

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 17, Issue 4

July 2013

40 DEGREES

By Lori Tisdell

Here we were, eight hikers looking forward to our first warm weather backpack of the season on Memorial Day weekend. Cindy Hibert had worked 6 months putting the trek together. It was to be a continuation of the previous Labor Day weekend hike on the Appalachian Trail in Vermont. However, a late season storm dumping a foot of snow in the higher elevations and a deluge of rain in the lower elevations of Vermont put the kabosh on that plan. But all was not lost! Cindy came up with Plan B by changing the venue to the southern Berkshires and Sage's Ravine for a two-day backpack, where there was no snow and only a bit of misty rain to contend with.

We ended up with four of us, Cindy, John Fortune, Rick Briggs, and me. At the trailhead the sky was still cloudy and overcast but the forecast was good, so in we went. It was only a mile or so to the campground, so it didn't take long to get there. We found a nice group camping site and set up our tents and unloaded the extra gear from our packs. The others were veteran tenters but this would be my first time sleeping in a tent alone and not car camping as I had many years ago.

Cindy had planned for us to head up to Mt Race that day. John and I had been to Mt Race just a month or so before but had hiked in from the other direction. We headed out on the AT, all the while knowing there was a big water crossing ahead of us. We were hoping we'd be able to get across. We passed by lots of rushing water and beautiful waterfalls on the way out. Then there it was, a wide stretch of water running fairly fast and a couple places knee-plus deep. No way to get across without taking off our boots. We scouted around looking for a better place to cross but without success.

Along came some young backpackers who plowed on through without even taking their boots off! Oh, to be young and reckless! Several other, older hikers came through and crossed barefoot. Eventually, despite Cindy's protestations, we somehow had our boots off and were heading in too. About halfway across John said, "I'm goin' back." And with that we all turned and fled back to the bank and, relatively, dry trail. The cold got into my toes and it was positively painful for several minutes until they got warm again.

We headed back to the campground discussing an alternate hike for the afternoon. Bear Mt was discussed but I thought the steep and rocky/ledgy trail would be sketchy with all that rain, as there was still a lot of water on the trails. We checked the map and we all wanted to get over to Plantain Pond, John especially, but getting there was problematic. We'd have to bushwhack! As Rick and Bob Morgan had conducted an orienteering lesson the week before, Rick told me to put my new found skills to the test. With Rick overseeing, I mapped out a bearing for us to follow.

Steeplly down through thick scrub and then steeply up through even thicker scrub we went following my landmarks. Within a short time we had a most serendipitous surprise: an unmarked trail not on the map, open and easy to follow . wow! I was thinking it might lead us to the other side of the water

crossing, as it seemed to be going in that direction . and it did! If only we had known.

We continued in our meanderings, both on and off the trail, looking for Plantain Pond. Along the way we passed the Laurel Ridge Campground and Bear Rock Falls. From the campground came loud and rather obnoxious music. Isn't why we come to the forest, to get away from the loud and obnoxious? It soon faded away, though, replaced by the pleasing sound of the waterfall. We saw only the upper part of the falls, heading over the edge of the embankment.

Once again we left the trail to find the pond and, don't tell anyone, trespassed onto YMCA property. We saw some of the pond and a dam with a waterfall before turning back. As it was getting later in the afternoon we decided to forgo hiking up to Mt Race and turned back towards the campground.

Back at camp we made our dinner, with Rick being the most daring with his veggies and free-range steak! The rest of us made do with Ramen Noodles and MRE's and a share of (generous) Rick's steak. Thank you Rick! We were all disappointed that we were not allowed to make a camp fire but enjoyed the evening and each other's company anyway as the sun set, thankful we weren't in Vermont in a foot of snow.

The cold night passed slowly but without incident. It may seem a bit silly but I'd read in a blog about bears at night coming into the camp and was a bit concerned, especially as my tent was closest to the kitchen. Though I was awake for a good part of the night I heard not a single visitor, only a bit of snoring and rustling of the other campers.

In the morning we broke camp and headed to Bear Mtn. Cindy, Rick and I had all been there last December on a hike led by Shari Cox. What a difference! Then it was cloudy skies, with a snow and ice-covered trail, forest, and trees. This time we had beautiful blue skies, warm temps, and wonderful views. The hike up is steep and ledgy, with more and more views as we climbed. I've hiked up this trail several times but this was the

first time with a full backpack. I have enormous respect for thru hikers carrying such heavy packs day after day, week after week, for months. I don't know how they do it!

Once off the ridgeline, one of my favorite local hikes, we headed back towards the cars. Though there hadn't been any rain in well over 24 hours, the trail had areas up to ankle deep for stretches of 20 feet or more . yikes! As much as we tried to keep from getting our boots soaked, it was almost impossible to do. John and Rick worked the hardest and I think succeeded, while Cindy and I eventually gave up and waded through. And then we were at the car and our adventure was over for now.

Thanks to Cindy for all the work she put into organizing the original backpack and for coming up with a great alternate backpack on such short notice.

