

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 11 Issue 3

May 2007



Sheila at the Wheel (more S.S. Yankee photos on page 3)

S.S. Yankee Clipper

by Laura Cook

This was my eighth windjammer cruise and I will probably be hooked on them for the rest of my life. I enjoy sailing, snorkeling and just being near the ocean and we got our fill on this wonderful Windjammer Adventure. There were ten of us traveling together and our first stop was the beautiful island of St. Lucia. We spent 4 days and 3 nights at the very famous Anse Chastanet Resort located at the most southern tip of the island. Spectacular views, a private beach and award winning cuisine were just the start of this Caribbean vacation. There is so much to do at the resort, it's easy to find activities galore: kayaking, mountain biking, scuba diving, snorkeling and the list goes on.

We arrived on a Thursday and continued to the docks to meet our sailing vessel, the Yankee Clipper on Sunday late afternoon. After checking into our cabins, a scrumptious buffet awaited us for dinner. Later in the evening, a band of musicians appeared and a dance party began! By midnight, it was determined that all passengers had arrived, so we set sail to begin our trip throughout the grenadine islands. The ship consisted of 61 passengers and 32 crewmembers. A guarantee that we would be well taken care of.

We experienced beautiful weather, and explored five islands over the course of the week. Plenty of time to relax swim and do just about anything we felt like, including

sleeping in late. We met many very interesting fellow windjammers from all over North America and a few other parts of the world. I look forward to next year's windjammer where we will be traveling to Central America to the San Blas Islands off the coast of Panama. A new ship, new location and a new adventure!

~Laura Cook



Shenipsit State Forest GEO-Caching Hike

By John Klebes

In honor of the Easter holiday I thought it would be appropriate to lead a GEO-Caching Hike as it's kind of like an Easter Egg Hunt. Rick Briggs, Syndi Dirico and myself enjoyed the late morning sunshine and grand views as we hiked up to the summit observation tower on Soapstone Mountain. Along the way we found our first geocache called the Soapstone Powerline Micro. {Geocaching is an outdoor treasure-hunting game in which you use a Global Positioning System (GPS) to hide and seek containers called geocaches that hold a logbook and sometimes trade items like toys or small trinkets.}

After enjoying the views from the observation tower we hiked a mile around the Interpretive Loop trail which meanders down, around, and up again on Soapstone Mountain. There were two more geocaches hidden on this trail but we only were able to locate one of them. Along the trail there were information signs that pointed out features such as the remains of old charcoal pits, types of tree bark, and plants, etc. After returning to the summit we hiked around a picnic area with excellent ridgeline views, discovered our third geocache, and followed a looping trail around the base of the mountain back to our car.

On the way out we drove to the north end of Shenipsit Forest and hiked north to find the Park Services Letterbox. A letterbox is the original {Shenipsit - continued on page 2}

Sampling the New York Catskills High Peaks

By John Klebes

A few years ago I climbed my first peaks in the Catskills; Windham High Peak and the Blackhead range. If you drive toward Albany you have no doubt seen the majestic peaks of the Blackhead range south of the turnpike. This was the summer of 2003 and I had {Catskills - continued on Page 2.}



Waterfalls in the Catskills



{Shenipsit – continued from page 1}

geocache! It's a 150-year-old sport that uses references to landmarks and clues embedded in stories, back before we had GPS technology, to hide and seek the hidden journals and a unique ink stamp for each letterbox.

We crested the hill line, dropped into a valley and across a stream with a series of small waterfalls and rock cascades, and followed the clues that included identifying different types of trees to know when to turn and when to look for the next clue. After finding the letterbox, signing the log, and heading back the trail we ran into several others that were out looking for letterboxes. Turns out they are from the local Orienteering club. All in all a nice spring adventure.

~John Klebes

Merck Forest Cabin

By John Klebes

Eight of us braved the treacherous snow and ice as we traversed the lower slopes of Mt Antone on our way to Ned's Place in the Merck Forest & Farmland Center in Rupert, VT. Rick Briggs dared the attempt on skis while most of the sensible among us donned



snowshoes for the tricky terrain. (What that

says about the rest of us, that did neither, I will leave for your imagination.)

