



# Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the  
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

## Moosilauke - Flags on the 48

by Lori Tisdell

In 2011, I saw the Flags on the 48 for the first time when a group of us hiked the Osceolas in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. It was a moving and emotional experience. For those don't know, the quote below, from the website, explains FOT48.:



"On September 11th, 2001, the consciousness of United States of America was undeniably altered by overwhelming and devastating acts of terrorism, so far reaching in their intensity that our country will forever carry the scars. Thousands of lives were lost in a fleeting moment, immeasurable families shattered and countless hearts broken.

We, in the hiking community, continue to honor the deceased with a tribute: flying the American flag atop all 48 four-thousand foot and higher mountains in New Hampshire on the weekend closest to September 11 each year. By demonstrating our steadfast unity in this challenging endeavor, we also hope to express our unwavering support to the  
*See Mt. Moosilauke continued on page 4*

## Beginner's Backpack

by Sandy Segó

Have you wanted to spend the night under the stars, sleeping in a tent or a shelter? Backpacking gives you the chance to do just that. So when Karen Markham said she and Al Roman were going to lead a beginner's backpack, I thought it would be a great opportunity to try something new. Then reality set in.

*See Backpack continued on page 7*

Volume 19, Issue 6  
Nov., 2015

### Inside this issue:

- Important Renew- 12  
al and Member-  
ship Notices
- Upcoming Events 13  
And The Usuals
- Important Notices 13

### Special points of interest:

- Lori Tisdell's  
article on page 1
- Sandy Segó's  
article on page 1
- Rob Schechtman's  
article on page 2
- Cindy Dolgoff's  
article on page 2
- Dick Forrest's  
articles on page 3



## Featured Club Member: Rob Schechtman

by Rob Schechtman



Rob completed his 48 peaks in the White Mountains on top of Mt. Carraigan

I have really enjoyed being a member of the PVHC. It helped me in so many ways; to meet new friends, meet my wife, keep fit, support trails, find adventure, connect with my daughter, and help me through life's changes. Serving as president from 2000-2003 was a particularly rewarding part of my experiences. I have hiked, camped, mountain climbed, and backpacked my whole life. I did other more challenging activities when I was younger, such as cave exploring, canoeing, and rock climbing, but after starting a family and focusing on my career, I was getting away from the recreational things I loved. I found a group of people in PVHC that love the outdoors, and it came at a perfect time in my life.

When I visited Ray's store for equipment, he suggested that I join the club, and I began making a club hike almost every weekend. It wasn't long after I joined that I started leading hikes. I was so grateful for

*See Rob Schechtman continued on page 8*

## Bidwell House Museum Tour and Hike

by Cindy Dolgoff

One of the things I like the best about the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club is the variety of hikes. Every year, there are urban hikes, bike rides, kayaking, theme hikes, and more, of course, in



addition to the usual mountain and trail hikes. On Sunday, August 30, 2015, Brenda Doucette led a trip/hike to the historical Bidwell House in Monterey, Massachusetts.

*See Bidwell House continued on page 9*

**Book Review:** Peak Experiences: Danger, Death, & Daring in the Mountains of the Northeast, edited by Carol Stone White, 2012.

by Dick Forrest

Peak Experiences is a compilation of stories concerned with hiking in the mountains of the northeastern United States during all seasons of the year. The chapter titles give you an understanding of how Carol Stone White has grouped these stories: Part I. Weather-wise or Otherwise: Presidential Perils and Other Tales above Tree Line; Part II. Rescues in the Mountains; Part III. A Treacherous Place in the Peaks; Part IV. Dangers of Water in the Mountains; Part V. Animal and Avian Behavior; Part VI. Odysseys; Part VII. Lost, Unprepared, Leader Lapses, and Bushwhacked.

Each of the stories are both interesting and informative, since they are written by or about hikers who have often gotten into trouble, in one way or another, in either the White Mountains of NH, the Adirondacks of NY, the Green Mountains of VT, the Catskills of NY or in Maine's Baxter State Park.

