

BOOTPRINTS

VOLUME 15 - ISSUE 2

MARCH 2010

Thank you letter from club founder Ray Tibbets

I would like to thank the club for all the cards and prayers on my behalf. The flowers were a great pick me up. Thank you. I'm home now with a Star Wars boot on my left foot. It's not easy trying to learn to walk again, something we take for granted, or at least I did. Never again. Thanks again, please keep me in your prayers. Tell the club I said, Hello. Semper fil!

New Members

Joyce Berg	December '09
Kathleen Bauer	January '10
Dawna Caplette	January '10
Margaret Conklin	January '10
Sharon Connor	January '10
Krystyna Galipeau	January '10
Susan & Louis Grillon	January '10
Diane Moriarty	January '10

Election Results

Thank you Ann Marie Visconti, Marcia Kelly, Deb Gebo and Gail Carrier for accepting and being voted in again this year as the club's Board.

Mt Monadnock Adventure

By Lori Tisdell

January 2nd was my first winter Mt. Monadnock hike and, boy, was I looking forward to it! This was my first serious (OK, for me) winter mountain hike. I hiked all last winter but mostly at Mt. Tom and Mt. Holyoke, nothing that had any real major elevation gain and the possibility of blizzard conditions. Last winter I discovered, unknown till then, a love of winter hiking. So, I was really pumped about going this time around. I had hiked Monadnock in October, so I was not totally ignorant of the challenge before me. And I had my new Kahtoola Microspikes that several of my hiking buds assured me would be sufficient to get me through the snow and ice to the summit. (Note to self: buy crampons.)

Tom from our group came over and planted his crampon-booted foot into the ice for me to use to put my foot against and lever myself up.

The day dawned cloudy and snowy but I was hopeful we'd be going, in spite of the less than perfect weather. Unfortunately, I'd been awoken in the wee hours by stomach cramps, nausea and an intestinal issue that only Imodium AD could combat. Did that have to happen that day?

Ron Morrisette and I planned to carpool, and we arrived at the Rite Aid to see the group gathered in the parking lot. Dick and Sue (our fearless leaders) were taking a poll to see if we all wanted to brave the drive and snowy conditions on the mountain. Well, yeah... duh!

The drive up was fine, with only one scary moment on 91 of seeing an SUV flipped over in the trees. We saw the driver crawling out the door and several other cars stopped, with people going to help. Some of our group stopped and made sure there were no injuries, before continuing on.

One by one we arrived at Monadnock, signed in, and prepared to hike! I was no longer having cramps or nausea but had eaten and drunk very little. I know this is not the best way to start a hike, but I was going anyway.

And then off we went! Oh man, I'd forgotten how steep the climb was! I was a little bummed after awhile, as I couldn't seem to get my usual rhythm and pace going. But onward we went and I eventually started enjoying the challenge, as I'd anticipated I would once I got some more water and granola into me; until I was behind someone who had crampons on, and followed him onto an icy incline that was too much for my snow clogged Microspikes to handle. A few feet over was a better area but how to get there without slipping down about 10 feet? I was a little frazzled, as I've had some bad experiences on ice (yeah, haven't we all) and was scared of falling. Well, not really the falling part, rather, the getting hurt part. Kind of like, I'm not afraid of flying, I'm afraid of crashing! And now there's a group of people behind me waiting for me to get my act together. Then someone from another group decided to go around me - slipped, fell and slid into me knocking me off my feet! Thank you...

So, there I am flat out on the ice, exactly how I didn't want to be, scared to move lest I fall again and get even more frazzled. Tom from our group came over and planted his crampon-booted foot into the ice for me to use to put my foot against and lever myself up. I could not believe how solid his foot was in that ice. wow! I gotta get me some of those... So, with Tom's help and the encouragement of the others waiting, I got up and over to the more stable area and was able to continue on for awhile.

For continuation see Mt Monadnock page 4

Mt Norwottuck 5-Miler

By Marie Babbitt

I was looking forward to be going on a local hike at the Notch, which is just a short distance from my house. A friend had called me early in the morning to find out if I was going on the hike. What a gift! The day was to be warm, upper 20s, perfect for hiking with no rain or snow in sight. We all arrived in a timely manner, ribbed our fellow hikers, discussed the day's weather forecast, introduced ourselves in circle time, and were on our way.

The beginning of the trail was very icy, some club members who did not have stabilizers on, put them on post-haste. And, it was at this point that our group of 13 dwindled to 11. After this first icy section, the trail was basically packed snow with some occasional icy patches.

