

SPECIAL APRIL SUPPLEMENT OF FEETPRINTS

Volume 9 – Special Issue

April 1st, 2005

LOST in NoHo - “How we survived near death and were saved by the gentle art of co-leading”

by Gary's cousin Marvel M. Comic

Do you think we'll get out alive?" Norm blurts. We were deep in the forgotten pathways of Northampton, Massachusetts where few dare to venture far from a restaurant. Looking around nervously, I try to forget that we are miles for the nearest latté – or at least a couple hundred yards, anyway.

It had been a brutal hike so far. Several of our group were having trouble making headway through this urban jungle without the latest high-heel hiking boots but we struggled on hoping to find our way out of this godforsaken place before



Norm and his New Girlfriend Relax at AMC's Galehead Hut

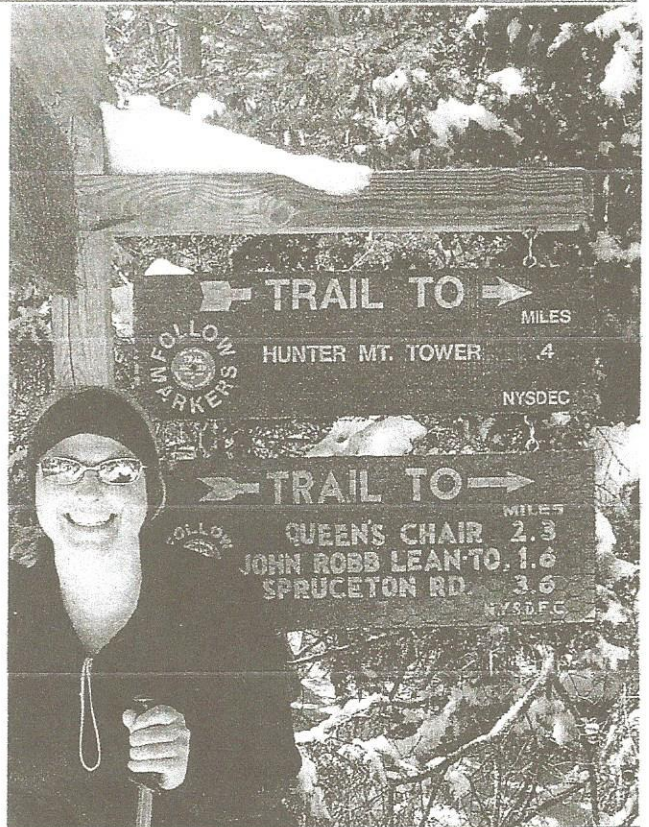
the bugs had picked our bones clean.

It had been well over twelve minutes since we last had a chance to “Carb-up” at the restaurant at the trail head and we were all woozy from the lack of nourishment. Most of our faithful group had skipped desert, not wanting to risk the fate of the others who had to turn back in the parking lot when the extra weight of the desert made it difficult to sustain the hike.

As with most daring adventures, ours faced a mountain of challenges. Gary, Norm, Marcia, and I agreed our only chance of surviving would be to travel fast and light, alpine style. For me, that meant carrying only a rain jacket, travel coffee mug, and Snickers bar, and strategically mooching food off Rick and Sybille. Sure, that decision carried extra risks – If the weather turned ugly, we might be forced to bivvy on the exposed porch of Thornes' Market. But we were willing to forgo lattés for the thrill of hiking.

Within a few hundred feet of the half-way point my crackerjack compass/decoder ring/watch sounded the alarm that were passed our turnaround time – our slim margin of safety to getting back to civilization in time to watch American Idol.

The wind turns bitter, the mercury plunges (probably below 60 F), and a whiff of death fills the air. We pushed on for we live in a time without heroes.



Ann Marie quickly ascends to the Queen's Chair

This is our chance to place our names into the annals of exploration history beside those of Magellan, Lewis and Clark, and my childhood heroes Spiderman, Superman, and Captain Marvel himself. We would be the first expeditioners to thru-hike the whole NoHo trail after dark. And we were desperate to find our way back to civilization and a latté.

Clenching my fists to suppress the tremors of terror, I scour the terrain ahead. “Oh, there's a cairn, ” I announce with practiced calm. The team takes a collective deep breath, and we press on past the “public-parking” sign. Good thing we had a co-leader for this desperate adventure.