For those of you wondering about the title of this article, it was the bearing we followed out of the campground to find Plantain Pond!

"I'm goin' back." And with that we all.....



NEW ENFIELD PARK & RIDE LOT LOCATION

The Enfield Park and Ride Lot, which is our meeting place for hikes to our south, has been changed. It is no longer by Bobç off of Exit 47E. It is now on the west side of Macyç off of Exit 48. From the North take Exit 48 off of Rte. 91, Route 220E. Take a left at the bottom of the ramp, go about a tenth of a mile following the Park- and-Ride signs, and then take a right into the Park-and-Ride lot just past Friendlyç on the right. From the South take Exit 48 again, take a right at the bottom of the ramp, go past Friendlyç and take a right following the Park-and-Ride signs.

MARIEçS BIG ADVENTURE

By Marie Babbitt

I was out scouting the hike to Castle Craig and West Peak that Içn leading over the July 4th weekend, and was treated to my first ever exposure to cicadas. I did not really know anything about them other than they appear every 17 years, which I gleaned from a comic strip and a brief conversation in my office.

I was hiking the trail towards Castle Craig and I could hear this loud noise which I equated the intensity of to frogs, but was still skeptical that this is what I was hearing. I could hear the tone rise and fall at times and continued to wonder what it was. After arriving at Castle Craig and taking a short break I continued on, and the noise was getting louder but I could not see anything that would explain it.

On my descent down the road the noise continued to get louder and I saw a trail off to the right, which I decided to take to see if I could find out what the noise was. I met a trail biker and stopped him to ask if he knew what was making that noise. He told me that it was the cicadas, and showed me a couple of pictures he had taken. He told me that about a half-mile down the trail I could see them flying around. He knew a little bit more about them than I, certainly, in that they emerge every 17 years to reproduce and then bury themselves in the mud. I decided to continue down the trail. I got to the open area that he was talking about and could see some large bugs flying around but was not sure it was them. There were some beautiful dragonflies as well. After hiking up and down the trail and taking another, I returned to the open area and went down the parallel trail to the one I had hiked earlier. There in the bushes I could see just a few of the cicadas, and then saw many more of them in a larger bush off to my right. I could hear them flying and I thought I was in a Sci-fi movie for a minute. I watched as the large body of one of the cicadas in the bushes expanded and contracted, making the noise I had been hearing. It was as I suspected and confirmed a mating call of the male. The sound they make is a clicking sound when they contract and expand their abdomen, unlike other insects which rub their legs and other body parts together. Cicadas can produce sound levels up to 120 decibels, which is louder than a fire alarm device, and can actually cause damage to the ears. I took several pictures and watched as they flew from one bush to the other.

After mating, the female lays her eggs in the bark of a twig. Once the eggs hatch, the nymph falls to the ground and burrows into the mud. The nymphs bury themselves between 12 inches or more and feed on plant juices in roots. When the cicadas emerge from the ground they shed their shell on a nearby plant and emerge as an adult. There were many holes on the trail about a ¼+in diameter, which I imagined were where some of them emerged from. It is theorized that the long life cycle may be

a response to the predators of the cicada. A predator with short life cycles could not reliably prey on them. The cicadas will be not be around when the club does the hike, but it was an interesting experience nonetheless.

NEW YORK CITY BUS TRIP - MAY 25, 2013

This year we came up with a couple of different activities - The Met (led by Jane, Bryan Goodwin, and Joan DelPlato), The Bronx Zoo (Gary), and the NY Botanical Garden (Cindy).

[The NY Botanical Garden - By Cindy Dolgoff](#)

Well, it wasn't the best of days for a foray into the wilds of this wonderful oasis in the middle of The Bronx. Rain was coming down during our entire bus trip. I wished I had brought gloves and a hat, but I didn't. After all, it was Memorial Day weekend! But it was cold, rainy and windy. Ten garden lovers braved the outside for this part of the trip.

After the bus dropped us off in front of the gate, we were pleased to find out that for one hour only every Saturday (i.e., between 10 and 11 a.m.) admission to the Garden is free! although limited to the grounds only. Admission to the exhibits is \$25. We took a vote and eight of us decided there would be enough to see foregoing the exhibits. Man, we were not wrong. We wandered for hours through the vast and varied gardens. You can walk for miles and still not see everything. We strolled over to one of the outer reaches of the park, where we located some woodland trails. It was almost like being on a regular hike . in the middle of NYC! We also enjoyed seeing a waterfall, and the banks of the Bronx River. Alas, we were one week away from the roses being in bloom; most were fully budded and just waiting to burst out. Maybe the cold weather scared them.

Thank you everyone who accompanied me despite the yucky weather. Actually, it turned out okay because the only time it rained hard was when we were having lunch (inside), and one advantage of inclement weather is the lack of crowds. I think we had a lot of fun trying to identify the various plants and trees that we viewed all day.