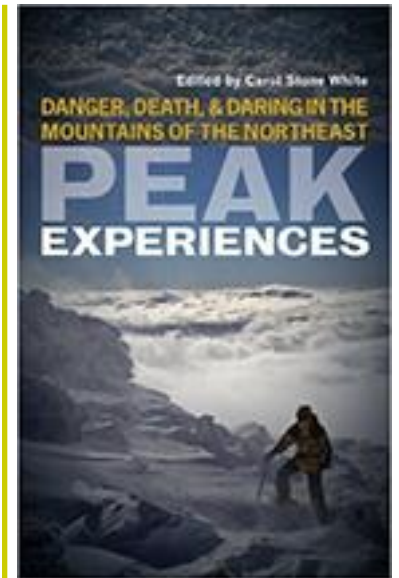
See *Peak Experiences* continued on page 10

## **Update on Missing Appalachian Trail Thru Hiker Geraldine Largay**

by Dick Forrest

In the September, 2015, issue of *Bootprints*, I wrote an article about the disappearance and mystery surrounding Appalachian Trail thru hiker Geraldine Largay. My interest in the plight of Geraldine Largay stemmed from a backpacking trip on the 4th of July weekend this year in the area where she disappeared. Since the last issue of

See *Thru Hiker Update* continued on page 11



Geraldine Largay's fate is no longer a total mystery



Flags on Mt. Moosilauke, 1 of the 48 High Peaks in the White Mts.

**Mt. Moosilauke** *continued from page 1*

families, friends and communities whose losses are beyond comprehension and whose suffering we remember in our hearts.”

The first time we saw a group of Boy Scouts on the Osceolas, who weren't even old enough to remember 9/11, carrying the flag, the piping and the ropes, put it all together and raise the flag to honor those who died that day. It was so touching, and moving and intense to see. I remember thinking it was something I wanted to do again. Even if not carrying a flag, we could still pay tribute to those who died and the sacrifices made that day.

I have led hikes to Moosilauke twice since that first time to see the FOT48. The first time was overshadowed by the severe weather issues. We were completely socked in and it was very windy. We heard the flag whipped by the winds before we saw it. We weren't able to stay long at the summit that day, but we remembered.

This year it was completely different. The weather was perfect, a light breeze, moderate temps and fair-weather clouds dotting the sunny skies. There were 16 of us hiking to the summit. Chip and I hatched a plan to bring our club banner up the mountain - it was safely stowed in my pack. We set off on the Gorge Brook Trail leading us directly to the summit. It is a great trail, never very steep, and with good footing. About 2/3's of the way up is an opening with a very nice view. Then the switchbacks start. Switchbacks are wonderful! And when you get in the Whites, they are so welcomed because there are so few of them!

As we got higher the views east and more of the White Mt's opened  
See Mt. Moosilauke continued on page 5

**Mt. Moosilauke** *continued from page 4*

up. We could see Kinsman, the Franconia Ridge and the Presidential Range. Wow. When we reached the summit, there was the Flag waving in the breeze. There were many other hikers that day; someone said they counted 80 people. The forward group said the raising of the flag was so special to see, with those who raised the flag singing as it rose into the sky. We gathered as a group and Gina enlisted some "handsome" guys to take our club photo with the flag waving high behind us.

We rested and had lunch at the summit in the warm sun. Before heading to the South Peak we bowed our heads and took a moment of silence to honor and remember in our own way. We headed down the Carriage Road. It's not really a road, well not anymore. It was built in the 1800's and was the road to the summit hotel. The hotel is long gone, but the road still remains.

Most of the group hiked the .10 mile to the South Summit, which has great views, too, but from a different perspective. Totally worth the 5 or so minutes it takes to climb the 100 feet to the top. If you look among the scrub, you will find a plaque dedicated to Penn Haile. I always find that it's so interesting to find these metal plaques in various places in the White Mt's.

Soon we were heading down and below the views. The trail is pretty, first just wooded and then beside the water with several crossings. When we came out of the woods, there was a wedding reception going on at the Ravine Lodge, dance music and all! We were all well-behaved, and didn't crash the party. We might have been a tad conspicuous in our hiking duds. Everyone agreed it was a beautiful day to be out in the mountains – it could not have been more perfect. It was truly a day to remember.

See *Mt. Moosilauke* continued on page 6



*Niki Rellon, aka, Bionic Woman*

**Mt. Moosilauke** continued from page 5

On the way home several of us had an amazing experience. I saw a woman thru hiker hitching a ride and stopped. It turned out to be Niki Rellon, aka, Bionic Woman. She is hiking the Appalachian Trail with the goal of being the first woman amputee to complete it. Niki was having some trouble with her prosthetic, which was causing her severe pain due to an infection. We gave her a ride a couple miles up the road. She had hiked Moosilauke that day. Talk about spirit, grit and iron will. It will make me think twice about complaining when my feet hurt on the trail. Niki just recently passed over Greylock and has about 600 or so miles to go on the AT.

