

BOOTPRINTS

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THE ROAD TO JERIMOTH HILL

By Lori Tisdell

A few years ago Jeanne Kaiser and I were having a conversation about lists, summit lists to be exact. We know hikers who have completed summit lists, the 48 in The White's, the 46 in the Adirondacks, the 67 New England Highest, and the 111 Northeast Highest. It seemed a bit intimidating to have such long lists to work at! So, Jeanne suggested we work on the six New England State's highest points. Just six, well that didn't seem nearly so intimidating! We both had summated the highest peaks in MA, CT, and NH, so we just needed three more peaks to complete the list! Ha! We were already halfway there! Seemed almost like cheating. And Katahdin was still a long way off at that point (that's called foreshadowing folks).

Jeanne and I put together a club hike for Vermont's highest peak, Mt. Mansfield, in Stowe during July 2011. We thought we were in our comfort zone having done some pretty difficult hikes with steep elevation, rocks, ladders, ice. Hell, Jeanne had done the cables on the Gothics and I had overcome some pretty serious fear of heights issues of my own. Boy, were we mistaken, there was nothing comfortable about that hike! Mansfield's Profanity Trail was well named and we certainly were using some profane words while scrambling up this steep, wet, rocky trail. We were glad to have trees close by to help pull ourselves up with. And not a view to be had except for the misty clouds surrounding us, until most of the way down the mountain, of course! But the four of us on the hike had a good time despite the unkind conditions. There was a section of trail called the Knife Edge and we wondered if it was similar to the one at Katahdin. Once we were on it we were hoping the one at Katahdin would be similar ... Not even a little bit close.

Once Mt. Mansfield was under our belt, Jeanne and I started in on more serious discussions about Katahdin. Cindy Hibert came on board and the three of us got together and decided on June 2012 as the time, right after the annual White Mountain Sampler. We decided it would be a ladies hike and invited some other friends, Karen Goodwin, Beth Case, and Heather Wyman. We didn't make this one an official club trip because we were concerned with getting *ourselves* through this hike, much less anyone else. We all knew it would be a difficult one, and so it was. But it was also a great adventure filled with laughter, views only flying creatures get to see, amazing camaraderie and support, some fear, and a few tears, and it will truly never be forgotten. And the Knife Edge? Yeah, I'm sure there are great views to be had elsewhere, but so

far I've yet to see anything that makes me know without a doubt there is a God than when I was up on that trail.

Now, Cindy still needed to summit the side of Mt. Frissell, Connecticut's highest point, to be "legal." CT has the distinction of being the only state whose highest point and highest peak are not in the same place. Cindy had summated Bear Mt., the highest peak, but not the south slope of Mt. Frissell, whose summit is located in MA but whose south slope is located in CT. Yep, it's confusing. I led a club hike to Mounts Frissell, Round, and Brace last August, which was a beautiful hike that covers three summits in three states, passes by the CT high point, and has lovely views. Once this was done Cindy, Jeanne, and I were ready to take on the "challenge" of Jerimoth Hill.

Jerimoth Hill has been, in the past, an elusive and difficult place to hike. The land leading to the high point was privately owned and the owner did not like people intruding upon his land. Apparently not a friend to hiker's and peak baggers. Jerimoth Hill had the reputation of being a harder summit to bag and more dangerous than, say, Mt. Whitney! That might have been due to the gunfire one would have to dodge when the owner felt particularly ruthless about insuring the No Trespassing policy. Eventually the owner was persuaded to open the land five times a year. much to the NE high pointer's appreciation. In 2005 the land was sold and the new owners were much more amenable to people crossing through their land to reach the high point. They even created a trail with the help of volunteer high pointers. The trail is now open seven days a week.

