

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 14 - Issue 1

January 2009

PVHC Christmas Party

Marie Babbitt and John Klebes

Well, if you were not able to attend the club's annual Christmas party, you missed a great night of friendship and camaraderie.

As usual, the Pueblo's rustic charm added to the spirit of the season, with its rock fireplace and log columns. The coat rack could have been a bit bigger but that's the price we pay for charm.

The food selection was great and the dessert table was once again overflowing with sweet treats. No one could say we don't like our sweets. And I won't mention any names but there were a few people that went back oh, say, four times or so, that I saw anyways, but I wasn't really counting. Do you know anything about that, Kay?

After we had our way with the food, it was time for the annual awards. John sent me the real notes on what we as a hiking club did over the last year. Ann Marie was given a whole different agenda as you will see.

We had 43 hike leaders, 187 day hikes, 197 night hikes, and 40 backpacking or special events, for a total of 424 events for the year. Recognition awards were given to the top five members leading events in 2008. This year the award recipients were: Marcia Kelly, Richard Harris, Chip Pray, Rob & Lisa Schechtman, and Rick Briggs. A special award was given to Norm Plante in recognition of over 12 years of dedication, service, and loyalty to PVHC. The "Volunteer of the Year Award," with much secrecy and maneuvering behind the scenes by key members of the club, was awarded to a surprised Ann Marie Visconti for her many years of leadership and devotion to the club. Ann Marie has held the position of secretary, vice president, and president; has been the chairman of the club's Holiday Party for the past several years, a hike leader, including the annual Tully Lake overnights, Barton Cove canoe weekends, and Maple Corner Farm Breakfast and Ski; as well

as devoting many hours to the club, including organizing the yearly slideshow for the Holiday Party featuring a year's worth of hikes and activities in pictures.



We almost missed the slide show and went straight to dancing but we were able to rein Ann Marie in. I think she must have been a bit flustered by the award. But nothing gets by this club.

After the show it was on to the dance floor to work off all those sweets. Everyone had a great time and the music was good, as usual. I left during the Macarena and everyone was having a great time.

Thanks again to all the Christmas party volunteers who organized the party, set up, cleaned up, made the table decorations, picked up the food, and to the door greeters, shoppers, and all the foodies who brought their side dishes.

November 22-23 Falls Brook Shelter Backpack

Lisa Schechtman

I can't help but tell my fellow hiking club members that I really had some fun sleeping outside on a cold night at Falls Brook shelter in Royalston, MA. The shelter was built with the help of several of our PVHC club members. It is open in the front, and has no heat of course, but sleeps 10 easily. It has wide bunk beds that can sleep two each and a ladder up to the loft. Although it's a

challenge to sleep out in freezing temperatures, all you need is to be prepared, with warm clothes, a warm sleeping bag, and determination. Anyone willing to give it a try can enjoy a camping night out in the cold. Look at me, I would have never dreamed that I would be enjoying winter camping, but thanks to Rob I now look forward to it each winter.

Rob and I enjoyed ourselves with our fellow PVHC members, John, Rick, Ron, Ron Jr., and two day hikers on a cold (25°) day. We took a nice 5-mile hike along the Tully Lake Trail, passing beautiful waterfalls, with lots of ice covering huge glacier-formed rocks and what also appeared to be glacial potholes. The frozen ice looked so beautiful in its many shapes, as it clung onto berry branches and other woody flora now withered by the cold. As many of you know, this Tully Lake region has so much to offer, and has definitely become one of my favorite areas in Massachusetts. I look forward to exploring it even more. As long as we kept moving we stayed warm . well, with our backpacks on that was not very hard to do. Once we got to Falls Brook Shelter we were able to collect firewood until dark. Some overnight members, including Rick, walked the day-hikers out to their cars at the end of this trek, as we were very near our cars. We had spotted cars for this hike. Rick had decided not to carry his full backpack in initially, knowing that he would gather up the rest of his gear for the overnight and bring it back to camp later. You were the smart one, Rick. Wish I thought of that!
For continuation see Falls Brook on page 2

Falls Brook from page 1

We made a nice fire and, boy, did we stay near it all night! Two other backpackers had come along and joined us . they actually had some raw venison that was hunted a few weeks ago, and grilled it on a long fork over the fire. It was all very interesting to watch. Our evening meal also consisted of some nice goat cheese and crackers (thanks John). Each diner was on their own, different packages of soups were made, and couscous with some leftover pork from dinner the night before suited Rob and I just fine.