Ned's Place is a beautiful wooden cabin located at the edge of a mountainside field with outstanding views of Bear Mt and Mt. Equinox. After our hike into the cabin we enjoyed a lunch of hotdogs cooked on the grill before taking an afternoon hike up to the summit of Mt Antone, which is the highest mountain in the Merck Forest with nice views. This time there was no trouble convincing everyone that snowshoes would be a good choice!

When we returned to the cabin for dinner we had a nice surprise when we found Ann Marie and Rob had hiked in to meet us. Ann Marie even braved it on skis! We enjoyed hamburgers and vegi-burgers with an assortment of potluck appetizers and sides. This club never hurts for food!

The cabin is fully enclosed and equipped with a wood-burning stove and plenty of firewood so we were toasty warm. With a sleeping loft and bunk beds we had plenty of room and enjoyed great company while the weather turned to sleet, rain, and then snow.

Ann Marie could only stay for the day so Jonathan and I snowshoed out half way with her to where she could switch to skis. Then we headed back to the cabin. The rain began to freeze and we would later find our trails ice covered and slippery in the morning.

~John Klebes



Rick cooks up Mushroom Omelets for breakfast at Merck Forest Cabin.

{Catskills – continued from page 1}

recently finished the New Hampshire 4000 footers. Hiking this list brought me to many exciting places I would never have thought to go. I thought, why not use another list to explore the Catskills. So, armed with the list of 39 peaks required for the Catskill 3500 list (all the peaks in the Catskills over 3500 feet plus a required winter climb of four of them!), I planned an ambitious solo three day backpack over the Escarpment trail and the Blackhead range to cover my first four high peaks.

This was to be the first of several raining introductions to the Catskills. Despite the rain I had a wonderful ten-mile hike over Windham High Peak, Burnt Knob and Acra

Point to the Batavia Kill Leanto. After spending the night in the leanto I awoke to a solid day of some of the heaviest rain I have seen. Not usually a fair weather hiker I must say I wimped out anyway and spent a most enjoyable day reading a good book and listening to the rain. I was a little disappointed that I couldn't finish my plan to hike over the Blackhead range and return that day so that I would have time to hike the ten miles back to my car the following day. As luck would have it six young women joined me ☺ that night at the leanto. I was able to hike out with them over the Blackhead range the next day, which earned me a ride back to my car!

Dick and Sue, Ann Marie, and Rick will recall my second Catskill Backpack; which was also in heavy rain. Who could forget the slippery rocks of the Burroughs Range? With an elevation gain and loss of over 10,000 feet we climbed Wittenberg, Cornell and Slide. Slide Mountain is the highest point in the Catskills at 4,180 feet. I am surprised that anyone hiked again with me after this wet exhausting hike. But fortunately it broke my wet weather streak and I began to see sunshine on most of the rest of the Catskills. That is when it wasn't snowing!

We returned to the Catskills in 2004 for the annual Ed Laroche Death March on the summer solstice. The Devil's Path is listed as one of the toughest day hikes with 26 miles, 7 peaks, and 18,000 feet of elevation gain and loss. Rick Briggs, Ed Laroche, Al and Josh Roman, and I got a world-wind tour of the best of the Catskills this day!

In 2005 Rick Briggs led us on a fantastic winter day hike up Hunter Mountain; second highest peak in the Catskills. Ann Marie remembers fondly the descent through deep snow on snowshoes! The year 2005 also included the famous "Mice eating Rick's brand new 900 fill down sleeping bag+ hike to Balsam, which included my first inedible meal. It consisted of an ancient cold weather military ration of square blocks. The square blocks of stew, brownies, soup, and such were indistinguishable from each other, coated with an edible shellac to preserve them, and totally inedible. I'm sure the mice must of thought Rick's sleeping bag was a better find than my leftovers that trip! I also led a backpack trip to Table & Peakamoose that year, which included Strawberry Shortcake to celebrate a visit from Sybille Nickel, who fly in from Wisconsin to join us.

Forty percent of the Catskill 3500s are trailless peaks or do not have maintained trails. Most of these trailless summits have a canister at the top with a log book which, when found, gives you confidence that you actually made it to the right peak. Actually finding this canister is another question when pushing through dense conifer trees and brush. I gained a lot of map and compass skills in 2006 as I fought my way up these trailless peaks. These are some of the more remote and difficult hikes. probably why they don't have any trails!

