

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 16, Issue 4

July 2012

Mount Greylock Four Peak Traverse

Aka Greylock Death March 3

By Jeanne Kaiser

As I was struggling my way up the Mt. Prospect trail on Lori Tisdell's third annual Memorial Day weekend Greylock traverse, I decided this trail has a lot in common with childbirth. Specifically: you don't remember how hard it is until you are in the middle of doing it again. Then it all comes vividly back and you wonder how you forgot.

For her annual Memorial Day hike, Lori has devised the most diabolical way possible up and down the mountain. This year, there were ten of us. First, she had us go down- a long way- to the bottom of the Hopper. Then of course, we had to go up, because after all, Mount Greylock is the highest peak in Massachusetts. We did that via the aforementioned Mt. Prospect trail, which looking at the contour map at the top of the mountain is the most vertical trail of the many trails at the park. It does not help that the temperature and humidity on each of these Memorial Day hikes has seemed more appropriate for the Fourth of July than late May. I don't think we can blame Lori for that, however.

Nonetheless, the hike has its many rewards: hence my return each year. At the end of the Mt. Prospect trail, there is a wonderful overlook where we ate our lunch and looked at the mountains in the distance and the town below and had Beth tell us we had gone 4.98 miles thus far. Then there was a much more reasonable climb to the top of Mt. Williams where we found both another lovely view and Richard Harris. The climb to the third mountain, Fitch, barely feels like an incline. And the final peak is Greylock, which has not just what we normally get at the top of a peak - spectacular views and a sense of accomplishment- but many of the things we hardly ever get on the trail- real bathrooms, water, and ice cream.

After a short and painless climb down the mountain, we were back at the cars. And again the childbirth comparison seemed apt. Although we grouched our way up Prospect, at the end we all were saying that wasn't so bad.+ My guess is that next year, all we'll remember is the views and the ice cream and many of us will sign up again.

Book review: *It's Not About the Hike: Two Ordinary Women on an Extraordinary Journey*, by Nancy Sporborg

By Dick Forrest

About ten PVHC members, including myself, went to see the presentation, *It's Not About the Hike*, at the East Longmeadow Public Library on Tuesday, April 10, 2012. Nancy Sporborg and Pat Piper gave a highly inspirational multimedia presentation about their hiking

experiences of climbing almost entirely in the White Mountains. The presentation had a lot of smiling faces in it, inspirational quotes, many slides and a couple of videos interspersed, and some music to accompany some of the slides. It was so inspirational that I bought Nancy's book: *It's Not About the Hike: Two Ordinary Women on an Extraordinary Journey*

If this book were a movie, it would definitely be a chick flick. Essentially, the book is a romance journal centered on hiking. It's a

love story between Nancy Sporborg, the author of 60 journal entries of mostly hikes in the White Mountains, and Pat Piper, her friend and hiking companion. The book is all about a woman's feelings/her journey and a friendship. In fact, if this book were written by a man, it would be pure fiction; for a man, it would be all about the hike, forget about the friendship.

Overall, it's a charming book of 60 journal entries of the mountains (several PVHC members have climbed many of them) that Nancy and Pat climbed. It's also loaded with a lot of color images of their hikes, which makes the book rather pricey, \$34.95.

What makes Nancy's book and Nancy and Pat's presentation inspirational?

These two women, who met in a therapy group, started walking back and forth between their

two work places in Keene, New Hampshire, and then, after working out a while in a fitness center, decided to climb 4,000 footers in the White Mountains, for the challenge. They both overcame huge obstacles in the course of their friendship and journey: Nancy's obesity of carrying 60 extra pounds and lack of self-esteem, and Pat's depression and concomitant alcoholism. a spiritual and euphoric high achieved during striving toward their various mountain climbing goals while climbing through
See Book Review continued on page 2

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALLISON AND KATHY ON COMPLETING THE 48 IN NEW HAMPSHIRE. ARTICLE & PICTURES IN NEXT ISSUE OF BOOTPRINTS

I decided this trail has a lot in common with childbirth.