It was a beautiful day to honor and remember those who died on 9/11. It was a way to celebrate their lives, too, not just to mourn. 9/11 will be a part of those of us old enough to remember that day forever. Our country lost so much, but we came together and didn't allow it to break us. In hiking to the summits, raising the flag, cheering on the flag bearers, remembering and honoring, we continue and carry the spirit forward that brought us together in the days after 9/11.



*"Even the smallest act of service, the simplest act of kindness, is a way to honor those we lost, a way to reclaim that spirit of unity that followed 9/11."*

– President Obama in a 2011 radio address

-- Lori Tisdell



**Backpack** *continued from page 1*

I would need a sleeping bag. I would need a tent. I would need a stove. I would need a water filter. I would need a bigger backpack. And I would need other stuff I wasn't even aware of. As a day hiker, I didn't have any of this equipment. Purchasing all this gear would be a big investment. And I wasn't sure that I would ever use it again. I planned on seeing what equipment the club had that I could use. But then, I mentioned that I wanted to try to backpack to Lori Tisdell. She generously offered to lend me the equipment I would need. Al assured me I wouldn't need a water filter or stove, as everyone else would have them. So I picked up a dehydrated meal, and tried to fit everything into the backpack. I was ready.



Beginner backpacking trip at Riga Shelter on the Connecticut AT

Rick Briggs led us on a flat three mile hike to Riga shelter. Once there, we set up camp. Having several experts around has its advantages. I had the opportunity to set up a tent. Then I perfected those new skills setting up a second tent! Next, I was shown different water filters, and then used one. Surprisingly, I did not have to start a fire by rubbing two sticks together to fix dinner - there were three different types of stoves used instead. After it became dark, we played a dice game called Cosmic Wimp Out by a combination of headlamps and light from a full moon. Rob Schechtman improvised a pencil from a burnt match so we could keep score. Half way through the game, we remembered that there was a pencil with the sign-in book, and decided to use it instead. We had a great time.

In the morning we woke to a beautiful sunrise, enjoyed a leisurely breakfast, and then packed up and hiked out.

It was a great experience and I highly recommend trying backpacking if you haven't done it before. There are experienced backpackers in the club, who are great mentors. They are happy to share their knowledge, wisdom, experience, and equipment.

-- Sandy Segó

**Rob Schechtman** *continued from page 2*

those hikers that showed me their favorite spots that I wanted to lead them to mine. Before the club, I probably only visited 5 - 8 places with a lot of repetition, but after joining, I saw so many new places in my first year. I was an avid hiker of the White Mountains in college. I even own a 1976 White Mountain Guide, but I had lost touch with people to go with. The club connected me with people that liked the Whites, and carpooling and camping led me to form many new friendships, too many to mention here.

When I began as president, we were faced with the challenge of moving the club. With a great officer board, we got connected with Wilderness Experiences Unlimited in Southwick, and although it was further away from our roots in Agawam, we continued to grow membership. Behind the scenes, we brought the club treasury and membership list into the computer age. We made sure members got mailed all information, so attending meetings was



not a requirement to be an active member. Volunteering as an officer was a rewarding experience for me and I encourage all members to serve. The more people that volunteer, the easier it is for the club to continue.

Some of my most memorable hiking adventures with the club include; my first club hike up Sleeping Giant, leading White Mountain hut trips with family and friends, Labor Day Mt. Katahdin trips, White Mountain Samplers, Battenkill River canoeing, Merck Forest winter camping, ADK summer and fall JBL camping, Appalachian Trail backpacks, trail maintenance, Stratton Pond, Mt Washington winter summit at -75 degrees F., and countless day hikes all over New England.

I realize I haven't been as active lately - life's changes sometimes takes us down different paths. It is great to know that if a day frees up, the schedule always offers a hike or outdoor adventure. The diversity of hikes the club offers is a real benefit to serve so many members. My favorite activities still involve reaching a mountain top above treeline, and camping year round. I hope that the club stays strong, and that we find new leaders to continue with all of our great outdoor activities.

-- Rob Schechtman





**Bidwell House** *continued from page 2*

I was intrigued by this event because (a) I had never even heard of Monterey, MA, much less gone there; and (b) I love to visit historical houses. My grandparents, Wilfred and May Taylor, at one time owned a 1700s-era home in Central Massachusetts. Sadly, it was sold out of the family when I was a teenager; however, I still have fond childhood memories.

We drove to the Bidwell House via the Massachusetts Turnpike, exiting at Exit 2, Lee, and driving through scenic Tyringham. "We're here!" we exclaimed, as we pulled into what we thought was the Bidwell House parking lot; however, it was actually the Kern residence. Oops. A mile further up the road, we arrived at our destination.