I started my first bushwhack peak by joining a Catskill Club hike led by Harry Rampe to gain some confidence. I was later told that my confidence was artificially inflated because Harry was the maintainer of the canisters for years and knew the mountains like the back of his hand. He made it look too simple.



Armed with my new confidence in my map and compass skills I proceeded to hike the rest of the bushwhacks solo. I suspected that there are few in our hiking club that would be interested in bushwhacking through dense trees, without trails, on many mountains that did not always have views. I had a grand time in 2006 combining different mountains and camping in new places. It is very satisfying hiking for several miles with only a compass and finally reaching the top and realizing you made it to the right spot! Sometimes it wasn't easy to find the canister and I would walk around in circles within a tenth of a mile of the true summit. I have seen my footprints circle within ten feet without noticing the canister. If you have never hiked without a trail it's an experience that's hard to describe but certainly builds your confidence.

During my climbs I discovered the remains of crashed airplanes such as the wreck on Kaaterskill High Peak, fire towers, many waterfalls and cascading brooks, and rock ledges and views from every angle and compass direction. I came upon bear cubs, deer, turkeys, and many birds and since many of the hikes were in snow I saw more kinds of animal tracks than I can even guess at.



And YES, there were STREAM CROSSINGS, and



S.S. Yankee Clipper
Windjammer
Cruise



I must admit I may have hiked a few miles in wet feet a time or two!

Afraid of a little rain, Mike Carrier and Dick & Sue Forrest decided not to join my backpacking trip to the Giant Ledges and Panther Mountain. To their loss as we didn't see that much rain, it was SNOW! We awoke in the morning to a beautiful coating of four to six inches of white. Our climb up Panther on the fresh snow gave Al Roman his fill of wildlife tracks as we followed bear prints along our footpath!

We returned to Blackhead Range this winter for a backpack up Blackhead, a required winter peak, with Ann Marie, Sybille, Rick and Jacob the faithful mountain dog.

My last winter backpack I did solo and included two days camping in strong wind up on the ridge and summits of several mountains included my last trailless peak, DoubleTop. I had saved DoubleTop because it had no defined trail and claimed views and just struck me as something to be kept for last. I climbed up to the ridge between Balsam and Eagle the night before, and camped on the ridge. It was surreal with howling wind and blowing snow. A real winter wonderland. In the morning I climbed Balsam, coffee cup in gloved hand, and returned to my camp to pack up and head south to Eagle and then the Bushwhack over to DoubleTop. Never found a herd path and the snow was deep enough to make it interesting while being just shy of demanding snowshoes. Reaching the summit ridge I never found a herd path or even a hint of trail or footprint. It took me sometime to find the canister, as the snow was heavy on the trees causing them to bend over and mask any sign of a herd path or opening. I'm afraid anyone following me would be very confused by my crisscrossing footprints looking for the canister. By the time I made it back to the established trail and headed back toward Eagle I was exhausted. Coming fully prepared I opted to spend an unplanned second night up on the ridge instead of over exerting myself trying to get back to the car. Glad I did because the next day it left me time to hike out

refreshed and enjoy a stop at the frozen Kaaterskill Falls to watch the ice climbers. Something I would have missed if I had continued another six miles out in the dark while exhausted from the long day's excursions to three peaks.

My last two climbs, a return in winter to the summits of Panther and Slide, were very enjoyable with deep snow and nice views between the windy snow squalls. The trees were all covered in thick layers of ice that made it look like everything was made of glass and crystal. The branches were bent across the trail and the route difficult in the deep snow. As you brushed past the icy branches it was like curtains of glass beads tinkling together.

And that's it. Thirty-five new mountains, 14 without trails, many in winter and four return trips to the four required winter peaks. Climbing the Catskill 3500s has provided a great introduction to the charms of the Catskills. I look forward to many future adventures. I have already started planning a few backpacking trips for this year to return to some of the places I missed. Join me on a trip to the Kaaterskill High Peak Wild Forest with summit views, an airplane crash site, rock ledges and outlooks at Huckleberry Point and Poet's Ledge and camping near the brink of three waterfalls. And later perhaps a trip in the Indian Head Wilderness to see the old mountain inn ruins, a climb up the fire tower on Overlook Mountain, and a night at the leanto at Echo Lake before checking out the views on the side of Plattekill Mountain.