Nancy keeps referring to living on a grace wave,+

Book Review continued from page 1
all four seasons.

Four journal entries/vignettes are memorable for me. One vignette is a touching letter to her youngest daughter, Jessie, about her climbing mountains with Jessie's dog, a yellow lab named Dejah. It's a goodbye letter because Jessie and her dog are moving to Texas. In another vignette/journal entry Nancy talks about the memories of her golden retriever, Rajah, whom she and her husband had to recently put down. Another touching/emotional vignette talks about how Nancy found her birth mother (both she and her twin brother were adopted). The last of the four memorable vignettes was how Nancy and Pat nearly bought the farm while winter climbing in the unfamiliar Adirondacks. All of these stories/thoughts were expertly intertwined with feelings that Nancy and Pat had while climbing mountains.

Overall, it's a book of feelings and experiences of the womanly kind. Could a man write this book? Probably not. It's a book about the friendship of two women strangers and how they overcame obstacles in pursuing hiking goals. For them, it became more than about the hike: friendship, love, perseverance, self-reliance, persistence, gaining courage and trust, building self-esteem, etc. I wasn't sure that I would like the book when I first started it, but as I got into it, I was charmed by it and found that it was worth reading. Adding to the charm is the fact that Nancy is a talented writer, and dividing the book into 60, relatively short journal entries, written at home after each hike, makes it highly readable.

Hiking the CT AT

By Cindy Hibert

Who knew that western CT was so beautiful! We have hiked about 38 miles in CT over 3 hikes and have about 20 miles and 2 hikes to go to make it over the hills and dales of the CT AT. Marie told you all about the 1st hike in the May Bootprints.

On May 12th, 20 of us hiked 12.5 miles from Kent to Cornwall Bridge, CT. We hiked sections 3 and 4 and 1st half of section 5 over Fuller Mtn and Caleb's Peak (800q elevation gain), then over St. Johns Ledges. We ended the hike off the AT over Breadloaf Mtn which offered an excellent view of the valley. Many of us enjoyed the delicious ice cream for a 2nd time in Kent, CT. highly recommended if you are in the neighborhood!

On June 3rd, 16 of us hiked about 13 miles from Cornwall Bridge to Falls Village, CT. We hiked sections 5 (2nd half) and 6 over Breadloaf Mtn to the ridge above Housatonic Meadows State Park to Pine Knob (700q elevation gain), past waterfalls and streams then over Mt. Easter, ending in Falls Village. This was a beautiful ramble with ups and downs and flat areas and even a squeeze through Rogers Ramp. Beth and Tom rescued a large snapping turtle on the way home!

Two more CT AT hikes to go: June 30th and July 7th. Sign up early!

JULY WILDFLOWERS

By Tierney Rosenstock

April showers are known to bring May flowers, but July has flowers too! The longer days of July offer lots of warmth and sunshine followed by cool, frost free nights. These conditions are just perfect for a wide variety of flowers that offer beautiful colors and interesting textures to outdoor explorers. Below are just a couple examples of what the warmer months of summer have to offer.

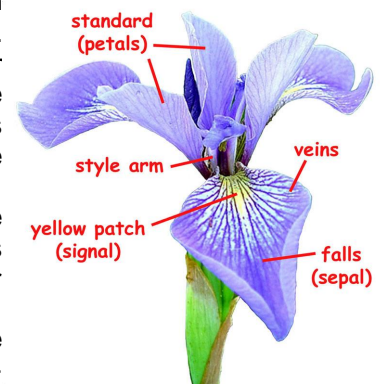
Larger Blueflag or Harlequin Blueflag Iris (*Iris versicolor*)

The blueflag iris' add a brilliant splash of color to roadsides, wet meadows, and various wetland habitats from May through July. The larger blueflag can be found north from Canada along the east coast south to Virginia and west to Minnesota and Manitoba. It is very similar to its counter part, the Slender Blueflag or Cube Iris (*Iris*



© Tierney Rosenstock

prismatica), which often shares the same habitat. However, the larger blueflag can be distinguished by its leaves. The leaves of the larger blueflag are 1/2 to 1 inch across while the slender blueflag has leaves 1/4 inch across or less.