[The Bronx Zoo - By Gary Dolgoff](#)

A group of us . around 15 Clubbies in all . chose the Bronx Zoo option, led by Gary D! Gary's friend, Paul, who lives in NYC (a friend that Gary has known since he was 18!), led the walk. His vast knowledge of animals & his enthusiasm made this well-guided Zoo tour a truly fun-thing...

The exhibits are amazing, and the animals are truly well-cared for...in these roomy & imaginative naturalistic enclosures.

Everyone in attendance had a %tully rockin' time+ & we barely wanted to leave, even after several hours of %oo-touring+!

After our zoo-tour, we joined up with Cindy's nearby Bronx Botanical Gardens group...and as it turned out, the biggest challenge of the day was getting the two groups (over 30 Clubbies) through the subway turnstiles in The Bronx (uptown NYC has, to say the least, a wonky inefficient system for large groups to do this) for our post-tour trip to Greenwich Village, our dinner destination.

Greenwich Village is a magical & atmospheric place, very much worth going to. And it has a lot of great places for truly delicious dining, and a great variety of desserts!

See *The Met* on page 3 for continuation

The Met continued from page 2

[The Met - Led by Jane Glushik, Joan DelPlato and Bryan Goodwin - by Jane Glushik](#)

The group who opted for the Metropolitan Museum viewed a popular exhibit, Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity, which featured 80 major figure paintings, paired with period costumes, accessories, fashion plates, photographs, and popular prints from the mid 1800s. After viewing the exhibit and taking time out for lunch, about 12 participants gathered in one of the Met's open areas for a discussion and commentary on what was seen, led by Joan and Bryan.

Fortunately the weather cooperated as the group headed out of the museum, across Central Park and onto the subway for a trip down to the High Line, a public park built on an historic freight rail line elevated above the streets of Manhattan's West Side. Although the weather was overcast, we were able to enjoy an abundance of spring flowers, sculptures, and an amazing view of the Hudson River as an ocean liner was pulling away from its berth and heading out to New York Harbor.

As members reached the end of the park at Groosevert Street, individual small groups broke off to find a restaurant of their choice in Greenwich Village. After dinner we all wended our way south to meet up with our bus and a welcome rest as the bus driver got us back to our cars in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Another enriching annual PVHC trip to New York City was complete.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
Barrie Vogel Jonathan Hagopian Patricia Rathay	Kenneth Lamothe Susan Padgett Judy Alfano Daniel and Sable Johnson

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Chip Pray, President
Marcia Kelly, Vice President
Lori Tisdell, Secretary
Carol Vanderheiden, Treasurer
Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Sue Forest & 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.

BIKE LOOKING FOR GOOD HOME !

I have a men's 27 inch 12 speed bike in good condition looking for a new home. Color is black with a medium frame mfg by Giant. Contact me by phone or e-mail 413-536-6611 or mjgross@atlanticfasteners.com
Mike Gross

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

July Renewals:

Karen Abert
Carolyn Armand
Kimberly Battipaglia
Rick Briggs
Elizabeth Case
Pam Chandler
Robert Church
JoAnn Churchill
Tina Garde
Jeanne Kaiser
Joanne Kellogg
Marcia Kelly
Susan Loehn
Jettie McCollough
Joel Meginsky
Norm Plante
Janet Platosz
Fred Riotte
Robert & Lisa (Frigo) Sussler
Sandy Segó
Joseph Walsh
Beth Willis

August Renewals:

Doug Adler
Harry Allen
Hedy Beaudry
Deborah Belle
Marie Bienvenue
Christine & Bill Crawford
Thomas Eaton
Cheryl Fisher
Connie Fogarty & Bill Nickerson
Dick & Sue Forrest
Bart Gottesdiener
Gabriela Horvay
John D. Leary, Jr.
Charlotte Lee
Benjamin Levy
Ann Mundy
Marie Nadeau
Marsha Odell
Russell Seelig
Chuck & Fritz Tiernan
Jane Toomey
Ann Marie Visconti
Mary Walters
Kyle Wojtowicz
Heather Wyman

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
PO Box 225
West Springfield MA 01090-0225

(Dues are \$25 member, \$40 family, and \$15 for students)

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
- July 4 (CT) N. Sect. of CT NET (Phelps Dr. to Rising Corner)
- July 14 (MA) Dolgathon . hike, dinner, hike
- July 19-21 (NY) Adirondack Heart Lake car camping & hikes (\$,Res)
- July 27 (CT) Tunix Trail (Barkhamsted)
- July 28 (MA) Whale Watch (\$, Res)
- Aug. 2 . 4 (MA) Bike/Hike/Camp Berkshires Weekend
- Aug. 3 (MA) Kayak Chicopee River
- Aug. 24 (MA) Trail Maintenance & lunch
- Aug. 25 PVHC Summer Picnic at Mt. Tom
- Aug. 30-Sept.2 (VT) VT AT Backpack 4 days, 3 nights



IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
August 6, 2013, 7 pm at **FBC**
September 3, 2013, 7 pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for submissions to the next BootPrints is August 20th, 2013

FBC - First Baptist Church, Piper Road, West Springfield

**** 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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