



# Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the  
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

## **It Takes a Village!**

by President Lori Tisdell

I have been writing about volunteering the last several columns. And I have one more. I promise this is the last one! I would like to take the time to recognize the volunteers we may not think about because they often work behind the scenes. Those are the members who are the administrators of the club, the coordinators, the committee chairs, and committee members without whom it would be impossible to run PVHC.

We have four executive board members President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. We four, myself, Erin Squires, Lani Giguere, and Peggy Tibbitt, meet each month. We make decisions about the direction of the club, policies, events, and generally work at keeping the club moving forward. We discuss policies and decisions that may need to come before the club for a vote. And we sometimes must manage sensitive topics and situations. Each of us have our own specific duties that we are responsible for each month, including creating meeting agendas, email distribution, clinic organization, communications, finances, and keeping the directory up-to-date.

We have Standing Committee Chairs who ensure the club behind the scenes duties are carried out.

Michele Wolf is our Hike Scheduler – she maintains the club calendar of events. She receives hike detail emails from members, attends the hike planning meeting, and updates the calendar multiple times a week so it is always up-to-date.

Rick Briggs is our Backpacking Advisor. He advises and answers questions about backpacking, gear, proper clothing, maps, trails, etc. He, along with Bob Morgan, have periodic compass and orienteering clinics for club members.

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*“We are all so grateful to those who volunteer as we know it takes a great deal of time and organizational skills...”*  
 ~President Lori Tisdell

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Chip Pray and Rob Schechtman are the club’s Maintenance Coordinators. PVHC has maintained the MA NET Sections 1 & 2 for over 20 years. They set up and lead two main club maintenances each year along with smaller ones in between, as needed. They make sure the trailhead at Rising Corner Road is mowed and maintained regularly. Chip and Rob will check the two sections and lead maintenances for specific issues that may arise, such as blow downs or overgrowth. They coordinate bigger projects, such as putting in water bars or stairs on a steep section, and putting in a gravel driveway at the trailhead. They also liaison with the AMC Net coordinators.

Rob is also the club’s non-member email coordinator. He answers questions non-club members have, as well as providing hike information if someone would like to try a hike out before joining the club.

Our Quartermaster is Mike Carrier. He is responsible for storing club gear and arranging rentals for club members.

Dick Forrest has two volunteer jobs! He is the PVHC webpage editor and *Bootprints* editor. He will update the webpage as needed and ensures bi-monthly publication of *Bootprints*. Both those jobs are time-consuming and require a specific degree of expertise. Also, getting people to write articles for *Bootprints* is probably one of the most thankless jobs of all the above.

More recently we formed an Outreach Committee which is headed up by Erin Squires. This committee was tasked with gaining new members, as well as keeping them, increasing the club’s social media and media presence, and adding more diversity to the club. Part of this is our *Facebook* page maintained by several admins and an *Instagram* page maintained by Jos Brannan.

We also have volunteers who organize the picnic and holiday party each year. We are all so grateful to those who volunteer as we know it takes a great deal of time and organizational skills to pull off these two fun social activities each year. This year Pat Davison organized the picnic and Karen Markham, Al Roman and Lani Giguere are organizing the holiday party.

See *President’s Corner* continued on page 3

**President's Corner** *continued from page 2*

As you can see, it takes a village to keep our club going! After 31 years in existence, I find it very heartening that so many of you are still stepping up and volunteering for these positions. Some of you have been doing so for years.

Many thanks to all of you! You are all an important and integral part of the club, and we would have a difficult time continuing without you. If I have forgotten anyone I sincerely apologize.

--President Lori Tisdell

*"As you can see, it takes a village to keep our club going!"*

*~ President Lori Tisdell*



Smurfy advice for the trail...

## **Embrace the Rain**

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

We all hope for great weather for our hikes but sometimes mother nature doesn't cooperate. I like to be optimistic, but to be honest, I've hiked in some pretty bad weather. Still, I usually have lots of fun, and honestly, if I canceled my hikes whenever there was a chance of rain, I would probably never get to hike. And I can't count how many people decided not to join me and missed out on great weather, fearing a coming shower that never came. Just go prepared and enjoy what mother nature provides.

