

# Special April Supplement of FEETPRINTS

Volume 14 – Special Issue

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009

## New Local Regulations Effect PVHC:

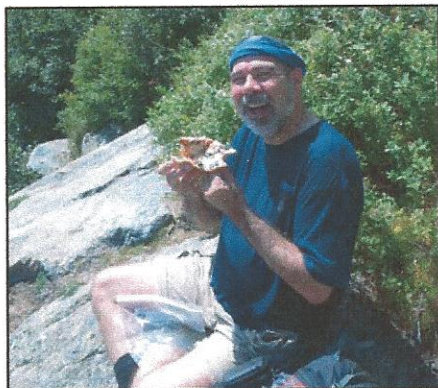
Massachusetts now requires all hiking clubs to file a hike plan, for groups of 6 or more, before entering state parks, wildlife areas and public lands. "Massachusetts is concerned about your safety and well being while you enjoy our great forest resources", says Governor Patrick. While not everyone forgets, many hikers enter our town and state forests without letting loved ones know our plans. We have identified a way to reduce the cost of search and rescue and improve the safety of our park guests by adopting the same system that we use for small plane flights.

We need to make everyone aware of the impact not letting others know our plans have on the state budget and your safety. Because not everyone remembers, we now require all outdoor clubs, organizations, corporations, and informal groups of over six hikers to file a hiking plan before entering our state resources. Hike plans must be filed 24-48 hours before the hike. The hike plan registration fee of \$20.00 plus \$2.00 per hiker, and a small Mass Use tax, are payable at the time of filing.

You can file your hike plan at any retailer that handles Massachusetts Fish and Game licenses. Because of the new hike plan filing requirements the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club can no longer allow last minute hike additions to the schedule for Massachusetts. It is OK to add hikes for other states. The new regulations go into effect on April 1, 2009.

## Spoons on the Summit

Welcome to America's most influential and popular peak bagging activity. The "Spoons on the Summit" list facilitates, encourages and documents the



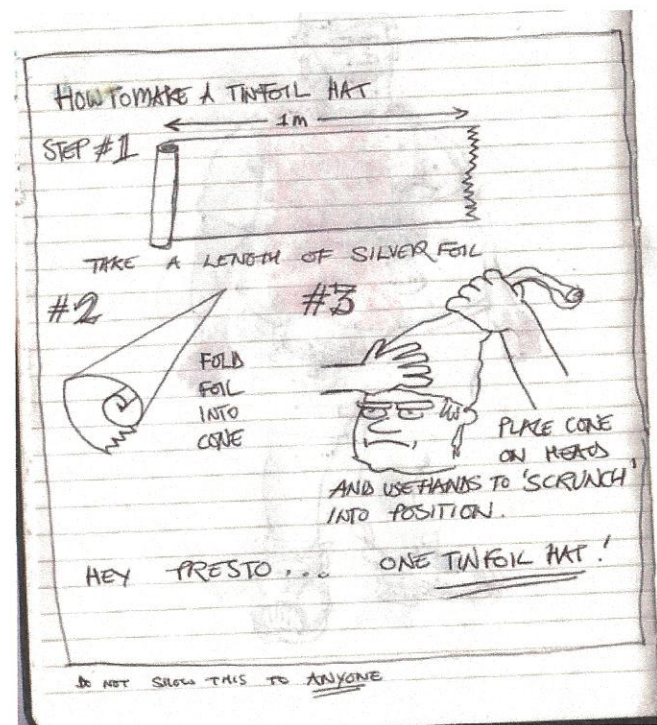
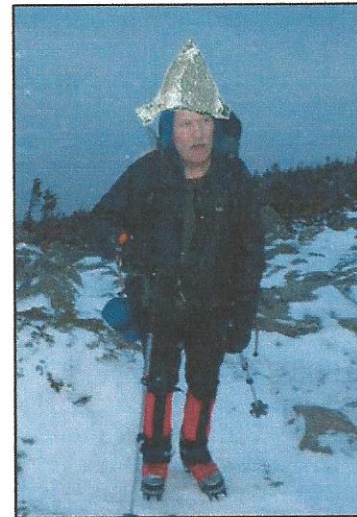
consumption of a meal on every named peak on the planet without actually carrying the food up with you. A few of us have already started on the local peaks in the New England area by bumming food on all the peaks in New Hampshire above 4000 feet. If friends and like-minded hikers can join in by supporting us with food we'll make some decent progress towards this goal. Along the way we hope that people will share their summit climbing experiences, through photos and posts to our facebook site, as well as their creative new methods for begging food. Maybe you would like to be a supporter of the Spoons to Summit List? How would you like to earn the honored title of "Most summit Cheeseburgers that a hiker had begged from you, best-tasting meal you provided to a beggar, highest lasagna on a summit, etc.; we'll see how this develops. We'd like you to join in and help us knock off a peak or two with our beggin-spoon in hand by packing an extra special meal on your next hike. See you on the summit.