~John Klebes
(Catskill 3500 Completer #1688)



Brennan's Inn

(formerly known as Remington Lodge)

West Cummington, MA

April 7, 2007

By Gary Dolgoff & Cindy Taylor

On Saturday, April 7th the Club (led by Gary Dolgoff) did their annual Remington Lodge (now known as Brennan's Inn due to change in ownership) extravaganza!

There was a total of 32 people in attendance for dinner; 20 people for lunch and the hike. Brennan's Inn has been refurbished. We took a tour through the establishment. The lobby has been redone and a full bar was added. The guest rooms look quite comfortable, and renovations were also made in the dining areas. The décor is an Irish mode.

Lunch was a buffet with a large accoutrement of cold cuts, plus delicious desserts & bite sized and yummy. After lunch, we divided into two groups for hikes. John and Ann Marie led a group into the woods around Deer Hill and the group loved the extensive bushwhacking that we did, as



well as the trails. Gary led his annual road walk past Windsor State Park. Nice scenery, although we really didn't want to walk through SNOW in April. Yes, there was several inches on the ground, and the temperature that day stayed in the thirties. As usual, the road walkers returned after the woods hikers.

After a social hour, we were seated for dinner & a great four-course dinner it was. Most of us expressed that the food was as good as that served when the establishment was Remington Lodge.

Norm, as usual, brought for our playing pleasure his personal game of Guess-Tures. However, due to (a) the lack of space to play it in (as this year, we were sharing the lodge with a group celebrating an 80th birthday) and (b) everyone was tired before 9:00 p.m.

to Gary D (the night owl's) great surprise, everyone left around 9:00 p.m. For the first time, we didn't get to see and experience this year Norm presiding over the Guess-Tures game.

It was a delightful day . delicious food, a LONG hike/walk, and a great day of club camaraderie.

~Gary Dolgoff & Cindy Taylor

4,000 Footer Series Continues by Richard Harris

March was a month of second or third tries as the summits of Mt. Flume and Mt. Jefferson were finally reached by Richard Harris. April was a month to try a Vermont 4,000 footer.



Mt. Liberty-Mt. Flume – always take snowshoes in Winter (No. 46 for Richard)

On March 14th, Richard Harris, Bob Morgan, and Tom Pedersen ventured to summit Mt. Flume via the Liberty Spring Trail and Franconia Ridge Trail over Mt. Liberty. It was a nice day with clear views. The forecast indicated that there was a good chance of precipitation later in the day. So, we decided to get a fairly early start. Wanting to move quickly, we made a decision (erroneous judgment) to forego taking snowshoes.

We quickly ascended the 4 miles up to Mt. Liberty using stabilizers with our crampons in tow if they were needed. The trail was fairly well packed as expected. Several other hikers aiming for either Mt. Flume or Mt. Lincoln were also along the trail. The views from Mt. Liberty were spectacular . similar to my first summit of Mt. Liberty in October 2006.

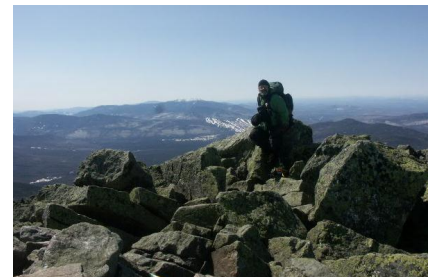
After taking in the views on Liberty, we quickly began the descent towards Mt. Flume. Having ascended Mt. Liberty in under 3 hours, we were hoping to find the Franconia Ridge Trail to Mt. Flume well packed and move rather quickly. Very shortly our hopes were to be dashed as we began post-holing into snow that was likely 4 feet deep. At times, the post-holing was up to our posteriors. This became the longest and slowest 1.1 miles we had ever hiked (I was to find a slower hike in April). While we

encounter 15 hikers on this trail, only 4 of them were in front of us.

After 1-3/4 hours, we finally reached the summit of Mt. Flume. The views were also spectacular, but we could see a storm system moving into the area. So, we quickly began the return trip to Mt. Liberty. This trip took less time than we thought it would take and within slightly over an hour we were on Liberty with the views gone with the summits of Lincoln and Lafayette no longer visible (similar to my second summit of Mt. Liberty also in October 2006).