The actual hike is a very easy, a mere ¼ mile stroll from the highway to the "top," with almost no elevation gain. A little anticlimactic after all the other hikes! Jeanne and I led a hike to Jerimoth Hill this past November, a little more than two years after first planning the goal of hiking the six New England High Peaks. There were nine of us that day and six of us completed the goal. It seemed apropos – six completing the six high points! The six were Jeanne, Cindy H, Beth Case, Bob Morgan, Karen Markham, and me. It was a great journey with many supporters and well-wishers (especially for the pesky Katahdin hike), made with some of the best people I know: strong, resilient, fun, supportive... I could supply an unending list of adjectives to describe the people I hike with. Suffice it to say, they are awesome and made this journey more fun than I could ever have imagined!

RICE NATURE PRESERVE

By Celeste Ziemba

At every meeting, our fearless leader, Chip, always encourages people to walk out their front door and get out on an easy hike. Nature and wonderful adventures await. On November 10th, a beautiful, sunny Saturday, I took his advice and met ten fellow hikers at Fresh Acres at 9:30 AM. I was pleasantly surprised to see people there who scale 4,000-footers! I usually only encounter those hikers at the club meetings, the holiday party, and at the club picnic. My hiking is mostly limited to Ashley and Whiting Reservoirs, or long treks on the streets of New York City. I was dressed for the occasion and had my bottle of water, but I was missing two essentials: a backpack with lunch in it and poles. I guess I thought we wouldn't be out that long and that I wouldn't be needing poles. A big Thank You! goes to my friend, Karen, who had plenty of lunch to share, and generously lent me one of her hiking poles as well.



As we began hiking in the woods, it was hard to believe that we were in Wilbraham. The temperature was in the 50's. Chip's hike-leading style is compassionate, to say the least. No one gets left behind. Every so often, he gathered the troops for a break to catch our breath, and to point out nature's beauty and any unusual wildlife. We saw a special type of woodpecker, whose name escapes me, but Chip knew exactly what it was. We even saw a snake! It wasn't anything exciting like a cobra, because, heck, we were in Wilbraham after all.

Our lunch spot was perfect, with a nice view and plenty of rocks to use as chairs and tables. Since I had my camera, I asked if we could do a group photo. Chip and Harry were quite willing to take the pictures. They took one in one direction and then had us turn around so you could see our vista. The hiking pole came in handy as we continued our walk. There were rocks and tree roots covered with leaves and large branches to navigate. It was evident that there had been much tornado damage in that area from last year's storm.

All too soon, we reached the end of our wooded journey, right back to where our cars were parked. The trail map, and Chip! got us exactly where we needed to be. I felt a certain exhilaration that I hadn't felt in a long time. I loved being in the woods breathing clean air as well as having the chance to chat with other hikers. My take home message was to leave hiking poles in the trunk of my car and to put some lunch and water in my backpack, and to walk out my front door for more adventures with the PVHC.

PIONEER VALLEY HIKING CLUB ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

By Lori Tisdell

December came upon us so quickly, and here it was, another year of hiking and time to celebrate it! For months Chip, Brenda, and Marie had been working on the logistics and preparation of bringing together the annual holiday party. Others had volunteered to help with decorations, set up, take down, making appetizers and desserts, and the slide show.

There were over 90 attendees. The party started at 5:30, and by 6:00 it was in full swing. The appetizer and dessert tables were laden with wonderfully delicious goodies. As we all stood around chatting and reminiscing about the year's events, we were also enjoying the yummy offerings. As I looked around the room and saw the smiling vibrant faces, it was undeniably apparent that everyone was having a great time!

Then it was time to eat – well, OK, time to eat some more. The buffet was once again a delightful bounty with choices for all appetites. Everyone enjoyed the food as we continued our conversations at our tables. We were surrounded with the holiday spirit, which was enhanced by the table centerpieces, the mantelpiece decorations, the fire in the hearth, and most especially in the goodwill and cheer of our fellow revelers.

Dessert was next – yikes! It's a good thing we hike since we really needed to work off all this food! Undeniably, the hit of the evening was Rick's apple crisp, absolutely mouthwateringly delicious. There were many other scrumptious offerings as well, which made it difficult to choose which to have. Such a quandary!