It was a little too frigid to play a game of cards, as we were all not wanting to take our gloves off. We had good conversation by the campfire, as always. We got so relaxed as we were talking that Ron's boot caught on fire . too bad, those were nice new boots! I've seen a sneaker or two melt by the fire but never a boot actually getting caught on fire. The forecast on the web stated that it got down to 11 degrees in Athol that night. Even so, the winter sky was brilliant, as all the stars came out.

The most important thing to remember on such hikes is to have several layers of clothes and a good stove for heating water.

The most important thing to remember on such hikes is to have several layers of clothes and a good stove for heating water. We all had lots of hot drinks and I filled a nice hot water bottle to put in my sleeping bag before I went to sleep and also did lots of jumping jacks and exercises before I got into my sleeping bag. These things really do help, as I was pretty warm. Another tip I learned is that all water bottles needed to be in your bag or emptied into a cooking pot to freeze solid, but ready for making morning coffee.

For those that have never camped in the winter, getting out of your nice warm sleeping bag in the morning is the toughest part of trip. You do it fast and get on those cold boots and start moving to stay warm. We actually restarted the fire for some comfort at breakfast. We took a 2-mile hike along the brook, and that did the trick to warm us up. After this, we backpacked out and headed straight for the Athol Diner for lunch. I always look back on accomplishing a challenge and feel

good that I made the effort and shared the experience with good friends.

Northern Woodlands – One Helluva Read (A review)

Mike Reed

I've just finished the latest quarterly issue of *Northern Woodlands* and just have to tell you all about it. Why? Because I truly enjoy this magazine, as much as any other I've read. Truth be told, it's in a flat-footed tie with the *Atlantic*, which I'm very fond of also and have been reading for well nigh twenty years or so. But I want to share my thoughts on *Northern Woodlands* because it's a publication that any true hiker would love. If I may be bolder still, if one of the main reasons you hike is that you can't let a weekend go by without being out in those same woods, for hours at a time, then you will thoroughly enjoy this magazine. Simply put, it's an impressive mix of articles, stories, photography, art, and poetry regarding the ecology of these woods that so many of us love, its flora and fauna (their life cycles, what they look like up close, how to tell similar species apart, what makes each of them thrive, why some species are endangered, and so on), the region's various forests and habitats, its trees especially (pretty much all you'd want to know about them) and the people and industries reliant on these trees; also about hiking, hunting, fishing, camping, and generally living well in the woodlands of the northeast.

Here's the Table of Contents (with commentary from yours truly) from the latest, Winter 2008 issue, which pretty much says it all: From the Center+ (in this issue the editors, a husband and wife team, discuss the ups-and-downs of growing a small publication such as theirs was into a mid-sized one); Calendar+ (a run-down of anticipated plant and wildlife happenings, more on this later); The Long View+ (one uplander's impressions of his daily walks in the woods near his home, somewhere up north); Another View+ (an author's recollections of growing up in the Adirondacks and how modern medicine is coming to understand how curative spending time in the woods can be); the Knots and Bolts+ section of short