After chatting with an AMC group that was camping out along the Franconia Ridge Trail near the Liberty Springs Trail junction, we met a couple who seemed thrilled at the prospect of descending along the Flume Slide Trail. That was the last that Bob and I saw of Tom until we reached the car as he sped down the trail to the trailhead (much like he had done all day).

~Richard Harris



Mt. Jefferson

When hiking by oneself, one should seek clarity as to who is on the trail. March 30th-April 1st was forecast to be a really nice weekend. Therefore, despite the lack of any club members being able to accompany me, I proceeded to the White Mountains to try to bag my 47th summit. Though it was not winter, it was wintry conditions.

Having arrived at the Lowe's Store parking lot at 3:45 on March 30th, I saw several other cars in the parking lot and inquired as to others being on the trail. The clerk saw 3 cars and said it was the car taker and 2 other groups. Well, what she was counting was the cars for the weekend caretaker, a person who was taking care of stuff for that day, and my car . as I was to learn 4+ hours later. Trail and weather reports indicated that snowshoes were not necessary. I met the %day+ caretaker shortly on the trail who confirmed that snowshoes were not needed.

The ascent up Lower Path to just below the Log Cabin went fairly well . under 1-3/4 hours including time taken to have a snack, put on crampons, etc. Being within 0.7 miles of Gray Knob Cabin, I was looking forward to enjoying sunset on the Quay. Well, the next 0.7 miles were very, very icy and slow with a backpack that was too heavy and my conscious decision to be extra careful hiking alone . I was not seeing any of the other hikers+that I expected. Shortly after 8:00, I reached the Gray Knob Cabin to find it was just the weekend caretaker and myself. After a nice dinner (soup, stroganoff, chocolates, and plenty of tea), I settled into a nice sleep in spite of the lack of any fire in the cabin . the caretaker was not given authorization to burn any wood.

The next morning, the caretaker and I agreed on a time that I should be back at the cabin since I was considering summiting alone. After losing and retrieving a crampon that slid under the cabin on the boiler plate ice that encircled the cabin, I left around 9:40 for Edmunds Col with the intent of deciding about the summit once I reached that key junction. The day was gorgeous . the finest I have ever experienced in the White Mountains any time of the year. After about 2 hours, I reached the Col. The trail was a combination of packed snow, bare ice, and bare rock . a rather unpleasant combination. Taking some time to take photos, enjoy a snack, and water, I cautiously ventured up some boiler plate ice along the trail out of the Col. Within minutes, I heard two other hikers come into the Col and decided to proceed for the summit knowing I would be hiking with two more persons.

We reached the summit of Jefferson in approximately 1 hour. Thus, after having turned back in January, I finally made it on my second attempt. The sky was strikingly clear . too clear to have good photographs. But, one could see miles and miles. The wind was cold and blowing around 50 miles per hour. After taking photos and enjoying the summit for 15 minutes, we began our descent. All the way down, we were able to view directly into the Col. The snowfield was easy to traverse as parts of it were bare rock and the snow areas were well packed. Deciding to avoid the worse of the boilerplate ice, we %ushwhacked+through snow around the most difficult of the boilerplate.

Upon reaching the Col, we proceeded back along the trail enjoying the views. The other two hikers were going back to The Perch where they had spent Friday night. I took my time and leisurely traversed the trail. Approximately 3/4 a mile from the cabin, I took a fateful break. When I got up to leave, I left my camera there and did not realize it until I was within a 1/4 mile of the cabin . yep, I had to hike back and get the camera, adding a full mile to the track. I reached the cabin shortly after 5:00 and decided to take a little rest before deciding whether to hike out

that night. Two hours later I awakened to realize I not only missed the opportunity to hike out (I was not going to hike out in the dark on the steep boiler plate ice), but I also missed the sunset for the 2nd time on this hike. Four more people had hiked in that evening, so there was more company.

I hiked out in beautiful weather on Sunday morning with a man and his daughter from Hingham . they needed a ride back to their car at the Valley Way trailhead. I drove home with the realization that I was only 1 summit . Carrigan . from my goal of achieving all 48 in the Whites.