8 Sneaky Ways to Carry Less

from *Slackpacker Magazine* – June 2002

The following tips are guaranteed to make your camping experience more comfortable... Unless you're the ethical type that is. Then you'll just learn which tricks to watch out for.

1. Always volunteer to carry group food rather than group gear. That cook pot, tent, and stove will always be there but the food just gets lighter and lighter as the trip progresses.
2. Sneak gear into your partner's pack at trailheads and vistas. Shari will love you when you pull that nice cold can of diet Coke out of her pack to share with her. (Just be sure you don't get anything stuffed in your own pack when you are not looking - no fair putting rocks in Rick)
3. Volunteer to cook dinner the first night and be sure to burn it. Your hiking partners won't "let" you cook again leaving more time to rest.
4. Take up photography, suggests Ann Marie. When others are setting up camp, you'll be off shooting the perfect sunset getting you out of setting up the tent.
5. Travel light. No need to carry all that food. With a simple spoon and a few comments about how low on food you are everyone will feel sorry for you and feed you. NO WAIT – forget that! Just bring Lots and Lots of Food. It's important that you have extra incase someone else comes by with a begging spoon. It is considered very good luck to share food with strangers carrying a begging spoon.
6. Volunteer to carry the tent poles and stakes. At first it sounds like a fair deal, but you won't have to lug the extra water weight when the tent and rainfly absorb rain and condensation.
7. Always use your stove first and offer to heat water for everyone. That way you will burn through your fuel in no time saving weight. You will then be able to sit back and have everyone else heat water for you later in the trip.
8. Feign sickness, cough, sneeze and talk about your loose stools. Nobody will let you cook, clean dishes or filter water and you will be able to lounge around camp.

Experience your unhappiness while you've got it, you might never be unhappy again!

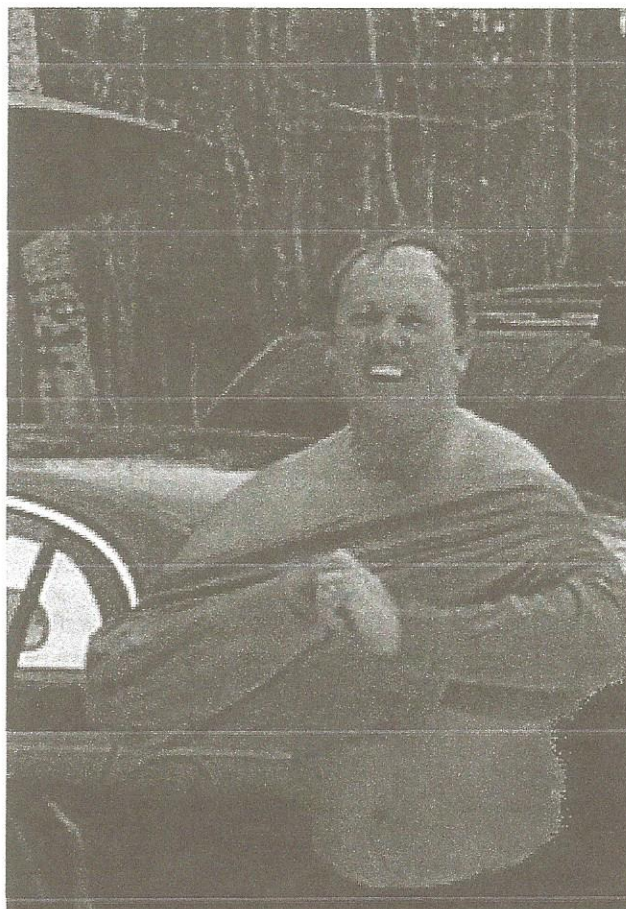
High Altitude Mountaineering

(Quote from Greg Hamilton on suggesting the feeling of climbing at altitude)

I suggest going out to the nearest pub and getting completely, and utterly, wasted. Make sure you smoke at least 1 pack of unfiltered Camel's. Get the full ashtray, pour a drink in it and then pour the mixture into a water bottle. When you get home (ideally around 3:30am) stick the vile mixture into your freezer.

