

BOOTPRINTS

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NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

By Ali Baldwin

I am new to the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club, so this was my first trip with the club to NYC. WHAT A BLAST!! The group I explored the City with was lead by Shari Cox (queen of u-turns) LOL!! There were eight very strong, fun loving women on this tour.

Shari was very impressive, especially when we were walking around Central Park and she decided to run up one of the huge rocks. You go, girl! The u-turns were so much fun. It was a team effort to stay together so no one got lost, and all stayed safe. The street entertainers in the park were wonderful and added to the beautiful, spring day we were experiencing, weather-wise.

I would highly recommend the Tenement Museum on Orchard Street, in the Lower East Side, as an activity not to miss. The tour was eye opening and truly reminded us all of the better quality of life that exists today that we are fortunate to live in. After this, we walked halfway across the Brooklyn Bridge, which added to the great experiences we were having, seeing the wonderful array of people walking and biking, along with the beautiful architecture of the bridge itself.

The subways were challenging but our great leader, Shari, got us all through it. We were determined not to lose anyone, so we kept doing head counts. Some of the New Yorkers we met during this experience were very helpful and added to the smiles of the day which were many. A great burger place I would recommend is Steak n Shake, located on Broadway, near the Museum of Natural History; our lunch spot.

The hike concluded with a delicious meal (portions were a bit small) at Davinci's, a great Italian restaurant with large, cheery yellow awnings situated just down the street from where the bus picked us up on Avenue of the Americas. The waiters were so much fun and made sure we weren't rushed, while also getting us out within an hour so we didn't miss the bus. There was even time to go to Molly's Cupcakes bakery down the street, where some of us bought some very yummy cupcakes.

This was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had in NYC. I was raised just 20 minutes outside of NYC, in New Jersey, so I've been to NYC many times in my lifetime. Still, by far, this trip was DEFINITELY one of my top ten experiences there! I want to send out a special thank you to the FABULOUS LADIES in my group, and especially Shari Cox for being an important part of the experience.

CAR SPOTTING 101

By Lori Tisdell

Last year, Jeanne Kaiser and I decided to lead an M&M/NET series of hikes. We had done the southern sections many times but hadn't really ever got past Section 9 of this trail. Little did we know that the car spotting would cause more logistical issues than the actual hikes did. Every single one of our hikes requires car spotting! And there are about 16 hikes in all. That's a whole lotta car spotting.

I think Mike Reed explained the seemingly simple math of car spotting a few years back but maybe a refresher is in order.

There are basically two kinds of car spots - easy and logistically nightmarish. The easy ones require hikers to show up for the hike at the trailhead where the hike ends. Everyone piles into a few cars and drives to where the trailhead. At the end of the hike one or two drivers will bring the original drivers back to their cars and everyone goes home. The second kind has cars parked at three different locations. This is where the fun begins! Hikers show up at posted meeting place, some cars are left there while ideally the volunteer drivers take on their *passenger*; just one. Only two people to each car. One driver and one passenger. The math is so simple! Everyone drives to where the hike will end and half the cars are left at that location. At that point, those drivers taking the hikers to the trailhead, where the hike begins, will take on two more passengers, for a total of four hikers to a car.

Ideally this works best if the total of number of hikers can be neatly divided by 4. Really, divided by two. If the number of hikers isn't divisible by two someone has to go home. Just kidding!. Actually, in the odd-numbered situation we just end up with a car with five hikers in it, and someone has to sit on the bump in the back seat.

Car spotting sounds simple, right? But, seriously, here's how car spotting with cars in three locations goes. I'll use a recent hike as an example: Section 9 of the M&M/NET. We all met at the CVS lot on Main St in Belchertown. The hike started at Harris Mtn. Road and ended on Route 9. There were 20 hikers, thus, we needed ten cars for the car spotting: 20 hikers with two people per car = 10 cars. Next those 10 cars drive to where the hike will be ending. Half the cars, in this case 5, remain at this spot and half take on two more passengers. Five cars each with four hikers = 20. These cars now drive to the trailhead starting point for the hike. Now that what seems like six hours has

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passed spotting cars we are ready to begin the hike!