PS. While this new hike list is worth the effort; My favorite still remains people who have taken long, fulfilling naps on summits. Wouldn't it be glorious to have kicked back and dozed off on all 46 of the Adirondack High Peaks? Perhaps, we can combine the two and beg a glorious meal followed by a nap on the summit?

## Hiker Headgear

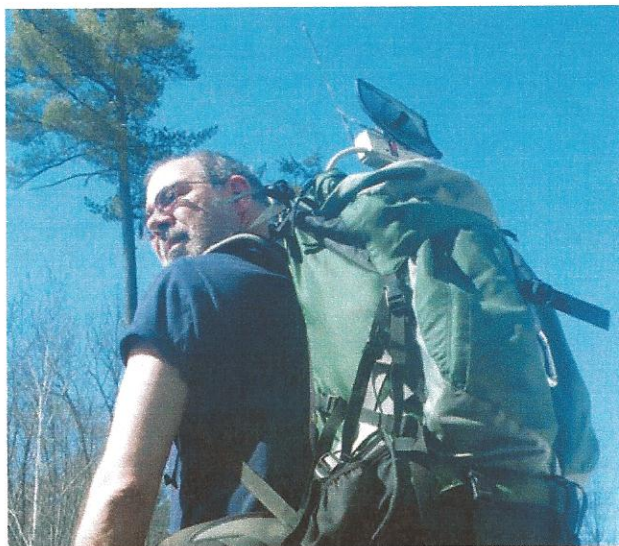
### One of the 11 Essentials - Don't hike without it!

The effects of global warming are being seen around the globe and it is particularly dangerous for hikers since we spend long periods of time exposed to the sun's rays. Lose of ozone allows dangerous levels of radiation to build up in our brains. In addition the latest advances in cell phone towers, digital TV broadcasts, and wireless appliances are transmitting toxic levels of radiation into our brains that are causing cancer. Our hiking club liability lawyers are advising that all club members wear protective headwear on all outdoor hikes and events to protect against overexposure to this radiation. Commercial versions of protective headwear are available at most good outdoor supply stores and at WEU. As this could be a financial burden to some members we have also including simple "build your own" instructions to create your own protective headwear in this months FeetPrints Newsletter. Remember, this is an important safety measure. Don't put it off.



## Pay to Pee; Save the Planet

We've all become more or less resigned to paying airlines for services that until recently were free. Coughing up \$15 or more to check luggage, paying for in-flight food, paying to get an extra inch of leg room. Well, one well known hiking/money club, who's three letter acronym shall not be named, has decided to join this money grubbing band wagon, and start charging a fee for going pee on hikes. That's right; "A fee to Pee" will be charged on all (unnamed) club hikes. A portion of the proceeds (.01 cents per dollar) will go to the protection of wildlife in our national parks. The remaining portion will be used to defray the costs of enforcement and upgrades to the executive bathrooms of the clubs lobbyists in Washington, DC. Note that only the portion applied to wildlife protection should be considered a non-profit charitable donation on your taxes. So, if you have to pee be sure to bring a few coins on all future hikes. Those not wishing to "Pay as you GO" can purchase an annual PEE Permit that you can affix to your hiking pole. The PEE Permit allows for unlimited urination throughout the year; as long as you adhere to the restriction of 200 feet from any water source, trailhead, or money club facility.



