to remain in the ocean, when the whales were around. We used no flash on our cameras, never pursued them and actually completed our dives only stopping to look and marvel at their beauty as they glided by us from time to time. We did a series of shallow dives in the Coral Sea, which is the northern part of the Great Barrier Reef. We dived mostly pinnacles, which dropped to a mere 50 feet in depth and we would circle the pinnacle slowly working our way upward. Green turtles, white tip sharks, cuttlefish, nudibrachs and thousands of assorted fish were everywhere. The diving was so easy, with great visibility and comfortable temperatures. We were the only boat

visible in this section of the reef. The stars at night filled the sky with a view of the Milky Way that I have never seen and was unable to capture on film. But the memory of it is still clear and crisp in my mind and it literally took my breath away. The dark of night by was lit only by starlight and we heard only the sound of the whales surfacing for air.

We were surprised to discover that one of the other passengers was the well-known Roberto Rinaldi, the Italian videographer and author of several books on the Coral seas. He was friendly, informative and at times very comical. He and his companion, Helena was there to film the whales. The season for Minke whales is only 6 weeks each year before they move south towards Antarctica. This was just the start of our adventure and I knew it could be hard to surpass this part of the trip. We said goodbye to the great crew of the Supersport to return to the mainland.

We returned to the Tradewinds Hotel in Cairns, which was directly on the esplanade and within walking distance to many great restaurants and shops. The surrounding streets were clean, uncrowded and safe. The hotel was beautiful and with an ocean view, swimming pool and convenient location. We had the afternoon free and rested up for our tour to Kuranda the following day.

Kuranda was our busiest day of the trip. We rode the Kuranda Scenic Railway passing through 15 tunnels, 40 bridges, Stoney Creek and Barron Falls. We walked the nature park and took an amphibious Army duck tour of the rainforest with a very knowledgeable guide. A tropical BBQ lunch and a performance by Pamagirri Aboriginal dancers rounded out the afternoon. The Aborigines were friendly and very eager to share their culture with us. They even gave us a lesson in throwing the boomerang. The Koala and Wildlife Park was a great place to get a closer look at the inhabitants of the rainforests and desert plains. We departed by skyrail over the rainforest canopy and watched large white cockatiels soar over the trees just under our cable cars.

The next day we departed for the outback, Gulf Savannah. The four-hour drive across the plains put us near a small ranger station and we found ourselves in a place called the Undara Experience. There were miles of hiking trails; chance encounters with wild kangaroo and kookaburra birds. Our hotel was actually a series of 15 train cars linked and surrounded by decking. These old train cars had been converted into comfortable hotel rooms. They were rustic but cozy. The shared baths/showers were immaculate and there was plenty of hot water. A small general store, a small stone

lined swimming pool and a first aid station was nearby. Upon our arrival, we were taken to lunch at an outdoor patio with surrounding train cars for those who prefer indoor dining. The buffet lunch was plentiful and afterwards we were shown to our rooms or train car I should say. We spent the afternoon hiking and exploring the area. With camera in hand and a zoom lens, there were kangaroos in the wild everywhere. Not just one or two but a group of four feeding and looking about. Then, we spotted another group and so on. We boarded a shuttle after dinner and our guides took us to a lookout point called the Bluff. It was there the sun began to set and the true beauty of the outback was known. Our knowledgeable guides opened picnic baskets and brought out cheese, crackers and wine for us to enjoy while we watched an intensely colorful sunset. One of our guides was of Aborigine descent and shared some very wonderful stories about his family's heritage and the history of the local area. The next morning "Breakie" (breakfast) was served around a campfire with an array of food choices. Logs served as chairs and stumps were at the perfect height for holding one's plate. After Breakie, we explored more of the surrounding area and another guide took us on a tour of the lava tubes and gave us a historical account of the area. This was an extraordinary place for discovering the beauty of the Outback and for observing the local wildlife.