Plants grow in large round clumps between 2-3 ft tall and are adorned with purple-blue flowers 3-4 inches

http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/beauty/iris/images/blueflagiris_flower_lg.jpg

wide. Iris' have all the standard parts of a flower, but they have been given their own unique terminology. The top most petals are called the standards and the lower most petals are called the falls. The falls are usually adorned with intriguing colors that differ from the rest of the flower called the signal and are surrounded by veins. Native North American Indian tribes once used the blueflag iris to treat a variety of ailments as well as using the leaf fibers to weave baskets and mats. It was even believed that substances within the roots would offer protection from rattlesnake bites. However, today we know that the roots are highly poisonous and can cause nausea and vomiting if ingested. For some people the plant sap can also cause skin irritation.

See *Wildflowers* on page 3 for continuation

Wildflowers continued from page 2

Despite their toxicity, the three parts of the iris flower have symbolized wisdom, power, and courage and combine to symbolize power.

Canada or Wild Yellow Lily (*Lilium canadense*)

Canada lilies are a surprising and exciting find when stumbled upon while exploring a wet meadow or wandering along the edge of a woodland. Canada lilies can be found north from Quebec south to Georgia and Alabama west to Nebraska and Kansas.

These giant jewels generally flower in June and July and reach heights of up to 5 ft! The bright yellow to fire orange flowers are 2-3 inches wide and hang facing downward in whorled, open clusters of 1 to 5 flowers. Although rare, some plants have had flower counts as high as twenty!



The flowers are pollinated by large butterflies such as the great spangled fritillary (*Speyeria cybele*) and swallow tail butterflies, but bees are attracted to the flowers as well. Many other species use Canada lilies for food including caterpillars, beetles, and flies. Voles and chipmunks are even known to feed on the corms.

Like the Iris, Canada Lily was used by Native Americans to treat snake bites and the corms were also used as a thickening agent in soups.

Happy flower hunting, but always remember; Take only pictures. Steel only time. Leave only footprints+ (Author Unknown). Living by this philosophy will leave the beauty of nature intact for the next person on the trail and for generations to come.

CT AT HIKE- SECTIONS 3&4

By Marie Babbitt

The second of Cindy and Jeanne's AT series hikes for Connecticut went off without a hitch. The day promised to be a beautiful one and nature sure delivered. This day's hike was going to be 12.6 miles but not as much elevation gain as the previous one, with a 5 mile flat walk along the river. We met in Enfield and were off shortly after our 7am meeting time. After the usual spotting of cars we were on the trail once again around 9:15. After crossing the field we started the 1st of our accents for the day up



Fuller Mt. The hiking was fairly easy and many of us were, well maybe just me, taking time to really enjoy the flowers along the trail. I was having discussions with some fellow hikers about the different flowers and doing some trail maintenance by pulling out some of the Mustard Garlic, which is an invasive species. It is tasty though, which is why it was brought here for its culinary use.

After crossing Choggam Brook and then Skiff Mt Rd it was just a short distance up to the best view of the day on Caleb's peak. We stopped for a snack and to take in the view. There is nothing like looking out onto the horizon and seeing nothing but the green undulating forms of the mountains and valleys. With the vibrancy of the early spring leaves the view was all that more appealing. It was here we started playing, guess how old I am. Jim certainly played off Cindy's guess of his age very well, even though she was only 2 years off. I do not recall who fessed up to being the youngest and certainly no one was volunteering for the oldest and wisest honor. Cindy did give up her age rather willingly though and then it was off to St Johns ledges. On the way we enjoyed the smell of honeysuckle.

The ledges were as described a steep decent on rock steps. Sometimes steps are a blessing and other times, well not so much. Here it was a mixture of both. About half way down I looked up to my left to see the stone wall towering over the trail, it was incredible. The group waited at the bottom of the section before moving on to find a lunch spot. We pulled up beside the river, which was moving pretty quickly and had our lunch.