## Club to Buy Emergency Gear

Our new quartermaster has requested the club purchase some emergency gear for hike leaders. Many of this years long distance trail hikers are saving weight on the trail by leaving spare bulky batteries for their gps, camera, headlamp, cell phones, mp3 players and pocket computers at home. Instead, they carry one of the new wireless extension cords to recharge their gadgets away from home.

This ultra-light gear is also a great safety feature. Mike recommends the club purchase several wireless extension cords for use by hike leaders to keep emergency cell phones charged on hikes and at remote tent sites. We have all been in the situation where the battery on our cell phone is failing. Let's make sure our hike leaders always have access to a charged cell phone.

This is just one of many of the "Best and the Brightest" ideas our quartermaster has for making hikes safer. Many of you will remember years ago when Mike recommended carrying a supply of dehydrated water for emergencies on hikes. Hey Captain Mike, any news on a ultra light fire extinguisher that uses dehydrated water?

---

"The superior hiker uses his or her superior judgment to avoid situations in which he or she has to demonstrate superior skill."

"The inferior hiker uses his or her poor judgment to avoid bringing food on hikes and demonstrates his superior begging skills to amass a health supply of emergency food while in the wilderness!"

---

## The Hike Plan

In the Beginning was The Hike Plan .....

Then came Norm with his Assumptions.

And Norm's Assumptions were without form and The Hike Plan was without Substance.

Darkness was upon the faces of the Hikers.

And the Hikers went unto their Hike Co-Leader Gary and said:

"This is a crock of shit and it stinks."

And Gary the Hike Co-Leader went unto their Hike Leader Richard saying:

"It is a pail of dung and we can't live with the smell."

And Richard the Hike Leader went unto their Hiking Club Member-at-Large Ed saying:

"It is a container of excrement and it is very strong, such that none may abide it."

And the Hiking Club Member-at-Large Ed went unto their Clubs Secretary Gail saying:

"It is a vessel of fertilizer and none may abide its strength."

And the Club Secretary Gail went unto Deb the Club Treasurer saying:

"It contains that which aids plant growth and it is very strong."

And Deb the Club Treasurer went unto the Club VP Marcia saying:

"It promotes growth and it is very powerful."

And the Club VP Marcia went unto the Club's President Ann Marie and said:

"This new Plan will actively promote the growth and vigor of the Hikers with very powerful effects."

And Ann Marie, The Club President, looked upon The Plan and saw that it was good.

And The Plan became Policy.

And this, my friendly hikers, is how Shit Happens .....

---

### Keep Your Eyes Open

Two guys are out hiking. The first guy says, "Did you see that?"

"No," the second guy says.

"Well, a bald eagle just flew overhead," the first guy says.

"Oh," says the second guy.

A couple of minutes later, The first guy says, "Did you see that?"

"See what?" the second guy asks.

"Are you blind? There was a big, black bear walking on that hill "

"Oh." A few minutes later the first guy says: "Did you see that?"

By now, the 2<sup>nd</sup> guy is getting aggravated & says, "Yes, I did!"

And the first guy says: "Then why did you step in it?"



Photos of U-turn Shari and DreamCatcher found on facebook during the time they were supposedly hiking the AT

## Thru-Hiker Scam Uncovered

It's hard to believe but PVHC News has uncovered a Madoff Style Ponzi scam has hit us right in our own hiking community. Every year hundreds of hikers claim to be out hiking long trails such as the AT, PCT and CDT. Telling their loved ones and family that they are out hiking for months at a time, living off dehydrated food and struggling through endless days of toil hiking and finding water and places to sleep in the rugged wilderness.