The number one rule for serious hikes above treeline and with exposure is to know the weather forecast and adapt your hike to the evolving weather conditions. That said, for most day hikes a little rain will never hurt you. Come prepared and you can enjoy much more time outside. And who knows, that weather forecast is never really right and you might miss a wonderful day.

### **How to prepare for wet weather**

Be proactive, make sure you have rain gear and clothing at the ready, your pack is rigged for wet weather, and you have an escape plan if it gets ugly.

First off, keep your rain gear handy in an easily accessible pocket or area of your pack. The last thing you want to do in a sudden downpour is to be digging through your pack looking for it as everything gets wet. There are several options for rain gear from lightweight, breathable, fancy

*Embrace the Rain continued on page 5*

*"Come prepared and you can enjoy much more time outside."  
~ PaPa Smurf*

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**Embrace the Rain** *continued from page 4*

fabrics that cost a fortune to inexpensive nylon raincoats with ventilation zippers and even simple windbreakers with DWR (durable, water-resistant coatings) that while not entirely rainproof will mostly protect you. One of the cheapest and lightest options are Frogg Toggs. I saw them at Walmart for \$10. Light, breathable and waterproof but they rip easily and don't do well if a branch catches them like when bushwhacking. Even a cheap poncho will work in a pinch but always be prepared with some kind of rain gear.

While there are many types of rain gear that claim to be breathable, it's been my experience that they rarely work well. It always seems that the waterproofing keeps your sweat and humidity inside and you feel wet and clammy inside your rain gear. We always recommend synthetic, wicking fabrics that wick moisture away from you body while hiking. This is especially true of hiking in a raincoat.

You may also want to have a baseball cap or hat with a brim to keep water off your face. If you wear glasses, or don't have a raincoat with a hood that has a brim, you will also definitely need something to keep the rain out of your eyes, like a ball cap. I also like to have a bandanna or cotton cloth in a ziplock bag handy to dry off my glasses every once in a while, while hiking in the rain.

You will also want to make sure your first aid kit is up-to-date with blister care supplies as wet feet are prone to blisters. When you are wet you also are more likely to feel cold. Bring water/windproof gloves, maybe a handwarmer, and a warmer layer that is made from materials that retain warmth even when wet, such as polyesters or wool materials. Cotton just makes you feel colder when wet.

**Waterproof your gear**

Even if you don't expect rain it's a good idea to rig your backpack for  
See *Embrace the Rain* continued on page 6



PaPa Smurf

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*“First off, pay attention to the terrain and your foot gear.”  
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*“When wearing rain gear most people will find sweat and humidity building up that will wet your base layers.”  
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**Embrace the Rain** *continued from page 5*

wet weather. Remember that backpacks and storage sacks are not usually waterproof. I see a lot of people using pack covers which usually work but are prone to dislodge, get caught in branches, fly off in the wind, or leak. I find it more reliable to store the content of my pack in waterproof bags. You can use light weight waterproof bags, ziplock bags, or even shopping bags. Line your sleeping bag, extra clothing, and food in these waterproof bags before stowing in your backpack. Some like to just line the whole inside of the backpack with a trash bag. Do it before your trip and you don't have to fuss around repacking if it starts to rain.

**Hiking in the rain**

First off, pay attention to the terrain and your foot gear. As the ground gets wet dry surfaces can turn quickly into a slip 'n slide. Rocks and roots that your boots gripped well in the sunshine can easily become slippery as ice. Know how your shoes behave on these surfaces and adjust your level of caution while hiking accordingly. I'm always surprised how some rock surfaces when wet may be very grippy or can be slippery as glass. Same for roots and, of course, mud. As you hike ascertain how well your boots and the trail surface are behaving as you hike. You may find that on well-drained soil and where rocks are not slick you don't have to make any modification. But if you find yourself slipping you will need to slow way down and be more careful and attentive to obstacles. Hiking poles during wet weather are also very helpful when the going gets slippery and especially for stream crossings on slippery rocks.