The next section of the hike was 5 miles of flat walking along a road to begin with and then along the river. It was here that I noticed the native ginger flower, which I had learned about the week before. The flower is below the leaves of the plant and as I recall are pollinated by beetles, which is why the flower lays on the ground. We saw people floating down the river in boats and we saw a huge shark, bigger than Jaws stuck in the trees, it was an awesome sight. And half way through the flat section we even found a privy to use. I think we could have filled the the last spot in the hike if

Jeanne and Cindy advertised the privy in the hike description. We continued on and Eva and I were enjoying the wildflowers. The happiest flowers I saw were the yellow flowers that we were seeing in this section of the hike, which I believe are part of the buttercup family. It was about this time when I looked down on my arm and found a tick starting to settle down for a meal. Eva got the rascal off me. Thanks God for friends.

See Sections 3&4 on page 4 for continuation

Sections 3 & 4 continued from page 3

This was my first experience with a tick and I would rather not experience it again.

We had the final mountains to hike after our 5 mile respite along the river. We hiked up to the summit of Silver Hill and back down heading towards CT 4. We were all getting a bit weary at this time. As we descended the trail some people in our group believed we were approaching the end of the hike and much to their chagrin found out otherwise. It was at this point that Karen in our group exclaimed `Oh goodqor something to that affect when she found out we still had a ways to go. As we started back up the last mountain, Breadloaf Mt., the comments were **why** are we going up **again**. We tried to get Cindy to reconsider going up but she insisted this was the way. Good try Jeanne we all appreciated the effort. At the top I asked Chip to move out of my way so I could enjoy the view from Breadloaf Freakin Mt as our group had so named it. Chip had fun with that comment. After having our group picture taken here we made our final descent to our cars. We headed to the ice cream shop where we sampled more of the homemade ice cream from the store we stopped at from our earlier hike. Thanks Cindy and Jeanne for another great day on the trail.



"Volunteer Opportunities in PVHC"

By Cindy Dolgoff

The success of any club is directly related to the endeavors of its volunteers.

Would you be interested in sharing some of your time and talents with the club? Volunteers are always welcome! Here are some of the PVHC jobs. Take a look and let an officer know if there's anything you'd like to do. Or, if you have any other ideas, let us know that too.

Hike Leader: There are always open dates to lead a hike, especially easy hikes. Do you have an idea for a theme hike? Maybe you would like to try leading but don't know where to start? We can pair you with an experienced

leader. One benefit of leading a hike - it forces you to get out there on the trails.

Bootprints Writer: Articles are always welcomed. Let us know about a hike you went on. Do you have any hiking tips? Did you go on a hiking vacation? The club would love to hear about it. Dust off your keyboard and fire off an article.

Officers of the Club - Officers carry on the business functions of the club. Nominations are held in January, with elections in February.

Picnic - August - People are needed for set up, cooking, clean up. We also need hike leaders for a hike before and during the picnic. The club could also use an activities coordinator. Do you have any lawn games? Have a good idea for a picnic activity?

Holiday Party - December - Although we now have a party chairperson, we will need helpers for set up, clean up, decorating, and purchase of door prizes. This year, we will be asking people to bring a dessert or appetizer. Make sure you submit any hiking photos that you've taken throughout the year to Lori Tisdell - the sooner the better.

Greeter - All you have to do is come to the monthly meeting early (6:30), hand out information and talk to people. It's a great way to meet your fellow hikers. Friendly people wanted!

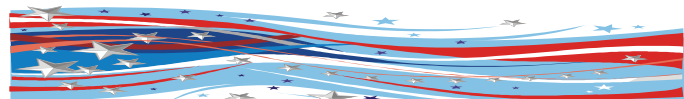
Clinics - Do you have an idea for a clinic? We've had slide shows, zumba demonstrations, nature discussions, boot clinics and more. See Marcia Kelly with your ideas.

Trail Maintenance - Are you handy with a chainsaw? Like to move brush or build? You don't need a special skill - we'll find a job suited to your ability. This is a great opportunity to meet people and get outside.