After dinner there were certificates of recognition and honorable mentions to the outstanding club members whose contributions help make our club what it is. First and foremost for me was Ann Mundy's Volunteer of the Year award. Ann exemplifies the meaning of volunteer. Her Adirondack trips are always among the highlights each year. Ann generously spends many hours organizing these trips; her unflinching cheer, energy and encouragement to all are qualities we should all strive to emulate. There were also recognitions of other hike leaders and volunteers; who are the backbone of the club and without whom we would not have the many and varied hikes and other events that our club offers each year

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Finally, capping off the evening was the slide show. As we watched the photos of so many hikes, people, views, events and outings recapping the past year, bringing back the joy and reminding us once again why we are part of this club. Most of us joined the club because we love to hike; however, the photos showed not just the sunlit wooded trails, shimmering waterfalls, and spectacular views but also the friendships, camaraderie, and challenges, and a group of people bound by a shared love of the outdoors.

Dancing followed, and a number of people hit the floor: Gary as usual, Mike and Tina, and others I can't remember, finishing the evening dancing to "Love Shack," "We are Family," and many other tunes. Some sat out and continued the earlier conversations, while others helped in the cleanup effort. Before we knew it the night was done and it was time to go home.

Many thanks to Chip, Brenda, and Marie for all your hard work in making this another memorable holiday party. Thanks also to all the people who volunteered their time to set up, clean up, greet people, bring food, and help in other ways.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>
Donna Diduk Marian Forrest Helen MacMellon	Steve Goluchowski

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Chip Pray, President
 Marcia Kelly, Vice President
 Cindy Hibert, Co-Secretary
 Cindy Dolgoff, Co-Secretary
 Carol Vanderheiden, Treasurer
 Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Sue Forrest & Chip Pray
Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs
Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman
Web Page Editor: Dick Forrest
Non Member Email Coordinator: Rob Schechtman
Club E-mail Coordinator: Chip Pray
Quartermaster: Mike Carrier
Bootprints Editors:
 Marie Babbitt & Mike Reed

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story/event contributions to the editor at: marie_babbitt@hotmail.com, or 21½ New Ludlow Rd., Granby, MA 01033

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

January Renewals:

Margaret Conklin
 Sharon Connor
 Diane Crowell
 Kathleen Damon
 Gary & Cindy Dolgoff
 Carole DuPont
 Krystyna Galipeau
 Thomas Harrington
 Richard McMahon
 Diane Moriarty
 Harry (Chip) Pray
 George/Dolores Schmeck
 Elaine Tryjankowski
 Ann Wood

Febuary Renewals:

Christina Calabrese
 Amy Cohen
 Lisa Cousineau
 Neil & Virginia Downey
 Richard Harrington
 Joan Holmes
 Jeannie Jones
 Daniel Koehne
 Mary Langevin
 Paul & Maxine Lessard
 J. Danusia Lokii-Braese
 Robert Maselek
 Lewis Popper
 Carol Vanderheiden



Rice Nature Preserve



Mt Monadnock

UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Every Mon. (MA) "Morning Hike – various locations
- Every Tues (MA) Tuesday evening hikes with Carol
- Every Wed. (MA) Wednesday evening hikes with Marcia
- Every Thurs (MA) Afternoon Hike
- Jan. 12 (CT) Snowshoe Farmington River
- Jan. 19-21 (VT) Stratton Pond Back Country skiing/
winter camping
- Jan. 25-27 (VT) Merck Forest backpack/snowshoe/ski
- Feb. 3 (VT) Bald Mt. (crampons)
- Feb. 10 (MA) Mt. Grace
- Feb. 14 (MA) Eagles Nest, Huntington
- Feb. 23-24 (MA) Sanderson Falls beginner winter
backpack



IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ☛ Next Club Meetings:
Feb 5, 2013, 7pm at **FBC**
March 5, 2013, 7pm at **FBC**
- ☛ Deadline for Submissions for the next BootPrints is February 18, 2013

FBC - First Baptist Church, West Springfield
Elections for new board members in February with nominations in January.

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

www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to:

pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

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