We were going to hiking the south side of the mountain, which I had not done previously, so the trails were all new to me. Between conversation and watching my footing, I did not get a lot of site-seeing in but had great conversation with those on the trail with me. I was beginning to tire and our leader, Bert, said we were stopping for lunch. Oops, I didn't really pack a lunch since it was only 5 miles and figured we would be out by 1:00 or so. I did have something to eat, since I always bring extra food just in case. After a fast lunch we were on our way again. Only to realize, to my dismay, that we had just gone a bit over half way and the mountainside we were about to climb looked pretty steep. Holy cow. Well, I might have said something else

There were some switchbacks and even more direct stretches up the mountainside, and when my pride got the best of me, some bushwhacking between switchbacks. After all, it was beginning to feel like it was just a bit over 5 miles. However, the south side was pretty, and as often as I have hiked up at the Notch, I have never really spent a lot of time exploring this side of the mountain. After the climb, we reached the summit of Mt. Norwottuck. The view was clear and we all stopped to enjoy it. I was happy that I knew where we were now, as I knew that we were almost finished.

Because of the ice, some of us slid down the steeper parts of the trail on the way back to the parking lot. As I learned early on, whatever it takes is now my motto in these circumstances. At the bottom we ran into Ann Marie, and there was some grumbling about the hike, e.g., that it was perhaps more like 7 miles than 5. Anyhow, afterwards, most of us went our separate ways, although Norm said some people were going to meet at Atkins for lunch or a treat.

Thanks, Bert, for a memorable hike.

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Lonesome Lake Hut

By Meg Schoenemann

The winter backpack to Lonesome Lake Hut was a first for me. I was drawn to the idea of backpacking at this time of year, without the challenge of sleeping in a tent or having to actually cook outdoors. It meant less of some equipment in the pack but I quickly realized that other equipment of equal or greater weight takes its place! The trip was led by the competent pair, Rob Schechtman and Lisa Frigo. There were ten of us in all, with the expectation that Ann Marie would join us later. While we never laid eyes on Ann Marie, there was evidence of her having made the trek into the hut as our chicken for the evening's meal (and cider donuts for breakfast) were there when we returned from the afternoon hikes. Thank you, Ann Marie!

At the trailhead it had been minus three degrees, with a fierce wind blowing through Franconia Notch. Despite this, it was a gorgeous, crystal clear day with spectacular views of the Franconia Ridge and Cannon Mountain. Off we went on snowshoes and soon the gentle climb had us removing layers once the wind died down in the forest. As we got higher, the views of the Ridge across the Notch were made even more awesome, as it was framed by the snow-covered trees around us. The trail was well packed and this made the footing stable in snowshoes. The sight of the hut across

Lonesome Lake was welcomed, and I felt like a real arctic adventurer as we stepped out onto the lake into the gripping wind for the last push to our destination.

It was all of zero degrees at the hut. We warmed up (in the balmy, 50-degree interior of the main

hut), ate our lunches, spread out our sleeping bags on our bunks in the unheated bunkhouses, dumped some non-essential weight from our packs, and headed out in two different groups for afternoon hikes. My group (Rick & Jeff Briggs, John & Mike Klebes, & I) went up the Fishing Jimmy Trail to Kinsman Pond, while the other group (Rob & Lisa, Jeff & Alex, Ron Morrisette) headed off to conquer Cannon.

The afternoon was the most challenging part of the weekend for me, and a time during which I learned a lot about winter hiking. While I had crampons, I hadn't used them before, and subsequently learned that I had fit

For continuation see Lonesome on page 3



Lonesome from page 2

them to my boots incorrectly. It was no time to correct the problem with the cold and steepness of the trail, so I reverted to my stable-icers, which actually did OK as there were no shear ice sections, but I realized that if there had been, I would have been out of luck. I was encouraged by the willingness of the guys to come to my assistance and enable me to reach our goal. Mike took my pack, while John took Mike's pack. It made all the difference, and I was rewarded with the beauty of Kinsman Pond. We stood in the middle of the pond with slopes of rime-ice encrusted trees all around and sun dots forming in the high thin clouds that started moving in. Once again, I want to thank Mike, John, Rick, and Jeff for their help and patience. John was persistent in making me feel that I could make it, and he really wanted me to be successful. He's fun to have on the trail, what with his positive attitude and frequent funny proclamations and observations.

We made it back to the hut just as dusk was falling, about 4:30 p.m., with a pale pink alpenglow on the Franconia Ridge . beautiful! We could smell the wood smoke as we got close to the hut, and were anticipating being able to warm up close to the wood stove. What a surprise to see a hut full of people! There were two other groups spending the night, 22 people in all. Our Cannon Mount group was successful in summiting and trickled in about 5:00 p.m., with young Alex arriving first, headlamp blazing.