At the end of the hike only those drivers whose cars are at the starting point need a ride back to it. In the above case only two cars are needed to take the five original drivers back to get their cars. Everyone else may go with the other three drivers back to the original meeting point at CVS. It often ends up that there is a car with five at this point; which isn't the end of the world, of course. We could have had all the cars go back to the other trailhead, with four passengers each, but it really isn't necessary for all the cars to return to the starting point when only two are needed. So some of the people in one car might be a bit squeezed, but as the ride is usually fairly short it generally isn't an issue. This is the ideal situation. Amazingly, the ideal situation rarely happens. Instead, any time we stray from the simple math of car spotting detailed above, chaos ensues.

Here are some things to remember. First, only two hikers per car when going to the first car spot from the meeting point. If there are more we may have overcrowded cars or not enough cars to transport hikers from the endpoint back to the trailhead. I once had to ferry people back and forth twice between trailheads at the end of the hike because some people took too many passengers and we didn't have enough cars! Second, and most importantly, please listen to your hike leader when they are explaining the logistics of the car spot. He or she has generally figured this out ahead of time and has at least a Master's Degree, or better, or should have and will likely have directions for each driver as well.

Unless you absolutely know there will be a big screw up, please don't suggest a better way. This usually leads to a long ass discussion at the meeting place, and takes time away when we would actually be hiking! Finally, at the end of the hike understand you may not be with your original driver. He or she may be taking another driver to get their car at the other trailhead. If your car is at the very first meeting spot, go with someone driving back there. Also, don't leave any of your belongings in another person's car since you may not be in that car at the end of the hike.

There you are everything you never wanted to know about car spotting and didn't care anyway! However, if you can understand all of the above you are now a car spotting expert!

Quabbin Reservoir

By Renny Merritt

I have joined the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club fairly recently. I have always wanted to explore the Quabbin reservoir, and this hike was a great start for me. As we started our hike, Fred Riotte noticed an unusual stone hearth of some sort along a short spur trail off to the side of the trail. Everyone in the group were very intrigued with this structure; it was very dark inside and hard to see what was in it. There were no remnants of charcoal or burned logs. However, as we got close, and our eyes began to adjust to the dark interior, we noticed that there

was something crouched in the corner of the structure, when then started moving! Shortly thereafter a porcupine waddled out of the structure and made a beeline for the pine tree situated right behind it. But then, in the dark right corner there was more movement, and lo and behold, another porcupine also decided to exit due to all the on-watchers, and climbed up the same tree with the other porcupine. It was really a very magical moment for all of us. As the hike continued we also were able to see a Bald Eagle soaring directly overhead, which was an great site! Soon thereafter, the wind kicked up ferociously and needless to say, it still being mid-winter, was very COLD! But we managed to eat our snacks in a sheltered area and got back into the sun with the wind now at our backs and a bit calmer. It was a beautiful day and a great hike well led by Fred. It was a wonderful experience for me since I had always wanted to explore the Quabbin, but the combination of the porcupines and the Bald Eagle made it even more special!! Thanks to Fred!!

Bootprints - Printing/Mailing

We will no longer be mass printing copies of Bootprints nor will we be mailing copies to club members (in fact we haven't mailed Bootprints since July 2013). However, there will be copies available at the club meeting the first Tuesday of the month, for those people who do not have internet access.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Chip Pray, President
Marcia Kelly, Vice President
Lori Tisdell, Secretary
Paul Kozikowski, Treasurer
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Jeanne Kaiser & Chip Pray
Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs
Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman
Web Page Editor: Dick Forrest
Non-Member E-mail 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.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

March	April
Rose Behnk Jason Lambert Pete & Susanne Ledoux Maiyann Zak	Eunice Jones Kathy Zeiben

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

May Renewals:

Elizabeth Avalone
James & Diane Brown
Icelene Campbell
Steven and Amy Dane
Brenda Doucette
Rosemarie Goyette
Lee Guarda
Jonathan Hagopian
David Herships
Steven Hilbun & Kelly Turney
Beth & Craig Kronlund
Betsy Loughran
Ann Maher
Becky Mason
Peggy McLennan
Ron & Eleanor Morrisette
Patricia Rathay
Michael Reed & Deb Gebo
Robert & Georgene Trombley
David Vibber
Barrie Vogel
Bruce & Jennifer Wade
Janice Webb
Angela Whittaker
Celeste Ziemba