We arrived back to Cairns in the early evening to prepare for the next days' rafting adventure. We would be rafting near the town of Tully about 90 minutes southwest of Cairns. It rains in Tully every day of the year, since the area is rainforest. It did rain off and on throughout the day but it was a welcome relief from the hot sun. The rafting was fun and allowed us to view the world's oldest rainforest from a different vantage point, the Tully River itself. I was glad to be in Australia during their winter because the temperatures in the north were in the 80's. If it were their summer, the heat climbs closer to the upper 90's. Our rafting guide was experienced and from New Zealand or a Kiwi as they are called. The river was shallow in some areas, but the current took us quickly down river. We returned to Cairns at the end of the day to prepare for our trip to Sydney the next morning.

Sydney is a very international city. There are so many diverse cultures living here. There were also visitors from around the world: Japan, USA, Philippines, Europe and so on. We flew on Qantas to Sydney, which was a 2-½ -3 hour flight. The weather had changed from low 80's in Cairns to the mid 60's in the day and mid 50's at night. Traveling away from the equator cooled the temperatures considerably. I like this type of winter.

Australia has so much to do. We had a wonderful tour of the opera house. We saw the royal botanical gardens, which were just beautiful, with many flowers in bloom. We enjoyed a cruise around Darling Harbor. The most fun however, was the Harbor Bridge Climb. We donned gray jumpsuits, wore a climbing harness, and hooked into a safety line to climb the ladders and stairs, which slowly took us up to the crest of the Sydney Harbor Bridge. The climb lasted two hours as we scaled up one end, crossed the catwalk 500 feet over seven lanes of traffic and a train track to the opposite side and made our safe return. It was breathtaking and the views were fantastic! Our twilight climb starting out in the late afternoon with our guide and ended early evening. At this time the city of Sydney was in lights outlining the skyline. To one side the Sydney Opera House, was also in full illumination. As I enjoyed the view, I realized an ocean liner was below us pulling out of the harbor all lit up! During our visit, we made use of the bus system called the Explorer, which allows you to get on and off all day long anywhere for one price. We spent some time in the historic district of Sydney, Chinatown, the business district and the waterfront where we enjoyed the Aquarium. We also went to a movie at the Imax Theater. A very busy three days and two nights, with endless international cuisine to suit anyone's palate.

Sadly, on our way home by way of Hawaii, I had pre arranged to spend some time in to spend in Honolulu for two days and two nights. The problem again was so much offered and limited time. I chose to visit Pearl Harbor the morning after our arrival. Everyone should experience such a special memorial and visit a part of history of World War II. Later in the day, I made my way up the coast to a beautiful snorkeling sight called Hanama Bay. It was a great way to relax and spend some time in the surrounding area. Oahu, which is the island we stayed on, has picture perfect beaches and offers the visitor a chance to explore such places as Diamond Head, Waikiki Beach and the Hawaiian Cultural center. I found Hawaii affordable and the cuisine to everyone's liking. Our last day we traveled back the mainland of the United States wondering how our vacation could have gone by so quickly. Our next Australian Adventure is June 24th -July 10th, 2005. For more information please feel free to contact Laura Cook at 4513 568-8764 evenings.

PVHC Mailbox

Please remind the Club that all winter gear is in stock along with Mt. Hardware clothing and Koflach Boots, etc. Please also remind current members of the PVHC, that they receive a 10% discount on all merchandise except sale items at Wilderness Experiences/Westfield Watersports store.

T. Scott & Laura Cook
Wilderness Experiences Unlimited &
Westfield Water Sports
413-569-1287 or 413-562-7431
adventures@weu.com
www.weu.com



Mt. Tom Conservation Effort

At our December club meeting Bill Burgart proposed coordinating contributions to the Little Tom Mountain Conservation effort. If we get a total of \$1000 contributed in the name of Pioneer Valley Hiking Club we can have our name listed as a major contributor. Bill has volunteered to coordinate keeping track of donations. If you are interested in this worthy cause please let Bill know that you will be sending a donation to the Trustees or you can send it directly to Bill and he will mail it in together with others. Either way we can get credit toward the \$1000 goal. Contact Bill or the TTOR for more information.

Bill Burgart can be reached at: (413) 527-9080, (395 East Street, East Hampton, MA 01027) HIKERBILL1@juno.com Folks can also give those checks to Gary Dolgoff- at hike-club mtgs, Northampton dinners & walks, plus at Remington Lodge.