We got immediately to the business of making dinner, and experienced the magic of Lisa's planning with a five course meal we prepared in the hut kitchen. Cheese & crackers, antipasti, soup, salad, chicken, stuffing, maple syrup squash, and tartlets with berries and whipped cream! Wow! It was great! During dessert, the whole hut serenaded Mike for his birthday. We lived up to our reputation for being the hiking AND EATING club, and had many in the hut looking enviously at our meal. Actually, we were giving food away to avoid having to carry anything more than necessary back out again.

After dinner we played some games; one pitting the men against the women. Lisa and I enlisted the help of a young woman who was hiking on her own to be on our team. I think the guys officially won but we were having so much fun that we continued without keeping score. Next, I learned the famous winter backpack game of Cosmic Wimp-out. I started with beginner's luck. After the first round I had 245 points . and there remained for the rest of the game!

One of the highlights of the trip was seeing the full moon come up over the Franconia Ridge. It's probably something I'll never see again. It was so clear, the stars twinkled, and if you stayed out too long, the moisture in your breath would probably freeze. Lisa ventured out onto the lake to take some pictures but I was content to see the moon from the

I was encouraged by the willingness of the guys to come to my assistance and enable me to reach our goal.

porch of the hut. I was warm in my down, hut booties and didn't want to get all bundled up again.

The night was made better for me when the hut caretaker offered a zero degree rated sleeping bag that I could put my 20 degree bag inside of. That certainly was better than my plan of using my fleece bag liner as my second bag. Jeff used the liner to put under his bag on the mattress. With those adjustments, I think we all slept fairly warmly, if not well. Several commented on alternating between being totally ensconced in the bag and sticking noses out for some fresh air. However, it didn't take long to feel the sting of the cold on your face when your nose was outside the bag. The caretaker said that it had hovered at zero all night, which was better than the 14 below temp of the night before!

We awoke to socked-in skies and lingered over breakfast and coffees. Rick, John, and Jeff went out to hike Cannon, while Mike stayed in the hut to wait for them to return. The rest of us headed back down to the trailhead, to much warmer temps than the day before. The sun broke through on the way, and we could see the mountains again by the time we reached the parking area. True to PVHC tradition, several of us went to lunch in Lincoln before hitting the road home.

I am proud to say I survived my first winter backpack and will definitely do it again. I plan to be better prepared next time, with a warmer sleeping bag and crampons that are fitted properly. I want to thank Rob and Lisa for organizing the trip and being enthusiastic and supportive leaders. If you want to experience the mountains in a totally new way (usually when you've gone to the top of a mountain in the winter, it's been on a chair lift!), this is the outing for you. It combined my love of winter sports and the mountains into one weekend, and added a new dimension to my hiking experience. Just don't look to me to do any mountaineering . 4,000 footers are plenty high enough for me!



Lonesome Lake trip

Mt. Monadnock continued from page 1

A little way further on was a very steep scary section . say that three times fast! OK, so there were two ways up: a short climb to an angled icy shelf, that had a pretty big drop off the end, or this chute which is covered with an even thicker sheet of ice. Hmm. I am sorry to say I was as close to a panic attack as I have ever been at the thought of either of these options. Several people made their way up the chute with some difficulty but successfully. Alison took the shelf route and was up and around and gone in no time at all. I held my breath until she disappeared around the corner - one slip and, well, there's all kinds of bad there. So, I turned my attention back to the chute . Ron came back down to help, Bob Morgan had been helpful and encouraging along with Dick and Sue and several others. Wayne was at the top saying to get myself started and he'd pull me up. OMG, wow, thank you. Pull me up... but what if I pull you down? Yikes!

At this point I have to stop and say how totally appreciative I am that everyone was so helpful, encouraging, and determined to get me up through both this and the previous section. I was and still am extremely grateful for everyone's support.

That said, I made the decision that I was not going to be able to continue on that day despite all the help everyone was offering me. After some discussion Bob said he would accompany me back down. I felt completely let down for a short time, until I realized that this was the right decision for me on this day. I felt worse that Bob was going to miss summiting and those wonderful blizzard conditions. Bob was very gracious about missing them . thank you, Bob! The hike back down was a joy. It was snowing on us and everything was incredibly beautiful and peaceful. It was just amazing.

At the end of the day it was agreed that crampons were really needed in the winter to make this summit. Seven of our group summited and several more came within a few hundred yards before being forced to turn back because of high wind conditions. And, not that it really matters, except to my ego, but I had gotten further up the mountain than I'd previously thought. Bob's GPS indicated that I was at about 2,750 feet or so before we had turned back.

All in all it was a wonderful experience. I have a new found appreciation and respect for winter mountain hiking and for the awesome members of Pioneer Valley Hiking Club.

New Club Website

The club's website has been changed to: www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org. If you have the address bookmarked, don't forget to change it. If you have any of the old business cards, please pick up some new ones at the next meeting.