Put on your best goretex and thermal layer. Climb in. At 5:30am, get out, drink (chew?) the mixture and go run the biggest flight of stairs you can find. Run until your heart threatens to explode. Your dehydration caused by the alcohol should adequately simulate what you may experience at higher altitudes. Your lung capacity should be sufficiently impaired by the smokes to simulate a oxygen poor environment.

The freezer episode should adequately replicate a bivy. Drinking the booze/butt mixture should simulate your lack of appetite.... Oh — once your finished your workout, go to work (to replicate the long walk out)."



Dick getting ready to lead a Topless Naturalist Hike

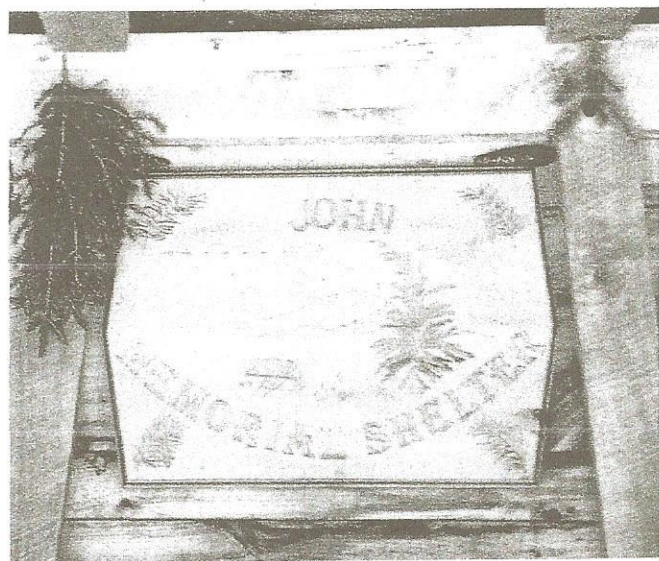
Up Coming Hikes & Activities

Sunday, April 24th Trail of the Red Planet

Join PVHC for some Out-of-this-World Hiking. Looking for a challenging new hike? Something a little more remote and isolated without crowds? Then try the Trail of the Red Planet, one of the newest long distance hiking trails on Mars. According to NASA scientists it's guaranteed to be full of features backpackers love – isolation, big mountains, challenging terrain.

Be sure to bring extra clothes, average daily temperature is only -67F. And bring plenty of water and oxygen as they can be scarce in this area. But don't worry about a little extra gear because a 50 pound pack only weighs 15 pounds on Mars.

Meet Dave at 8:00am at trailhead at Cydonia on the Martian surface. Take the Mass Pike to exit 18 then head straight up when you reach Boston. The trail is located approximately 48 million miles on your left.



Falls Brook Shelter renamed and dedicated to former Hiking club president. New problems discovered as hikers mistake shelter for actual "John" and use it as outhouse.

"Happiness is like peeing in your pants. Everyone can see it, but only you can feel it's warmth."

For sale:

Backpacking microwave oven, small size just right for backpacking, extension cord not included. See Dave's Deals.



Coming Soon:

Evian will introduce "Water Lite" -- Their claim of "half the calories" of stream water will sure to be a hit with ultralight hikers.

Her Side of the Story

My husband was in an odd mood Saturday night. We planned to meet at a café for a drink. I spent the afternoon hiking with my friends from the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club and I thought it might have been my fault because I was a bit later than I promised, but he didn't say anything much about it. I don't remember doing anything to make him upset, but could tell there was something wrong.

The conversation was quite slow going so I thought we should go off to some place intimate so we could talk more privately. We went to this restaurant and he was STILL acting a bit funny. I was getting really worried, what did I do? What was bothering him? Was he mad at me for going hiking?

I tried to cheer him up, but started to wonder what was bothering him. Was it me or something else? I asked him if he was upset with me, he said no. But I wasn't really sure. So anyway, in the car on the way back home, I said that I loved him deeply and he just put his arm around me. I didn't know what the heck that meant because he didn't say it back or anything.

We finally got back home and I was wondering if he was going to leave me! So I tried to get him to talk but he just switched on the TV. Reluctantly, I said I was going to go to bed. Then after about 10 minutes, he joined me and to my surprise, we made love. But, he still seemed really distracted, so afterwards I just wanted to confront him but I just cried myself to sleep. I just don't know what to do anymore. I really think he's seeing someone else.