For more details see the TTOR website: http://www.thetrustees.org/pages/337_mount_tom.cfm

MOUNT TOM: DEFINING THE LANDSCAPE OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY

The Mount Tom Range has been described as an "island of biological diversity," an important landmark, and an ecologically significant rare species habitat in Massachusetts. The Mount Tom Ski Area, at the heart of the mountain, was the largest private unprotected parcel. Its protection has been a key objective of conservationists and others concerned about the future of this Connecticut River Valley landmark.

A Conservation Partnership

In July of 2002, The Trustees of Reservations joined with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club to permanently protect the former Mt. Tom Ski Area for conservation, recreation and educational purposes. The Club plans to operate a

summer camp and other outdoor programs to introduce the next generation to the wonders of natural areas like Mount Tom.

The 73-acre parcel acquired by The Trustees includes most of the hill known as "Little Tom," located between the base lodge and Interstate 91. The property is a relatively undisturbed natural area that offers invigorating hiking, stunning views of the Connecticut River Valley, and a fascinating educational experience in the unique geology, ecology, and history of the Mount Tom area. To be named Little Tom Mountain, this new property of The Trustees of Reservations will offer parking, a new network of trails, maps, and activities that will help visitors enjoy the mountain.

A Geological and Ecological Gem

The Mount Tom Range is part of an unusual traprock ridge system extending fifty miles through Massachusetts and Connecticut. Its specific blend of soils, elevation, moisture, land-use, and forest succession supports a host of rare plants, and provides active springs and vernal pools that are home to many specialized species of salamanders, frogs, crustaceans, snails, and insects. Fully three quarters of the state's native species of reptiles and amphibians are found on the mountain. Moreover, the mountain supports a diversity of microenvironments: glades, wetlands, hollows, steep valleys, and exposed rocky balds. All of these factors combine to make Mount Tom one of the most important and ecologically significant localities for rare species in the state.

Scenic Landmark

Mount Tom is also an integral part of the scenic landscape that defines the central Valley. The mountain offers invigorating hiking, spectacular birding, and a place to escape the pressures and stresses of everyday life. Its history tells a fascinating story, from its geological beginnings in the continental rifting that created the ancestral Connecticut River Valley 200 million years ago, to its use in modern times as a tourist destination with its mountain houses, amusement park, and ski slopes.

Help Us Finish the Job!

In order to purchase Little Tom and enable the state and federal purchases to proceed, The Trustees borrowed \$300,000 that must be repaid. An additional \$220,000 is needed to cover transaction, start-up, and first-year management costs for what will become the 93rd property of The Trustees of Reservations, Little Tom Mountain. A fundraising campaign is underway to meet the \$520,000 goal. Your donation will help us to establish this new reservation for the Connecticut River Valley.



Membership Directory Update

Membership Directories were distributed at the Holiday Party and January Meeting. Those who have not picked them up will have them mailed during the third week of January. The membership directory is a great resource for setting up impromptu trips and social events, staying in touch with your club friends, and contains handy reference information in the back. If you are a new member and would like a copy or do not receive your copy by February 1st let me know. I have a limit supply of extras.

John Klebes (klebes@aol.com, 413.786.3620)

PVHC Scholarship Policy

In the past, we have offered reimbursement of up to \$25 for those active Club members who wish to partake in pre-approved leadership or outdoor skill training courses that directly benefit the good of the Club. In 2004 we plan to continue to offer this benefit to our members. If there is an interest in a particular activity, enough notice should be given for the Board to briefly review the course, and perhaps offer the opportunity to other club members. Once approved, a receipt of payment is required- to our treasurer- who will reimburse the appropriate amount up to a maximum of \$25.00.