Well our very own hiking club member, Donna, who started her attempt to thru-hike the AT this March has uncovered the extent of the scam. Pressured to keep her mouth shut and just join in with the rest of the hikers at the Mexican Riviera Paradise Resort she is resisting and attempting to continue her thru-hike. Turns out for many, if not all, thru-hikers the actual hike part is a giant scam. A whole community of hikers have been discovered relaxing on the beach, enjoying gourmet meals, and living the life of luxury.

Computer experts at the resort provide digitally enhanced photo albums to make it look like they have photos from their hike when actually they were sunny themselves on the beach all summer. And an overseas sweatshop of children, many under eight years old, are used to create journal entries documenting their thru-hike. (This certainly explains why most of the thru-hiker journals are so immature, contain such bad spelling, and appear to be written by someone who does not use English as their first language)

At the end of the hiker season a team of personal trainers descend on the resort to work with the scammers during the final weeks of their supposed trail hike. Using extravagant spa treatments, liposuction, and cosmetic surgery the professional trainers help the scamming thru-hikers to remove the pounds of flab and tone bodies to help mask the extravagant lifestyle they had led prior to returning to their friends and family.

The entire network of resorts and plush services is financed by a newly discovered ponzi scheme run by the Application Mountain Confundium (AMC) that has been funneling millions of dollars that tax papers thought was going for conservation, trail work, and green ecology. And you thought your donation went to refurbishing outhouse toilets at places like Noble View and the hut system? Funds taken from places like the White Mountain Park Passes have been laundered through an extensive network of overseas accounts that are setup and masked as Major Excursions events within the AMC hike schedule. None of these overseas hikes actually take place.

Clear evidence of the money trail was discovered back in January when Rick and John discovered that the millions allocated for a water system for the newly built Highland Center was never spent but diverted to the resorts. Visitors to the Highland Center find that they have no water at all in the rooms, showers, and bathrooms. Many of the AMC facilities are bankrupt and the whole AMC may fall like a house of cards as all the paper assets are phony and everything has been spent on these exclusive resorts.

The AMC director was not available for comment as he was indicted in another scam concerning a request for bailout money from the federal government in which he used money, allocated for the helicopter re-supply of high mountain huts, to charter a private helicopter flights for his personal vacations.

Investigations continue into how factual those in the PVHC, that claim to have hiked the AT, were during the clinics they gave about thru-hiking. Better clean up those facebook accounts....

## Introducing LifeTreker(tm) G5

Garmin's new GPS device for outdoor enthusiasts.

Give your hiking a boost of confidence with LifeTreker G5, a rugged, waterproof, touchscreen hiker GPS packed with features that allow real-time downloading of Google-Earth libraries of water sources, edible plants and wildlife. LifeTreker uses a high-sensitivity GPS receiver to match your location with real-time data from Google Earth.

Give your hunting or wild-life viewing a boost of confidence with LifeTreker G5. Using Google Earth real-time IR motion tracking and image recognition technology you can accurately map the location of all wildlife in your immediate area. Use the GeoLife waypoints to identify the location of animals of interest with an accuracy of +/- 18 inches. Choose from specific animals or set up alerts for general classes such as wildlife viewing of small mammals, birds, reptiles, dangerous animals, or humans.

Use the GeoPlant waypoint database to show a real-time map of the nearest edible plants, dangers such as poison ivy, and to help identify the foliage around you. Should you ever need it the Treker G5 can identify within inches the nearest edible plants, potable water and best shelter or campsites. Another handy feature is the integral camera that can be used to confirm the correct identification of edible plants

Eliminate the Guesswork: When hunting, wildlife watching, or in survival mode the Treker G5 displays and updates your exact position in stunningly detailed maps that show all wildlife, foliage and terrain features. Available from Garmin starting April 1st, 2009.