~Richard Harris



Mt. Mansfield

I had scheduled a 4,000-footer hike for April 14th. No one wanted to hike in the White Mountains that weekend and John Klebes advised that Rick Briggs was considering Mt. Mansfield. Realizing that the forecast for Mt. Mansfield was good for April 14th and it is the highest peak in Vermont, I joined Rick as we traveled to Vermont that morning. We intended to hike the 1.7 miles to Taft Lodge, drop most of our goods off at the Lodge, and then hike to the Summit of



Mt. Mansfield before spending the night in the Lodge .6 miles below the summit.

Rick had stated there was a lot of snow (85+ inches) on Mansfield. But, we were confident that the trail would be packed out . wrong!!! We wisely wore snowshoes . folks, there are different types of snowshoes for different conditions . my snowshoes were



not intended for a steep, deep, and soft snow ascent. I was constantly slipping back as I would try to ascend a steep pitch . a combination of carrying too much weight in my pack (5 liters of liquid) and the snowshoes and inadequate poles.

The snow was deep and obliterated the trailblazes. Most of the blazes were under the snow. Therefore, little surprise that we lost the trail 1/2 of the way to the cabin . we followed skier's tracks. Shortly thereafter, I became entangled in a spruce trap from which I spent 20 minutes extricating myself. Rick and I determined that we must be near the Lodge . but, since we were not on the Long Trail, were we above or below the Lodge? Rick set out to find the Lodge while I warmed my hands . extricating from the spruce trap had resulted in very cold hands. After 45 minutes, Rick returned and advised he found the Long Trail, but was uncertain whether we were above or below the Lodge. In the meantime, another hiker who had been enjoying following our packed trail, had advised me that the Lodge was 1/2 mile ahead of us.

So, we decided that if the Lodge was not located by 5:00, we would turn around and descend. We proceeded along the trail instead of the Long Trail. About an hour later (around 5:00), Rick found the Lodge. I reached it 20 minutes later. Of course, one could not see the Lodge from the rear as it was covered in snow. Rick advised that we had to dig out the front door. After 20-30 minutes of digging, we were able to enter the Lodge and proceeded to heat water and begin dinner preparations. Given the time, we decided not to try to summit Mt. Mansfield that evening . we would check out the conditions in the morning. So, we settled in for gorgeous views of the base of the ski resort and the summit of Mt. Mansfield, the Nose, and other nearby peaks as the clouds came and went and came again.

Sunday morning, we awakened to find the visibility very poor and a light snowfall. We decided not to try for the summit. Rick decided he had to find the privy. Off he went on snowshoes with the shovel from the Lodge. He shortly returned saying he could not do it . the privy was totally snowed in . Rick's snowshoes were nearly level with the top of the

privy. It would have taken 2 hours to dig out the privy.

So, we packed up and proceeded to rapidly descend. What took us 4 hours on Saturday to ascend, we descended in 45 minutes. Then, we lost the trail. Skiers and the snow had obliterated our tracks across the brook from the day before. We proceeded to follow skiers and snowboarders tracks down the slope until we reached the resort's maintenance facility. Shortly thereafter, we were back at my car deciding that this was a good hike in spite of not reaching the summit. I had resolved to do a better job of pack management, acquire more snowshoes, and replace the snow baskets that I could not find before the hike.

Mt. Mansfield . next winter for certain!!!
~Richard Harris

Local Hikes

By Richard Harris

Continuing my intent to do local hikes as well as 4,000 footer hikes, during March I led hikes on Mt. Orient and Mt. Holyoke Range and joined Rob on his beginning of the Spring hike on Mt. Toby.



Mt. Orient

On a beautiful Sunday morning, 9 of us gathered to hike Mt. Orient. The intent was to do a loop. Unable to locate the loop-portion of the hike the day before, I was resigned to do an up and back hike. However, fortunately, Julianna (thank you) was on the hike and she was familiar with the loop.

So, we proceeded with a combination of stabilizers, bare boots, and yak traks to set out on our hike. The nine included some friends of members of the club and several persons who I had not seen on hikes in quite a while . it was really good to see everybody.

We followed the Robert Frost Trail to the summit where we took a few minutes to enjoy the view and have a snack. With concern that the weather might turn on us and a bit of chill in the air, we continued down the backside of Mt. Orient along the M-M Trail and found the loop-portion of the hike . thanks to Julianna.