When wearing rain gear most people will find sweat and humidity building up that will wet your base layers. Try to slow down and minimize sweating. If you have clothing ventilation options use them if the weather permits and perhaps use a pair of waterproof gloves, or in a pinch, medical gloves can be used to keep wind off your hands to keep them warmer.

While it's harder to take breaks in the rain be sure to stop for quick easy snacks and water breaks. Don't just push on and get dehydrated. Even when I plan a nice lunch on a hike I like to pack a mix of snacks that I can  
*See Embrace the Rain continued on page 7*

**Embrace the Rain** *continued from page 6*

eat while hiking, to substitute for lunch, if the weather is too bad for a nice lunch break. It's no fun sitting around in the rain for too long unless you can find some shelter.

I like to also keep a ziplock bag with a small bandanna or rag to absorb moisture in a pocket to quickly put my cellphone and map into if it rains. If you find you want to take a photo you can use the cloth to keep the lens clear and quickly wipe away any drops that fall on your phone while taking the shot.

**Dangers**

In addition to slippery surfaces there are some unique dangers that come up in rainy weather. Stream crossings can swell with water, making what was an easy dry crossing quickly become a difficult wade through unsafe water. Be aware of obstacles that might be ahead or, if returning back the way you came, a creek crossing that is much harder later in the day after more rain has fallen. It might be a good idea to turn back early if you think a river crossing may be-

come unsafe with the rain. When crossing deeper water be sure to unbuckle your hip belt before you cross so you can easily get free of the weight of your backpack if you slip into fast-moving water. While uncommon in our area also be aware of any flash flood dangers if hiking in ravines or canyons.

And don't forget your hypothermia training. Watch out for the *umbles, mumbles, and stumbles* that indicate the signs of the wet cold turning into something more serious. If you see signs of hypothermia danger in any of your group, stop, get some food and drink, and be sure everyone is safe.

See *Embrace the Rain* continued on page 8

*"In addition to slippery surfaces there are some unique dangers that come up in rainy weather."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*



*“Surprisingly, if the environment allows it, hiking with an umbrella can be fun.”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

***Embrace the Rain*** continued from page 7

### **Hiking with an umbrella**



Surprisingly, if the environment allows it, hiking with an umbrella can be fun. It's important to be aware that on trails with lots of nearby branches the umbrella will catch on branches and quickly be torn to pieces so it only works in the open or on wide trails. Also, when in exposed areas you might be fighting the wind and find it's not worth the trouble. You may also find

that hiking on rocky or rough terrain with one hand holding the umbrella is not safe. But under the right conditions it can be pleasant keeping the rain well away from your head and face making for an enjoyable hike. I did a rainy 50-mile, 3-day hike in Pennsylvania once that was very enjoyable with the umbrella and would have been a soggy mess without it. Keep in mind it is very hard to hike with hiking poles and an umbrella at the same time so be prepared to hike with only one or no pole at all. I have seen others attach an umbrella to their packs for hands-free hiking but my experience has been that this is pretty tricky to get to work well. While using an umbrella is not ideal under many trail conditions, on the right trails it's fun and rewarding, turning a wet slog into a fun hike in the rain. Give it a try if the conditions permit.

—PaPa Smurf

(If you have a suggestion for future topics or a hike-related question you would like covered in this column send a note to [john.klebes@gmail.com](mailto:john.klebes@gmail.com))

Book Review by Dick Forrest:

## **The Last to Vanish: A Novel**

by Megan Miranda

I don't usually read mysteries but I made an exception with this book. This mystery/novel was on the *New York Times Bestseller List* and involved the Appalachian Trail (AT) and so it was intriguing to me as a hiker. I'm more of a person to read nonfiction and I would rather read books that cut to the chase.