## "Into the Wild Pioneer Valley"

It was on the first of April, in the year 2008, that I resigned my domestic happiness for a time, and left my comfortable couch, fully stocked refrigerator, and finely appointed indoor porcelain facilities, to wander through the wilderness of the Pioneer Valley. Experiencing for the first time the unconstrained freedom I felt I headed into the wilderness at the Connecticut/Massachusetts line. I almost immediately became lost in the dense grasses that grow in the abandoned farm lands of this rural wilderness.

Fortunately, through the ear high grass I heard the sound of machinery beyond the wildflowers. To my astonishment I met a friendly sole named "Ed the Trail Maintainer" hacking away at the tall grasses with a lawn mower and clearing the path ahead. What could have been days thrashing through the weeds became a pleasant stroll thanks to this hearty sole who cleared the way ahead. As I pushed on into the bogs and marshlands that lay ahead of me, (wondering about the odd comment Ed-the-trail-maintainer's companion had made - something about where's my lipstick? nay, must of heard that wrong), I again found myself stumped by the obstacles before me. How would I ever get across this wetland nightmare?

As luck would have it, just when I was ready to give up and turn back, I came upon a marvelous series of bog bridges. Who could have built such fabulous and functional works in the middle of this boggy marshland? As I stepped onto the finely crafted bog bridges I noticed a friendly "OLD" man who wandered out of the thickets and stepped up to a wooden box mounted on a nearby tree. Hello, I said, who might you be? I am "Rob the bridge maintainer" and I've come to fill this box with Pioneer Valley Hiking Club brochures. Then, after trying to sell me an airplane propeller, off he skipped across the miles of bog bridges ahead - it appears he had a date with someone named EB Wings and was off to treat her to dinner at a place called Lisa's.

Who is this PVHC I thought as I slipped one of the brochures into my pocket and promised myself that if I ever lived through the journey ahead I should send a thank you check for membership to this club since they very likely had just saved my life with the safety of these bog bridges.

Onward I traveled through a maze of paths but always, just when I might despair, I would find that someone had painted a mark on a tree to help me find my way. On and on I traveled till I got to a point where the going was to steep to possibly scale to the top of the high

cliffs ahead. But, again, when I needed it most I came across a long string of rock steps finely placed into the steep mountainside. Who could have built such a fine climbing aid? And why did they line the sides of the trails with all those rocks???? But then it became obvious that the rocks were to keep me on the trail and away from a giant hive of bees!

I continued quickly on through the dense foliage as it was getting around dusk and I had heard that it was dangerous to head into this next area at night. I had heard rumors that bands of police patrolled the area at night arresting people; and that the only way to safely traverse this wilderness was to gain the aid of the famous mountain guide Norm. I was hoping to enlist the help of this stranger Norm but I was unable to find anyone that knew his cell phone number or email address. All anyone could tell me is to look for a dense black cloud of rain that followed him around. Don't bother calling him at home, they said, because you will just get his answering machine; but you could leave him a message if you waited for the long beep after the series of short beeps.....

Having failed to contact this Norm person, who appears to have shunned all forms of modern technology, I took my chances and headed on alone. Besides I heard he was busy at something called a "Concert on the Green". He was probably leading some kind of Green Environmentalist hippy type commune somewhere I suspect.

On and on I went until my way was blocked by a large river that smelled faintly of septic. Here I found another box with PVHC brochures nailed to a tree. Amazing? Who were these PVHC people? Not having a clue at how I would cross this deep fast flowing river, and wondering if it was safe given this odor, I suddenly remembered that I had an inflatable sex pool-toy tucked in my rucksack, something I picked up at Acme WallyMart the day before. I could use it to cross this raging river!

Off I went but when I finally got to the other side I realized my supplies had floated down river. My journey would have to end because I had neither money nor resources to re-supply. But wait, what is that laying on the side of river? Amazing, there on the side of the river was a plastic bag with a wallet full of money along with a cell phone. It must be fate that brought this to me. Elated by my discovery I headed on with new vigor for the days ahead.