articles, this time it's about how to get the most value out of a timber stand, the many different ways that a cord+ of wood can be sold that may actually be less than a true cord (by definition), the latest on the Asian longhorned beetle's occurrence in this region, the ecology of the snowshoe hare, and three great nature books for young people; What Causes Those White Splotches on Tree Bark? Are They Bad for the Tree?+ (all about lichens, a symbiotic pairing of organisms); then come the major articles about Climate Change, Tree by Tree . How Would a Changing Climate Affect our Forests?+ (a pretty interesting article, more on this later); The Deep, Dark Woods+ (about the psychology of our relations to deep woods); At Home in the Snow+(a photo essay about people who love to be out in remote reaches of the north in the dead of winter); True Grit+ (about the ecology of the fisher, the mesocarnivore variety that is, and how it can take down a porcupine with nary a quill protruding from its maw); Sycamore, Platanus occidentalis+ (you got it, it's about sycamore trees and why their cousins, the plane trees, do better along our city streets); An Appreciation of Debris . The Science and Changing Perceptions of Dead Trees+ (about the evolving understanding of the value of woody debris, and the need for balance between their ecologic and biofuel values); A Work in the Main Woods with Logger Tom Cushman+ (yes, it's work+ and not walk,+ about a logging company owner's take on how forestry businesses such as his stay afloat in our current economy); The Shrinking of Wood in Winter+ (about the seasonal swelling and shrinking of sawn wood, how it varies by cut, and its effects on various wood uses, including doors); the Discoveries+ science section, with short articles on research regarding how milkweeds and other organismsq defense against predators evolves, For continuation see page 3

Northern Woodlands

Northern Woodlands from page 2

the indirect effects of herbicides on amphibians, the gut fungus of the Asian longhorned beetle (how to attack them via the fungus and how that fungus can lead to cheaper wood-based biofuel); Crown Gall, Agrobacterium tumefaciens+ (self-evident topic, again); WoodLit+ (book reviews of recent woodland-based books on topics such as those mentioned above); Mill Prices+(a listing of what various types of wood are getting in dollars per thousand board feet and the factors affecting the price paid to landowners); Chainsaw Body Positioning for Less Fatigue+(self-evident and damned practical stuff); Tale of Tall Snows+ (an author's rationale for why he so loves the deep-snow, deep-cold+ winters in the north country, quotes on this to follow); The Outdoor Palette+entry about the arts in the northern woodlands (with this issue highlighting wood-engraved, relief-printing techniques and the best types of wood to use for it); and finally (and always last), A Place in Mind+(reflections on life in the woodlands, this issue presents an author's love of the cabin he plunked on a hillside above a small pond near the Connecticut Lakes of northern New Hampshire, where there is, once again, lots of deep-snow and deep-cold).

A pretty impressively varied and interesting list of articles, no? One of the offerings that I'm sure to always cut out, post on my frigq and review weekly before I go out on a hike is their ecological calendar, which gives the main events+ in the woods each week during the upcoming season. For example, for the week that you'll likely be reading this (Jan. 4 - 10), the entry is: During bad weather, mink will stay in their dens, usually near water and often under tree roots in old muskrat or beaver borrows / Mourning doves are gobbling up almost every kind of seed from birdfeeders, but on their own, they mostly eat tiny grass seeds / Eastern pipistrels, New England's smallest species of bat, hibernate in the deepest portions of very humid caves, where temperatures are a constant 50 degrees.+

Now for a few quotes to wrap up my review and give you a more direct feel for the text of this quarterly:

Scientists, leaf peepers, economists, forest managers, birders, anglers, hunters, loggers, mill owners, and bed-and-breakfast hosts are all wondering, with increasing urgency, what climate change might do to the Northern Forest. We would be warmer all year, with shorter snow seasons and more rain in the winter; in summer, however, we'd get more hot dry periods and droughts. The bright foliage, for which the Northern Forest is famous, will suffer if maples are replaced by oaks and hickories. Stands most resistant to the effects of climate change will be those with a mix of healthy northern hardwoods and little stress. Stands weakened by pests, weather damage, leached-out soil, and drought may turn over quickly. The biggest and most certain population change will be the decimation of our spruce-fir or boreal forests. No one expects deeply significant change by 2050. Yet it will be quite real, and over the centuries it may create a different landscape and quite possibly a different culture. Vermont without maple syrup, New Hampshire without tundra, the

Who wants to go out and bare his butt at 20 below?