After returning to the trailhead, we began the difficult part of the hike . finding a restaurant in Amherst which could accommodate all of us. Well, after 3 different places, we found one. But, then half of the group decided to go to Trader Joe's. The four who stayed enjoyed a nice oriental soup.
~Richard Harris



Mt. Toby

On March 24th, the first hike of the Spring . a beautiful day, the first signs of Spring were apparent as 17 people turned out for Robb's hike of Mt. Toby. We followed the road to the summit where some people ventured up the tower while the rest of us rested and enjoyed a lunch snack

At this point, 4 hikers ventured back to the trailhead. Robb, wanting to make sure we enjoyed the hike, took us on a different route. It was a lovely change from the roadway and involved a pleasant descent, but it did have its little challenges as we had some difficulty finding the trail at one point. But, Robb, being the excellent hike leader, which he is, located the correct trail quickly and had us proceeding on the trailhead.



It was a terrific way to begin the Spring hiking season. Thanks Robb.

~Richard Harris



Mount Holyoke Range –

Long Mountain-Mt. Norwottuck

Six of us ventured on this second hike of the season. Of course, John Klebes and Mike Carrier made this a very educational hike as they taught the rest of us something about geo-caching.

The weather was okay . not the best of conditions, but not the worst either. As we ventured over Long Mountain towards Rattlesnake Knob, John and Mike kept looking at their GPS units to find a geo-cache. At times, they would lag far behind the rest of us as they would wonder . is it here or there?

What is a geo-cache? Well, the best I can figure out is that it is a prize not for what is hidden, but for the experience of using a high-tech toy to find the hidden cache. They were



successful in finding one geo-cache in the general vicinity of Rattlesnake Knob . the rules of geo-caching preclude me from saying where it was located.

Stopping at Rattlesnake Knob, we had a nice lunch spot and very attractive views of Long Mountain. Resuming our geo-caching, oops, hike, by now, John and Mike had the rest of us wondering where the next



geo-cache would be found. It was sworn to be in the Horse Caves area . but, despite our best guesses, it was not found on this day. After a geo-caching break at the Horse Caves, we proceeded to summit Mt. Norwottuck and then descend to the trailhead.

~Richard Harris

Upcoming Events

Kayaking and Canoe Series

Starting Sunday May 6 will be a weekly outing for the summer for kayaking and canoeing. The first Sunday of every month and then Monday evenings each week. If you have a canoe or double kayak and want someone to go with you let me know or if you are hoping someone might have space contact me. If you need to rent a boat that will be possible on May 6 and other times also. We will start on the Connecticut River and the following Monday try Lake Warner. The plan is to try different places each week. I know of some places and am open to suggestions as to where else. Life vests will be required. Hope to see you on the water this summer.

~Marcia Kelly

Newcomers Hike (May 20th)

If you are brand new to the club or if you have been a member for a while and haven't done much hiking or you are just not sure what to wear out there this hike is for you. There will be several members to meet. We will go to Mt Tom and hike at a pace that is comfortable for you. You will get up where there is a view and have a picnic. Along the way we will talk about gear, safety, different places to hike both near and far, other activities we do such as snowshoeing (when there is a good snowfall) urban exploration, climbing all the high peaks in a given area. We will clue you in as to eating well both heart healthy and checking out the best restaurants. The club is also known for finding the best ice cream stand after a hike and there is one near Mt Tom. So check this hike out.

~Marcia Kelly

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

May Renewals:

Hedy Beaudry
Stephanie Bustos
Susan Cary
Maggie Hodges
Debra Jacobson
Ravi Kulkarni
Carla LeCompte
Betsy Loughran
Gail McGrath
Jenny McNicholas
Nancy Pickett
Michael Reed
Michael Sharpe
Michael Stanley
Janice Webb & Family
Celeste Ziemba & Family

June Renewals:

David Bowker
Bill Burgart
Allison Cook
Mark Daniels
Lisa Edson
Arlene Ely
Kerry Frechette
Karen Gallik
Marion Germino
Sonja Goodwin & Family
Beth Harmon
Mark Henke & Family
Nancy Karella
Edward Kleciak
Ann Kot
Dot Pulowski
Beth Reneris
Helaine Selin
Joanne Sporbart

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
c/o Shari Cox
223 Gifford Street
Springfield, MA 01118

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

Gary Dolgoff & Cindy Taylor Lead 'The One That You've All Been Waiting For...'