The story is about a small mountain resort town that is close by the AT. Because of its proximity to the AT thru-hikers come into town to rest, eat, drink, and resupply on their journeys while doing the Trail. This (fictional) town, Cutter's Pass, is considered to be the most dangerous town in America. Seven people have disappeared/vanished from the town and haven't been seen since. An inn, called The Passage Inn, is at the center of the story. Abigail "Abby" Lovett is the narrator who has been the manager of the inn for the last ten years. A brother of one of the missing people, Trey West, comes into town and stays at the inn, is assigned the same room that his brother stayed in, and since the inn is the last place that his brother, Landon West, was seen, Trey stayed at the inn to find out what happened to his brother. His presence at the inn and in town prompts Abby, who for her own reasons which we find out close to the end of the book, to also find out what happened to those who have vanished.

So Abby is the person who knows the people, the various characters in the story who are at the inn and in town. It seems that everyone in town or at the inn has a reason or reasons for being there. So Abby, like Landon West before her, who was an investigative journalist/writer who went missing, also became a sleuth. In the course of the story she does find what happened to the "Fraternity Four," who were four college students who decided to do a portion of the AT and ended up in tiny Cutter's Pass, and who disappeared without a trace. See *Book Review continued on page 10*





**Book Review** *continued from page 9*

The three other characters who also vanish are Alice Kelly, Farrah Jordan, and Trey's brother, Landon West. Abby also finds out why these three people vanished, as well.

In summary, my disparate thoughts about the book: I won't go into the details, which will spoil the story. Megan Miranda writes well. However, I had a hard time reading the book straight through – I put it down several times. Probably why I don't read more fiction is that this book, like all fiction, is full of feelings, rather than facts. It's not that I'm unemotional it's that I prefer facts over feelings when I read a book. The ending of the book, however, feels contrived – a little too convenient. Additionally, it is regrettable that Megan Miranda includes the AT in her mystery about disappearing people. Many hikers hike alone on that trail and don't need another reason, fictional or not, to get worried about hiking there. The AT is not central but tangential to the story/mystery and that makes it all the more reason to not include it in the book. Considering that it's fiction I probably would not have bought the book without a book reviewer either talking or writing (I forget which) about the AT.

--Dick Forrest

*"....it is regrettable that Megan Miranda includes the AT in her mystery about disappearing people."*

*~ Dick Forrest*



## Sell, Give, or Exchange Used Hiking Gear

### For Sale:

1. Suunto ambit3 altimeter watch (\$65)
2. MSR whisperlite stove with repair kit and pump and 2 gas cannisters (\$65)
3. REI men's size L blue down parka (800 fill) (\$45)

Peter M. Haas

### Necky Looksha Sport IV kayak

**\$250** or best offer

The Looksha Sport is the ideal all-around kayak. It is hard-chined boat with the secondary stability of a whitewater boat - that means it turns easily and is good for coastal exploration, river kayaking, or tight marshes where you require more agility than a 18-20' kayak can offer. The hard chines also make for great carving ability which makes this an ideal boat for surfing waves or getting knocked around in big surf. At the same time, the design manages to offer excellent hull speed for longer distances. I have used this boat for flatwater races and, compared to other boats with a similar length/width ratio, it moves nicely through the water and maintains a very good hull speed considering the width.

Susan Young

### Giveaway:

I have a pair of Salomon X-Ultra low cut hikers in US women's size 6.5. I am giving them away to someone who can use them; I wore them maybe 2 or 3 times only, so they are in great condition. [The last on Salomons, I found out the hard way, doesn't agree with all my foot/knee problems; otherwise I would have been wearing them myself.]

Jane Ricci

Eco walking shoes, European size 37, low cut, tan leather, Vibram soles. In almost-new condition. I wear size 7 1/2 and the toes are too tight for me.