Adirondacks without snow, Maine without spruce and fir.+ (From Climate Change, Tree by Tree+)

Farming, to the early Christian church, was considered a pious activity engaged in by reliable people who were submissive to the authorities, unlike the uncivilized forest people, the charcoal burners and poachers and woodcutters who knew the primitive ways of the woods. For the people of the towns, the forest . with its traps for the innocent and hiding places for outlaws . was felt to be a dangerous place. The clearings were productive, useful, policed, taxable land. To the medieval Church, the forest was a pagan playground, the haunt of evil-minded magicians, witches, and criminals who continued to survive outside its influence. When Europeans came to this country, they brought their attitudes [about the deep woods] along. The newcomers saw no problem with claiming the land that the natives were wasting by not cultivating. Farming, mowing, tending, pruning, and cutting means owning. Since ancient times,

For continuation see Northern page 4

Strawbery Banke

Cindy Dolgoff

On Saturday, December 6, Al Goodhind sponsored a trip to the Strawbery Banke in Portsmouth, NH. Approximately 28 club members attended. Al explained that he organizes this trip every other year.

For those of you who have never gone, Strawbery Banke is a village setting of antique houses in Portsmouth, situated just outside of the downtown area. At Christmas time, they are decorated for the holidays. Not just a regular holiday though - different houses are decorated based on different time periods. In each home, there was a volunteer host who explained what they were doing for the holidays and a little bit about their lives. Some of the homes were adorned very festively. The time period spanned from Colonial times up to the 1950s. It was fun to wander in and out of the village with fellow clubbies.

After the tour to the Banke, some of us attended the annual Portsmouth holiday parade. Although it was rather cold out, we had a great time watching the parade and cheering on the marchers and floats.

Then we split up into groups and went out for dinner. Some of us ended up at "The Friendly Toast," a very eclectic dining establishment in downtown Portsmouth. I was happy to be able to have breakfast at 7:00 pm!

Most of us stayed overnight at the Anchorage Motel. The next morning, we went our separate ways. Gary and I had a wonderful walk along the Marginal Way in Ogunquit. It was snowing lightly, and we had a very peaceful walk along the ocean.

Thanks to Al for organizing this wonderful outing. We are looking forward to going again in two years.

writes psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim, the near impenetrable forest in which we get lost has symbolized the dark, hidden, near-impenetrable world of our unconscious. The forest, [Joseph Campbell] says, speaks to deeper centers than do city streets. The excitement of the imagination that a forest fastness can awaken may become an irresistible fascination, leading to a transformed life. (From *The Deep, Dark Woods*)

Old-fashioned winters, the kind with deep snow and deep cold are a blessing and a curse. In deep-snow, deep-cold winter, you can cross-country ski for weeks at a time on silky powder, and the silence of a wind-still, full moon night is so profound that you can almost hear the moonlight flowing over the snow underfoot, the crackling of the stars overhead. Far from convincing me, however, that my affection for deep snow and cold is wrongheaded, this past winter just reminded me of what those blazes way up in the trees taught me back in 1969: the easiest, most enjoyable way to get around in a good, old-fashioned winter isn't by pushing and heaving the snow out of your way but by getting up on top of it [e.g., by snowshoeing] and letting it carry you on its back. (From *The Tale of Tall Snows*)

Why do we do this? Because we can, maybe, but more for the sheer joy of testing ourselves against the land and the elements. And there is the admittedly smug satisfaction that you're doing what few people ever get to do . . . not that they want to. Who wants to go out and bare his butt at 20 below? But we do, and laugh at the blowing snow and cold, knowing that just beyond is the glowing light of a warm camp. So there we sat, on a frigid winter's night, moving our pegs up and down the cribbage board. What fools, I thought, to do all the hard work to get here in the middle of winter. And what fun, and what luck. (From *The Place in Mind*)

So, there you go. Since 1994, this has been one helluva magazine. To order your copy, or to pick up a back issue to first make sure you'd like it, either contact them on-line at www.northernwoodlands.org or write to them at Northern Woodlands, PO Box 471, 1776 Center Road, Corinth, VT 05039-9800. Happy trails, all.