His Side of the Story:

Played golf today -- shot 87! Can't putt for shit! Felt kinda tired. I really should have gone hiking instead. Got lucky after dinner though.

New Invention provides Bug-free Hiking:

Are you sick and tired of black flies buzzing around your head while hiking? Feeling anemic from all those raw and itching mosquito bites? A leading scientific study shows the new Bug-Out Hiking Shirt keeps bugs away 24 hours a day. Effective on flying and biting insects, as well as ticks and other crawling creatures. In clinical trials this product demonstrated 99.98 percent effectiveness when used as directed.*

Simply wear the patented Bug-Out Hiking Shirt next time you are in the woods and stay bug free without irritating chemicals or smelly repellents. (For best results only use this product at temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Use of this product in temperatures above 45 degrees voids warranty and my result in decrease in the products ability to repel insects.)

For a limited time the club will be offering a special PVHC embroidered version of the Bug-Out Hiking Shirt. Send \$45.00, cash only, to the Footprints editor.

OXYMORONIC BACKCOUNTRY STATEMENTS:

- I paid too much for it, but its worth it.
- A little pain never hurt anyone.
- No one goes to that place anymore-it's always too crowded.
- We do not anticipate any emergencies.
- I marvel at the strength of human weakness.
- I tripped over a hole that was sticking up out of the ground.
- I'm not going to say, "I told you so."
- I'm proud of my humility.
- No matter where you go, there you are!
- I used to be indecisive, now I'm not sure.
- May I ask a question ?
- Anyone who isn't confused here doesn't really know what's going on.
- I've told you for the fifty-thousandth time, stop exaggerating.
- Anyone who goes to a psychiatrist ought to have his head examined.
- He lived his life to the end.
- If you fall and break your legs, don't come running to me. - Samuel Goldwyn
- The best cure for insomnia is to get a lot of sleep. -W.C. Fields
- I can resist everything but temptation. - Mark Twain

Where your PVHC Dues went in 2004

During a routine audit of last months Footprints Budget several expenses were discovered to be incorrectly listed as operations expenses. The following expenses should have been listed as miscellaneous membership goodwill:

- \$2,127.50 for bail and vehicle towing charges during Norms Moonlight Night Hikes.
- \$4,023.12 for new telescope for Treasure (useful in search and rescue efforts and scouting out new planets for upcoming hikes)
- \$47,298.00 for airfare and travel arrangements for President Ann Marie's Hiking Club Ambassadorship Goodwill tour to Hawaii, Australia, The Galapagos Islands, Florida, and New Zealand.
- \$7,263.00 to Leprechaun Medical for VP's cosmetic enhancement surgery.
- \$127,650.23 - hey, who knows where it went but I'm sure it went to good use.

*Don't forget to pay your dues on time - we need them!

NEW HIKING GUIDELINES

1. Don't prearrange signals or meeting places with your hiking companions. It is more fun to surprise them by popping out from behind a tree.
2. Extra food occupies space in your pack and weighs you down - don't bring any. A simple spoon should be fine for mooching.
3. A pair of tight shorts, tank top and sandals will look terrific when wet - you can always cuddle to stay warm.
4. Seek no wisdom, Leave no Word, Common sense is too absurd.

**extracted from AMC Guide to "How to Die in the Mountains"*

"My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was sixty. She's ninety-three today and we don't know where the hell she is"

~Ellen DeGeneres

Truth is Stranger then Fiction

- Real Web Pages from the Internet

EDIBLE GEAR

www.ediblegear.com

The next generation of ultralight has arrived.

Welcome to EAT (Eastern Active Technologies) where your last mile is your lightest mile. EAT has developed a full line of backpacking equipment made from sugar, starch, rice and meat based materials. Yes, gear you can eat. Imagine watching your camping buddies unpacking their huge backpacks and setting up their intricate (and heavy) shelters while you recline in luxury, secure in the knowledge that you'll be carrying about sixteen ounces less tomorrow. And another pound per day after that.

Products include:

- **SnackPack™** Backpacks made with fruit flavored GummiSkin
- **SweeTarp™** Shelter made with flavored GummiSkin
- **SnackSack™** Sleeping Bags GummiSkin with VegiLoft Fill
- **CaliforniaRoll™** Sleeping Pads CarboFoam in Rice, Wheat, Egg noodle and Pesto Pasta
- **AlkyHaul™** Stove Fuel Chardonnay it's not-180 proof grain alcohol
- **ProteinStix™** Treking Poles Compressed beef, chicken, shrimp and textured vegetable protein (vegitaritan)

www.katahdinorbust.com

KATAHDIN OR BUST?