Monday morning I again found myself lost without a clue as to which way to go. Again this PVHC club came to my rescue. Here, in the middle of nowhere came Monday morning Chip who gladly offered to lead me in a morning hike. Thank you PVHC. Time passed and soon it was Tuesday evening I was sure it was too dark to hike on. Just when I thought I would have to give up out of nowhere came Carol "The Tuesday PVHC Hiking Fairy" who offered to let me join her group of hikers as they climbed up a Tom of a Mountain! Fantastic.

On and on I went. By Wednesday I became lost in maze of Amherst streets. To get through this part of my hike I would need someone that had intimate knowledge of this urban maze. I pushed on and saw the smallest little convertible I have ever seen, topped with a huge kayak strapped to its fragile roof, and submerged window deep in the middle of large puddle of water. I stopped to see if she was ok and she said she was late for hike she



was leading. Hoping, without Hope, I asked this woman, Marcia I think her name was, if she could help me navigate through the roads ahead. Of course she said, I have hiked every one of these roads! And with her help on a traveled.

On I went through hills and dales, at points almost dropping from hunger as I hiked on. Finally I came to small Turkish Restaurant hidden in the five college woods. Thinking how good a nice meal would be I took the money I found and headed into the small restaurant. Every table was taken up by the crowd of people that kept yelling "GARY! GARY! Please be compassionate and don't make us hike before dinner! Who is this Gary guy and why is he gelin? Turns out he too is with the PVHC, and was here to eat before co-leading a difficult hike that evening. After joining his friendly crowd I asked if I could join them on their after dinner hike but he said alas that he was unable to get a co-leader and that, while they always hike after eating, this day they would have to cancel. Besides, it might rain.

Still, thankful for the friendly company of these PVHCers, I headed on with a full belly and a promise to co-lead a hike with Gary in the future.

On I went and after many days I hit some of the most beautifully areas on my adventure. Rolling hills, meandering streams, and foliage and fauna of every imaginable kind. I was in awe of this magical place when I ran into another group of hikers led by a grumpy old man mumbling apologies for the typical central Massachusetts boredom of the area. As I tried to tell him how wonderful I thought the area was he harped... no time, no time, we are behind schedule and we should be at the next trail junction by now... Why don't you come with us and join us after the hike for lunch?

It seems almost every day during my adventure I ran into another group of these PVHC club members. Sometimes on the weekend I would run into them two or three times? Could this club be so big as to be scattered though out this wilderness every single day of the week? But again and again they seemed to be out hiking and providing me guidance on my adventure.

As time passed it seemed that everyone I met know my name. I would run into total strangers in the middle of the wilderness who would exclaim in excitement, "Your that hiker in the Guinness book of records aren't you?" Then, for some strange reason I would get a strangely veiled warning about some angry leprechauns? Never did figure that one out. So I took my 'way to short' hiking pole and continued on.

As I come to the end of my grand exploration of this wild country, and return home to my comfortable sofa and TV, I look back on all the close calls I had and how grateful I am that PVHC members

where there to make my adventures safe! As I reached into my pocket I found the crumpled up brochure for the PVHC I had found on my first day out, and thought, I should really join this club for the many times they had saved my life during this adventure. But then I thought, are not I entitled to the first hike free as a guest? And besides, I can always get a friend to forward the email schedule to me. Ah, they probably already have plenty

of money - just look at all those well paid club officers! So, I settled for adding a line to my will. "To the PVHC I leave all my expired cold weather MRE's, may you enjoy them in my absence."

~A friend from New Hampshire

**Instructions** - open newsletter, open eyes, if too dark turn on light, read words.

**WARNING:** Some of the contents of this newsletter may cause abdominal cramping and nausea. May contain small words that may be a choking hazard to young children. May also contain rambling words that may cause drowsiness; do not drive car or operate machinery while reading. Allergy warning: The paper used in this newsletter was processed in a factory the handles peanuts and other mechanically separated nutmeats and my contain traces of nuts and edible shellac. This is not an oral contraceptive. Eating this product will not prevent pregnancy, has no nutritional value. Do not use this product during earthquakes. Product may be reused for personal hygiene purposes.