Susan Young



## **Future Events in 2022**

**September 3-9** - Lily Bay State Park (on Moosehead Lake), Maine Camping Trip led by Karen Markham

**September 23-25** - Johns Brook Lodge Backpack Adirondacks led by Karen Markham

**December 10** - Annual holiday party at Holyoke Elks organized by Karen Markham, Al Roman and Lani Giguere

## PVHC 2022 Executive Board



Left to Right: Lori Tisdell, President; Erin Squires, Vice President; Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer; Lani Giguere, Secretary

## **Fun Pin Awards for Completing Hikes**

PVHC has started a new Fun Pin Award for participating in hikes with the club. There are three pins that members can earn:

1. **10 Hikes with PVHC**
2. **10 Mountains/Summits with PVHC**
3. **10 Trails with PVHC**

There is no double or triple dipping. One hike can be used for just one hike or summit or trail. You can count weekly hikes, summits or trails more than once if you do them on different dates. Examples - the Monday Morning hike can be used several times in the hikes log as long as you do them on different dates, Mt Holyoke can be listed several times as long as it is hiked on different dates, same with trails.

We hope you have fun hiking with PVHC and earning your Pins!

The logs for each pin are posted on the club website. Once completed you may turn it in at a club meeting for your pin award.

## **Slide Show Photos**

Please send all slide show photos for the 2022 PVHC Holiday Party multimedia slide show to the following email address:  
pvhcpictures@gmail.com

## Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

### Sept Renewals

David & Kathy Barzilai  
 Danielle & Richard Bel-  
 lows  
 Lara Brown  
 Shelly Burelle  
 Rika Clement  
 Shari Cox  
 Marie Dunn  
 Nicole Fonsh  
 JoAnne Gebski  
 Chris Giguere  
 Lani & Rick Giguere  
 Brian Sullivan  
 Carl Todd  
 Ann VanDyke  
 Vance Von Jarowski

### Oct Renewals

Janet Beach  
 Donna Beck  
 Marcy Bloomenthal  
 Darlene Elias  
 Isabella Forest  
 Joanne Fortin  
 John & Regina Fortune  
 Barbara Graf  
 Nancy Johnson  
 Betty Lempke  
 Karen Markham  
 Maria Rocco  
 Al Roman  
 Laura Slowinski

## Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Lori Tisdell, President  
 Erin Squires, Vice President  
 Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer  
 Lani Giguere, Secretary  
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

## Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Lori Tisdell & Michele Wolf  
 Backpacking Advisor: Rick Briggs  
 Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman  
 Club Website Editor: Dick Forrest  
 Non-Member E-mail Coordinator: Rob Schechtman  
 Club E-mail Coordinator: Lori Tisdell  
 Quartermaster: Mike Carrier  
*Bootprints* Newsletter Editor: Dick Forrest

*Bootprints* is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Please email your story/event contributions to Dick Forrest at: [dforrest@charter.net](mailto:dforrest@charter.net)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### July

Nikki Abromson  
 Luann Bianco  
 Kimberly Duval  
 James Kidd  
 Patrick Love

### August

Zita Boscher  
 Marty Kounitz & Susan Mellinger  
 Barbara & Andy Kowal  
 Jean Lynch  
 Lisa Morrin  
 Nina Wilder

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:

Peggy Tibbitt  
 413 South Gulf Rd.  
 Belchertown, MA 01007

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



### UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Mondays Morning hike
- Tuesdays Morning bike, evening hike
- Wednesdays Morning hike
- Thursdays Morning hike
- Fridays Kayak
- Saturdays Morning hike
- Sundays Morning hike
- Sept 6 (MA) Club Meeting
- Oct 4 (MA) Club Meeting
- PVHC <https://teamup.com/kszb8qkbizhndt3qjt7>
- Schedule of Events

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

### Next Club Meetings

September 6, 7 p.m. at **ROC**  
 October 4, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

**ROC - Red Oak Church, 337 Piper Road, West Springfield**

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is October 20, 2022

**\*\* Check out our club website at:**  
[www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org](http://www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org)

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to:  
[pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com](mailto:pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com)



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