The 100th 'Northampton Dinner & Walk!...

-On Thursday, June 21st (the 1st day of Summer), Gary & Cindy will proudly lead those 'hardy' Club members, who are 'game' to attend- on the 100th Northampton Dinner & Walk, (started over 8 years ago by Gary D, & Jane Glushik, a friend from the Club...).

We are hoping to attract everyone who's ever gone on one of these stellar events, to attend this one...

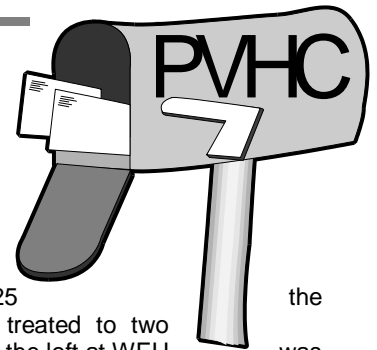
Gary's walks, followed by a delicious Northampton restaurant-meal, are (in)famous throughout the Club...there are rumors that Clubbies have met other Clubbies at this event for the 1st time, eventually to marry!...(plus, the walk [thru the Smith College grounds, etc] is good exercise, & great camaraderie is always present...)

Sooo, come!...Mtg at 6:30pm, June 21st, in front of Thornes' Mkt, Northampton...if possible, please call in advance, so's I can reserve 'proper seating', at the Noho restaurant that I pick out...

~Gary Dolgoff

Thanks WEU!

Movie Night &
Pizza/Pool Party



On the weekend of March 24-25 the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club was treated to two great evenings. On Saturday night the loft at WEU was filled with laughter as we took in the full-length movie SouthBounders! It was a, sometimes hilarious, sometimes serious, glimpse into the world of long distance hiking as we followed Olivia, Slackpack and Rollin southbound on the Appalachian Trail. Picture a love story that's a cross between "The Blair Witch Project" and Bill Bryson's "A Walk in the Woods". If you have ever wanted to hike the AT than I am sure you left this great movie wanting to leave on the trail tonight! And our hosts Scott & Laura provided popcorn and refreshments and collected donations for the food pantry!

Then to cap off the weekend Scott & Laura treated PVHC to a Pool Party at WEU on Sunday night. PVHC provided pizza and Scott & Laurie soda, to round out a great weekend. Thank you Scott & Laure. ~John Klebes

Hiking Club Goodwill

During our March and April meetings we collected a total of \$153.00 to donate to the Cash for the Cupboard / Poverty has a Face Campaign. Thank you to everyone that helped out. The following letter and donation was sent in PVHC's name:

Dear Parish Cupboard:

Last month Bob Smith, from the First Baptist Church in West Springfield, made an appeal to our hiking club to help with the Cash for the Cupboard / Poverty has a Face Campaign. On behalf of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club, and the First Baptist Church, please accept our donation from our membership of \$153.00. I hope it helps with all the good work you do.

We wish the Parish Cupboard good luck with your Poverty has a Face Campaign and best wishes for a successful year ahead.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Ann Marie Visconti, President
Marcia Kelly, Vice President
Gail Carrier, Secretary
Shari Cox, Treasurer
Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences Unlimited
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Planning Coordinator: *Sue Forest & AnnMarie Visconti*
Backpacking Coordinator: *Ed Laroche & Mike Rattelle*
Trail Maintenance: *Ed Laroche & Rob Schechtman*
Web Page Editor: *Dick Forrest*
Email Correspondent: *Rob Schechtman*
Email List: *John Klebes*
Quartermaster: *Jack Leary*
Bootprints Editor: *John Klebes*

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: j.klebes@ieee.org (Email) or by USmail to John Klebes, P.O. Box 51385, Indian Orchard, MA 01151.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
June 5, 2007, 7pm at **FBC**
July 3, 2007, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: June 21, 2007

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

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

<http://www.geocities.com/pvhcweb>

Join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

fold here



A publication of the
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club
c/o Wilderness Experiences Unlimited, Inc.
P.O. Box 265
Southwick, MA 01077