Thanks to our current, tireless volunteers. We hope to add to your ranks soon

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUNE</u>
Terrie Gaiser	Bruce Morin
Elizabeth Avalone	Kelli O'Donnell
Rosemarie Goyette	
Patricia Miller	
Murray Watnick	
Dorothy Pulowski	
Desiree Malo	
Sarah Pascale	
Fran Van Treese	
Anne Maher	
Beth & Craig Kronlund	
Dianne Baran	
Becky Mason	
Donna Sweeney	
Lee Guarda	



Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Chip Pray, President
 Marcia Kelly, Vice President
 Cindy Hibert, Co-Secretary
 Cindy Dolgoff, Co-Secretary
 Carol Vanderheiden, Treasurer
 Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Sue Forest & Chip Pray
Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs
Trail Maint: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman
Web Page Editor: Dick Forrest)
Non Member Email Coordinator: Rob Schechtman
Club E-mail Coordinator: Mike Reed
Quartermaster: Mike Carrier
Bootprints Editors: Marie Babbitt & Mike Reed

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

Quotable Quote

By Dick Forrest

What injury accounts for the most fatalities in outdoor recreation?

"Sunburn. Over 8000 Americans die annually of melanoma, a particularly nasty form of skin cancer. That's more than one every hour."

Tom Welch, MD, professor and chair of pediatrics at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY, and an active member of the Wilderness Medical Society in the May-June 2012 edition of the Adirondack Mountain Club's "Adirondack" magazine.



Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

July Renewals:

Karen Abert
 Rick Briggs
 Elizabeth Case
 Ginger Elliott
 Tina Garde
 Jeanne Kaiser
 Joanne Kellogg
 Marcia Kelly
 Cindy Kennedy
 Stacey Laplante
 Jettie McCollough
 Joel Meginsky
 Norm Plante
 Robert & Lisa(Frigo)
 Schechtman
 Sandy Segó
 David Stein
 Martha Sullivan
 Chaula Vora
 Joseph Walsh
 Beth Willis
 Fairin Woods

August Renewals:

Doug Adler
 Harry Allen
 Marie Bienvenue
 Lee Dawn Daniel
 Thomas Eaton
 Connie Fogarty & Bill Nickerson
 Dick & Sue Forrest
 Vida Gircys & Family
 Gabriela Horvay
 John D. Leary, Jr.
 Charlotte Lee
 Terry McCarthy
 Bert McDonald
 Ann Mundy
 Russell Seelig
 Chuck & Fritz Tiernan
 Jane Toomey
 Ann Marie & Lea Visconti

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
 PO Box 225
 West Springfield MA 01090-0225

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



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Every Mon. (MA) Morning Hike . various locations
- Every Mon evening - Kayaking
- Every Tues (MA) Tuesday evening hikes with Carol
- Every Wed. (MA) Forest Park Hike/concert
- Every Thurs (MA) Afternoon Hike
- July 7 (CT) AT (5 of 5)
- July 8 (MA) Gloucester Whale Watch (Res & \$30)
- July 15 (MA) Section 7 of AT
- July 22 (MA) Farley ledges in Erving & Hermit's Castle
- July 27-29 (NY) Adirondack Heart Lake Car Camp & hikes(\$, Res)
- Aug. 4 (MA) Race Brook Trail to Mt. Everett & Mt. Race
- Aug. 11 (MA, CT, NY) Tri State Mt. Frissel
- Aug. 18 (MA) Pine Cobble in Williamstown-
- Aug. 26 (MA) PVHC Summer Picnic at Mt. Tom 12 to 5
- Sept. 1-3 (VT) AT - Backpacking 1 night (\$, Res.)
- Sept. 8 (MA) Block Island
- Sept. 14-16 (NY) Adirondack JBL Lodge Backpack (\$, Res.)
- Sept. 23 (MA) Minute Man Trail from Lexington to Concord



IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
Aug7, 2012, 7pm at **FBC**
Sept 4, 2012, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for the next BootPrints is August 20, 2012

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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