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 & Ann Marie Visconti
- Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs
- Trail Maint.: Glenn Ewing & Rob Schechtman
- Web Page Editor: Ron Morrisette
- Email Correspondent: Rob Schechtman
- Email List: John Klebes
- Quartermaster: Mike Carrier
- Bootprints Editors: Marie Babbitt and Mike Reed

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: marie_babbitt@hotmail.com

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

March Renewals:

- Alan Goodhind
- John Klebes & Family
- Suzanne Carey
- Kay Byington
- Mike & Gail Carrier
- Sean Dugre
- Norma Casillas
- Susan DeMaria
- Michele Lloyd
- Donna & Tom Scott
- Rowe
- Mark Bidus
- Howard Eldridge
- Ed Grabowski & Family
- Denise Matthews
- Peggy Sullivan
- John Gorey

April Renewals:

- Bryan Goodwin & Joan DelPlato
- Mike & Monica Gross
- Jane Glushik
- Charles Williams
- Robert Morgan
- Lynne Shapiro
- Jacki Barden
- Carolyn Stewart
- Judy Treu
- Jacqueline Sheehan
- Penny Kratimenos
- Virginia Brown
- Arline Ely
- Lawrence Garvey
- Robert Aspinall
- Lois Christenson
- Pam Graves
- Adam Makkaoui
- Lori McMahan
- Monica Sadowski
- Maureen Sullivan
- Phyllis Vincent
- Ed Watson
- Susan Ziff
- Susan McGurk
- Mike Rattelle

EXPENSE RECAP	2009	2008	Difference
Beginning Balance:	\$4,751.77	\$4,206.21	\$546
Deposits:			
Equipment Rentals	\$60.00	\$20.00	\$40
New Members*	\$1,850.00	\$1,875.00	(\$25)
Renewals	\$3,890.00	\$3,825.00	\$65
Clothing/Patches	\$81.00	\$174.00	(\$93)
Total Inflows	\$5,881.00	\$5,894.00	(\$13)
Expenses:			
Operations**	\$615.69	\$537.32	\$78
Insurance	\$936.00	\$936.00	\$0
Directories, Bootprints & Postage	\$1,682.02	\$1,817.42	(\$135)
Trail Maintenance	\$95.80	\$202.21	(\$106)
Club Picnic	\$477.93	\$474.05	\$4
Holiday Party	\$1,663.58	\$1,317.89	\$346
Miscellaneous	\$137.75	\$63.55	\$74
Total Outflows	\$5,608.77	\$5,348.44	\$260
Ending Bank Balance	\$5,024.00	\$4,751.77	\$272.23

*There were 67 new members in 2009

**Rent, business cards, web hosting, endorsement stamp

Bartholomew's Cobble

By Marie Babbitt

Bartholomew's Cobble has had a varied existence. Perhaps as long ago as 500 million years the cobble began as coral reefs, shells and sand beneath an inland sea. Later when the Taconic and Berkshire mountains formed they pushed the land up and it flipped over forming what we know as the cobble today. The cobble has 5 miles of varied hiking trails. There is also a visitor's center on the property with a resident naturalist there to answer questions.

The high point of the cobble is known as Hurlburt's Hill which offers panoramic views northward up the Housatonic River Valley.

The alkaline soil which is created with the quartzite and marble supports North America's greatest diversities of fern species.

The cobble is designated as a National Natural landmark and is owned and overseen by the Trustees of Reservations.

Please come out and join us for our annual work day at the cobble on April 10th and enjoy this diverse and beautiful site.

For more information on the cobble visit their website at www.thetrustees.org



Meet the DAR Ladies at Chapel Brook Falls



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES & THE USUALS

- Mar 7 - (MA) Bear Hole Watershed W. Spfld. Snowshoe/hike
- Mar 20 . (MA) Robert Frost Trail
- Apr 10 - (MA) Barthomew\$ Cobble work day
- Apr 11 - (MA) Maple Corner Farm Breakfast & XC ski
- Apr 11 - (MA) Unkamits Path Trail Work
- May 1 - (MA) Upper Goose Pond
- May 15 - (NY) NYC Carpool (\$)
- June 18-20 - (NH) White Mountain Sampler (\$, Res)
- July 3-4 - (NY) Adirondacks Kayaking & Camping
- July 16-18 - (NY) Adirondacks Camping (&, Res)
- Aug 7 Sat - (MA) Lake Wyola Hike/Picnic
- Every Monday - Morning hikes, various locations
- Every Wednesday - Evening walks
- Every Thursday - Afternoon hikes

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
April 6, 2010, 7pm at **FBC**
May 4, 2010, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: April 22, 2010

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

***** Check out our web page at:**
www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org.

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

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