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

January Renewals:

Claire Bailey
 Marianne Cortelli
 Sheila Croteau
 Kathleen Damon
 Gary Dolgoff
 Lawrence Gould
 Thomas Harrington
 Richard Loomis
 Judy McQuillen
 Jeffrey Mills
 Karen Savoy
 Dean Stroshine
 Stephen & RoseMarie
 Thompson
 Ann Wood
 Ronald & Susan
 Woodward

February Renewals:

Linda M. Benoit
 Sheila Bolduc
 Bart Estes
 Louise Fowles
 James Hastings & Family
 Donna Hatch
 Eva Kealey
 Ed Kelliher & Family
 Paul & Maxine Lessard
 Catherine Poudrier
 Michael Sharpe
 Edmund Sullivan
 Carol Vanderheiden
 Glen Young

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:

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club
 c/o Wilderness Experiences
 P.O. Box 265
 Southwick, MA 01077

2003 - Looking back on a Successful year for the PVHC

by John Klebes

The club has grown over the years and as I take a look back over this past year I find myself more impressed then ever with the success of our great club. With over 220 members we have put together a phenomenal mix of outdoor activities including high altitude mountaineering, easy hikes, walks, canoeing, kayaking, tubing, backpacking, car camping adventures, cross country and downhill skiing, biking, moonlight hikes, nature walks, trips to cabins/shelters and even hotels. Dinner hikes, breakfast hikes, ice cream excursions and everything in between was to be had. We had a summer picnic, Halloween party, and dinner & dancing at our famous Holiday Party.

I'd like to thank the over 42 hike leaders we had this year; an unprecedented one in five of our members leading well over 230 events which I dare say no other club can match. I would especially like to thank our officers and committees for helping make all this possible. All those things behind the scenes, such as the schedules, webpage, quartermaster, equipment rentals, party and picnic committees are appreciated. The club has a wealth of activities and knowledge. It is each and everyone in this club that makes it all possible.

This past year we have seen major contributions to land stewardship from the club. For one we built our first shelter: the new "Falls Brook Shelter" on the Tully and M-M trails. I believe this will be a lasting tribute to how the PVHC has helped to create new opportunities for us and others to enjoy the great outdoors. We also continued our trail maintenance efforts on our adopted section 1&2 of the M-M trail, adding about 40 feet of stone steps on section 2 to complement the work we did last year on the 200 feet of bog-bridges on section 1. We also continued to participate in Bartholomew's Cobble workday and trail maintenance on the AT.

Also PVHC was mentioned briefly in The Trustees Fall newsletter, it said, "At Dinosaur Footprints, a volunteer workday with members of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club removed more invasive honeysuckle." **Thank you to each and all for your hard work and contributions over the past year.**



Members from the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club that helped with the construction of the new Falls Brook Shelter: Ed Laroche, Rick Briggs, Juliana Vanderwielen, Gary Tompkins, Ann Marie Visconti, Al Roman, Josh Roman, Rob Schechtman, Carol Vanderheiden, Ann Mundy, Sybille Nickel, John Klebes, Bob Morgan, Heather Wyman, Bill Cichaski, and Harry Allen.

Upcoming Hikes and Activities:

HADLEY WALK & DINNER/COMEDY IMPROV EVENING! (coming Sat, 1/24th)

By Gary Dolgoff

We'll meet at 5pm at Bread & Circus in Hadley, on Rt. 9 (just west of the Cinemark cinemas & the big shopping mall there)- which, by the way- is a fine place to shop for tasty and varied wholesome food.

After a 3-mile rural road-walk, we will head for the large Peking Garden restaurant (slightly west of Br. & Circus), for some 'living large' entertainment, compliments of those wonderful improvisors, The Villa Jidiots ('they're hilarious', say I)!

We'll arrive there bet. 6:45 & 7pm., get seated; order some Chinese food; & sit back and enjoy the show (which begins at 7:45pm, and concludes at 9)- dining & laughing, a 'boffo' combination!

Question? Feel free to call me, Gary Dolgoff (413) - 584-8564

Remington Lodge

By Norm Plante

On Feb 7, 2004, one of the more popular events of the hiking club will be taking place, our annual trip to Remington Lodge. This is a very rustic and quaint lodge nestled in the foothills of West Cummington Massachusetts about an hour's drive from the Springfield, MA area. People can elect to come up for just the day or make it an overnight also. There is a communal bunkroom on the lower level and upstairs there are three rooms with three bunks each. The maximum number of people overnight is limited to 36 so avoid the rush and sign up early. Bunks are claimed on a first come first claimed system.