Big Adventure in the Mountains vs. Big Mountains for Adventure

HOME

ABOUT US

CONTACT US

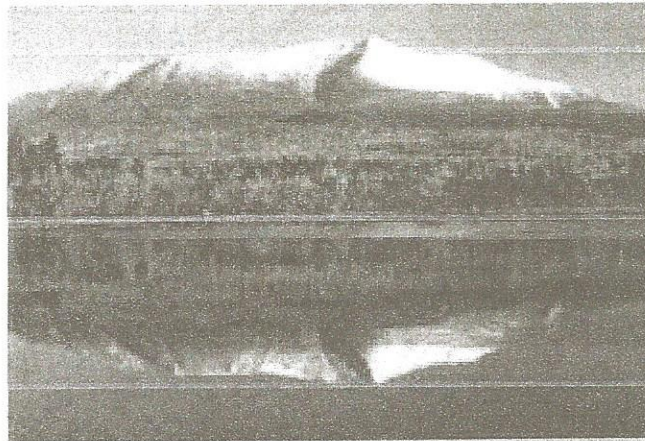
FAQ

CONTRIBUTE

THE A.T.

FUND PROGRESS

GALLERY



Which sounds more appealing to you:
A 2,100 mile hike through 14 states
and some of the most beautiful vistas
in the United States

OR

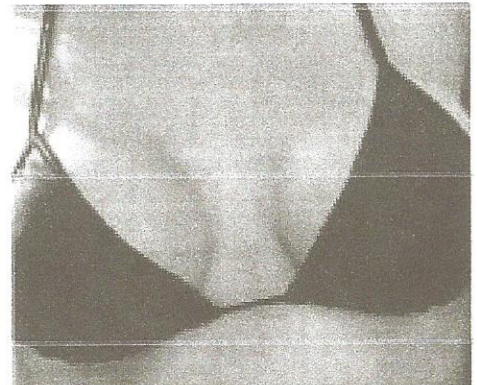
Large, full, perky breasts?

Which of the above two options
should a young couple strive to
achieve?

VS.

The average Thruhike costs almost as much as a breast augmentation. We need \$5,000 to make one of these dreams a reality!

All we need is for 20,000 people to donate fifty cents, or for 80,000 people to donate twelve and a half cents, and both of our dreams can come true!!



Pioneer Valley Eating Club Officers & Committed Felons

President-in-Abstantia – ANN MARIE

(Under impeachment for inappropriate use of funds and excessive meeting absenteeism while vacationing in Hawaii, Australia, The Galapagos Islands, Florida, New Zealand.....)

Vice President – Long JOHN

(The Leprechaun Society has filed an appeal to the Guinness Book of World Records on the basis of measurement tampering.)

Secretary - MONICA

(Accused of inappropriate sexual behavior in the work place and sexual harassment toward our Treasurer)

Treasurer – Telescope MIKE

(Hoping for more sexual harassment)



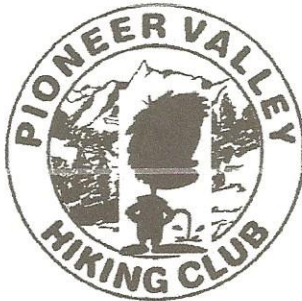
IMPORTANT NOTICES

- Next Club Meetings:[†]
May 3, 2005, 7pm, Green Bay, WI
June 3, 2005, 7pm, Pittsfield, ME
- Next Hike Planning Meeting:
February 31, 2006, 7pm at WEU
(to be held concurrently with Ann Marie's Tully Lake Backpack planning meeting so please speak loudly so we can hear you over all the talking)
- Happy April Fool's Day

[†]Please Note New Meeting Locations!

Due to the ever expanding national scope of our membership we will be rotating our meeting locations between Green Bay, Wisconsin, West Springfield, Massachusetts, and Pittsfield, Maine.

fold here



This FeetPrints Supplement is not a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Any similarity to the Famous BOOTPRINTS is purely intentional.

Postage
Due
*Return to
Sender*