June Renewals:

Judy Alfano Huber
Bill & Marianne Burgart
Allison Cook
Gina Geck
Sonja Goodwin
Cindy Hibert
Sable & Daniel Johnson
Eva Kealey
Kenneth Lamothe
Susan Padgett

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)

Friends of Hiking

By Angela Whittaker

I joined the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club four years ago. Not knowing what to expect, I never thought I would meet so many endearing people. Being somewhat on the quiet side, it wasn't easy to create friendships.

What I've discovered on hikes is that you don't have to worry about forgetting your lunch. Before you know it, you have a smorgasbord in front of you. Everyone is right there giving you whatever they have to share. I have seen friends helping each other by giving someone one of their pair of foot tractions, so that everyone has a pair on an icy hike. Whether you forget your poles, food, water, traction, direction, or whatever, there always seems to be a friendly hiker to help you.

I also have encountered dedicated volunteers giving their time and efforts to the club. Our leaders are always making our hikes fun and safe.

Meeting and getting to know friends of hiking is something I cherish. We laugh a lot, get muddy while crossing streams, and see nature at its best and worst. What could be better than feeling like you did as a youngster again, exploring in the woods.

It is always a good day when you are on a hike. This club is not just about the path on the trail, but who you share the path with.

TICK SEASON IS UPON US

By Marie Babbitt and Chip Pray

The summer hiking season is gearing up as the weather gets warmer, and along the way we may meet up with some unexpected and unwanted guests; namely, the dreaded deer tick. Whether you are new to hiking or a seasoned hiker with a faltering memory, ticks will be out and present on the trail with us. They will be looking for a free ride and meal, and for our protection it is better if we are not the main course. Deer ticks in particular are often fairly tiny and can be hard to see, or may be a bit bigger when full sized and a little easier to see. It is important to check yourself during and after a hike. It is recommended to take a shower afterward and then check yourself with a full length mirror or a hand held mirror. It is important to remove the tick, if you find one, with the head intact. Tweezers or other tick removal tools can be used. The CDC has a lot of useful information on the types of ticks and how they hitch a ride, as well as providing pictures, so you can see what the different types of ticks look like. The web site is: <http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/>.

What can I do to prevent Lyme disease?

Deer ticks live in shady, moist areas at ground level. They will cling to tall grass, brush and shrubs, usually no more than 18-24 inches off the ground. They also live in lawns and gardens, especially at the edges of woods and around old stone walls. Deer ticks cannot jump or fly, and do not drop onto passing people or animals. They get on humans and animals only by direct contact. Once a tick gets on the skin, it generally climbs upward until it reaches a protected area.

- In tick-infested areas, your best protection is to avoid contact with soil, leaf litter and vegetation. However, if you garden, hike, camp, hunt, work, or otherwise spend time in the outdoors, you can still protect yourself:
- Wear light-colored clothing with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots and shirt into pants.
- Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently for ticks while outdoors and check again once indoors.
- Consider using insect repellent. Follow label directions.
- Stay on cleared, well-traveled trails. Avoid contacting vegetation.
- Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.
- Keep long hair tied back, especially when gardening.

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) Morning hike
- May.10 (MA) Race Brook Falls & Mt. Everett
- May 17 (MA) Bartholomew Cobble Work Day & Hike
- May 16-17 (NH) Galehead Hut backpack
- May. 18 (MA) M and M Sec. 12 and 13
- May 25 (MA) Quabbin Reservoir
- May 31 KAYAK (MA) Swift River
- June 1 (MA) Mt. Greylock
- June 14 (CT) Tunxis Trail
- June 20-22 (NH) White Mountain Sampler
- July 5 Tristate
- July 13 (CT) Bike ride
- July 18-20 (NY) Heart Lake Adirondack-car camping
- August 8 (MA) Lake Wyola Picnic



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IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
June 3, 2014, 7 pm at **FBC**
July 1, 2014, 7 pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for submissions to the next BootPrints is June 18th, 2014

FBC - First Baptist Church, 337 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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