The place is very cozy, has a big living room with wood/coal stove, a dining area, a hot tub and two great hosts Ken and Jo. The dinners there are top-notch four course events with soup, salad, entrée and dessert. The meal choices are currently being decided but will be chicken, fish or vegetarian. But lets not forget while we're here why we joined the club, that's right, to hike and spend time outdoors. Ed Laroche has volunteered to tone down his image as a Death March Leader and lead a moderate, compassionately paced, hike somewhere in the area and I'm sure Gary Dolgoff will be leading his usual easy outing on the roads or nearby Windsor State Forest. For skiers and snowshoe buffs, there is a cross-country ski area just up the road. For those people not so inclined, you can vegetate by the fire and read a good book. One of the best things about

the trip is the chance to bond with fellow members in a relaxed and fun atmosphere as after the hikes and dinner we usually all get together for a rousing game of Guesstures, Pictionary or whatever. It's worth the price of admission alone just to watch Gary perform charades.

There are many options people can choose to do for this trip. Typically if you're coming for lunch on Saturday you should plan to arrive between 11:30 am and noon. You can come up later if you like and just do the dinner that evening usually around 6:30-7pm. The hikes will probably be going out around 1 pm or so.

The costs are as follows:

- Overnight stay \$55.00 – includes lunch & dinner Sat and breakfast Sun.
- Lunch only \$5.00 – typically cold cuts, chips, condiments, and beverage.
- Dinner Only \$20.00 – 4-course meal, chicken, fish or vegetarian entrée.
- Dinner & overnight only - \$45.00 (Does not include breakfast)

The cutoff date for signups and money collection will most likely be at the Feb 3rd hiking club meeting. Make checks payable to Pioneer Valley Hiking Club and send to Norm Plante (108 Campbell Dr., Agawam, MA 01001)

If you have questions you can call me at 413-786-2678. If I'm not in leave a message, I usually don't have an outgoing message on my machine to fend off telemarketers so just leave a message after the beep and I will get it. You can also call Gary Dolgoff at 413-584-8564.

As I said, this event is one of the most popular and widely attended and this year's trip is commemorated to the originators who planned and organized it for many years in the past, Terry and Sandy Cripps, who sadly have moved on and are no longer with the club. Thanks Guys, Hopefully some other members will pick up the torch and carry on this traditional annual event. It's certainly been the highlight of many past winter trips and a chance to beat the winter blahs.

Remington Lodge phone number (413) 634-5388 or 634-5493

Directions to Remington Lodge: Rte 91 North to Northampton exit for Rte 9 West. Follow Rte 9 West through Williamsburg and Goshen into Cummington. Look for large white building "The Creamery" with a life size cow on the roof. (Use as landmark as Remington Lodge is just a few miles away) Look for small green sign for "West Cummington/Windsor Jambs/Winsor State Forest" on your right, shortly after sign is West Main Street. Take a right here and Remington Lodge is a large Gray building about 1/8 mile on left. Take a left there and park in lot.

PVHC Snowshoe Rentals:

The club has snowshoes and backpacking tents available for rent. The clubs screen house, trail maintenance tools, and hand held radios are also available for club events without fees. Contact Jack Leary (413) 562-0264, our Quartermaster, for help with rentals.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

John Klebes, President (413) 786-3620
 Ann Marie Visconti, Vice-President (413) 547-2729
 Heather Wyman, Secretary (413) 562-8575
 Kimberly Bruneau, Treasurer (413) 569-1970
 Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences Unlimited
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Planning Coordinators:

Sue Forrest & Ann Marie Visconti

Backpacking Coordinators: *Ed Laroche & Mike Rattelle*

Trail Maintenance: *Ed Laroche & Rob Schechtman*

PVHC Web Page Editor: *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:
February 3, 2004, 7pm at **FBC**
March 2, 2004, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Next Hike Planning Meeting:
February 10, 2004, 7pm at **WEU**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: February 24, 2004

SPECIAL NOTE:

Elections will be held for New Club Officers at the February 3rd Meeting. See inside for Absentee ballot information.

FBC – First Baptist Church, West Springfield
WEU – Wilderness Experiences Unlimited

***** Check out our web page at:**

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

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

- - - - - fold here - - - - -



A publication of the
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club
 c/o Wilderness Experiences Unlimited, Inc.
 P.O. Box 265
 Southwick, MA 01077