Welcome New Members

Glenn Ewing	Nov-08
Kathy Gray	Nov-08
Enola Nelson	Nov-08
Maribel Ortiz Douglas	Nov-08
Bill Packard	Nov-08
Diane Sullivan	Nov-08
Peter Thieme	Nov-08
Lori Tisdell	Nov-08
Kenneth Hrycay	Dec-08



Congratulations Norm



Warming up for the big feast



Ah, we have arrived!



Where are we going for Ice Cream?



Hydration during the winter month

By Marie Babbitt

During the winter months of hiking it is very easy to forget to reach back and pull out your water bottle and drink water or whatever your choice of beverage is. It is no less important to adequately hydrate ourselves in the winter than in the summer, although the summer it is much more obvious to us.



After doing some research on the subject, thirst is the least accurate means to measure when we need to drink fluids. As we age thirst is even less accurate. We should drink fluids before, during and after exercise to keep our body performing at peak. Replacing salts and ions thru our fluid intake is also important if we are sweating a lot.. If the body becomes dehydrated fatigue and muscle cramps begin along with dizziness, nausea, headaches.

The idea of cold water on a cold day isn't very appealing to me so I like to pack some warm water with me in a thermos. It's nice to drink something warm on the trail. There are also the insulated bottle holders that you can buy to keep cold water cold in the summer and warm water warm in the winter. Or maybe you could talk your hiking buddy into packing a stove and a gallon of cider to warm on the trail. But however you do it just be sure to drink up so you can be safe on the trail and enjoy the beauty of winter hiking.

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

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

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Plan: Sue Forest & AnnMarie Visconti
 Backpacking Coordinator: Ed Laroche
 Trail Maint.: Ed Laroche & Rob Schechtman
 Web Page Editor: Dick Forrest
 Email Correspondent: Rob Schechtman
 Email List: John Klebes
 Quartermaster: Jack Leary
 Bootprints Editors: Marie Babbitt & Mike Reed

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the co-editor at: marie_babbitt@hotmail.com or 21-1/2 New Ludlow Rd., Granby, MA 01033



I think the trailhead is over there



Scott and Laura Cook

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

January Renewals:

Helen Bowers
 Carolyn Charette
 Sheila Croteau
 Diane Crowell
 Kathleen Damon
 Gary & Cindy Dolgoff
 Thomas Harrington
 Lisa Kirkland
 Bill & Heather Nelson
 Karen Savoy
 Ed & Marge Slinski
 David Stein
 Elaine Tryjankowski
 Ann Wood

February Renewals:

Diane Baribeault
 Christina Calabrese
 Syndi DiRico
 Donna Dreyer
 Richard Harrington
 Joan Holmes
 Daniel Koehne
 Apaul & Maxine Lessard
 Alice Mazzaferro
 Harry (Chip) Pray
 Sally Roberts
 Carol Vanderheiden
 Ruth Wade

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 Deb Gebo
 81 Roseland Terrace
 Longmeadow, MA 01106

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

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES & THE USUALS

- Jan 10 . WEU Potluck & Movie Night
- Jan 24-25 . Carter Notch Backpack
- Feb 1 . Canton Sunwind & Woodlands Trail
- Feb 6 - Moonlight Hike-Robinson St. Park
- Feb 13 - PVHC Booth @ Springfield Camp show
- Feb 22 . Mt. Monadnock
- March 7 . Mt Greylock
- March 14-15 Merck Forest Cabin
- March 21-22 Adirondack Backpack
- March 28-29 . Doublehead Mt. (Canin/backpack)
- Every Mon - Morning Hike . various locations
- Every Wed - Wednesday Evening Walks
- Every Thurs - Afternoon Hike
- Jun . Battenkill Canoe/Kayak (NY)
- July . Solarfest (VT)
- Sept . Katahdin Weekend

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
Feb.6, 2009, 7pm at **FBC**
Mar. 6, 2009, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: Feb 21, 2009

Feb. 13 – PVHC Booth at the Springfield Camp show

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

***** Check out our web page at:**
<http://www.geocities.com/pvhcweb>

Members may 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