A bit of history on the house: It was built in 1750 for the first minister of then-Township No. 1, the Reverend Adonijah Bidwell. It is a large white salt-box style home. Reverend Bidwell lived in the home until his death in 1784. He was married three times (his first two wives died young) and raised four children there. The home and its farmland remained in the Bidwell family until 1853; thereafter it was farmed by another family and subsequently housed an art school. By the 1950s, the home had fallen into a state of disrepair.

The Bidwell House was purchased by Jack Hargis and David Brush, two New York City fashion designers, in 1960. The property, which included 196 acres of land, sold for \$30,000. The two men spent the next 25 years returning the house to its original appearance. Unfortunately, all of the original furnishings were gone, but Mr. Hargis and Mr. Brush embarked on a quest to obtain similar period furnishings as per Reverend Bidwell's "Death Inventory". The Bidwell House became a museum in 1990, as a result of a bequest of the late David Brush.

Visiting this house was a remarkable trip back in time. You had to imagine living in a house where there was no electricity, no running water, no bathroom, and only a fireplace for cooking facilities. How hard life must have been back then, especially in the harsh New England winters.

Following our house tour, which was conducted by a friendly and knowledgeable young man named Jacob, we strolled the yard, marveling over the house design, heirloom vegetable garden, and farm and garden tools exhibit.

*See Bidwell House continued on page 10*

**Bidwell House** *continued from page 9*

After an outdoor picnic lunch, we started our hike. There is a series of trails leading around the Bidwell property. We chose to hike the "Royal Hemlock" trail. We ambled down a scenic dirt road and then found a path that was marked with pink ribbons. On the path, we located two of the property's motion-activated cameras. Earlier, the Bidwell House caretaker had shared with us night-time wildlife photographs that were captured with these devices. The Bidwell House property is home to raccoons, bears, coyotes, foxes and more.



Motion-activated camera mounted on a tree

I wish we had more time to walk around the grounds, but it was time to head home. Thank you, Brenda, for leading such an interesting hike. Someday I would like to tour some of the other houses on the Historic Berkshires 18<sup>th</sup> Century Trail.

-- Cindy Dolgoff

**Peak Experiences** *continued from page 3*

Very interestingly, one story entitled "Two Lives Saved by Search and Rescue Teams," by Edith Tucker, a reporter for the *Coos County Democrat*, was the very same story related by Wayne Rodrigues, a former PVHC member, at one of our hiking club meetings. Wayne and his girlfriend, Janice, at the time, now Wayne's wife, climbed Mt. Adams in the White Mountains in winter together. Wayne and Janice spent the first night at Gray Knob cabin on the mountain, and the next day they summited Mt. Adams. But on their way down from the summit, they became disoriented by blowing snow. They "thought they were on Lowe's Path, but they were actually about a quarter of a mile northeast of Thunderstorm Junction at the top of the Great Gully." After Wayne had called 911, a ranger told them to stay where they were. Wayne and Janice huddled in a 20 degree F. sleeping bag on the mountain until rescuers arrived. And, of course, since Wayne was able to relate the story at our club meeting, the rescue was successful. (Incidentally, neither Wayne's nor Janice's names were mentioned in the article.)

In reading these stories, even the best of hikers can get into trouble. But experience and training can go a long way in avoiding life-threatening situations in the mountains. Editor Carol Stone White provides a "Cliff Note" in many of the articles as a word of "advice, analysis, and asides" of

See *Peak Experiences* continued on page 11

**Peak Experiences** *continued from page 10*

what should have been done to avoid the various perils encountered. As an experienced hiker, I've found some of the "Cliff Notes" quite valuable.

What's great about Peak Experiences is that different authors give different, relatively short - not too taxing to read - perspectives on various perilous situations encountered in the mountains of the northeast. Naturally, some authors write better than others; and some authors relate more interesting and informative stories. Overall, if you are a hiker, and especially if you like to push the limits of hiking in wilderness areas during all seasons of the year, this anthology of hiking stories is well worth the read.

-- Dick Forrest

**Thru Hiker Update** *continued from page 3*

*Bootprints*, the remains of Geraldine Largay were recently found in mid-October, about 3,000 feet off of the Maine Appalachian Trail in Reddington Township, Maine. Geraldine disappeared in July, 2013, while hiking north alone on the Appalachian Trail. Her remains were found by a contractor, doing survey work, who was working for the U.S. Navy. (The Navy owns property in that area to train Navy pilots in survival techniques. Her remains were found just inside the boundary of that property. The locals in that area facetiously call that property, "Area 53.") The Maine Warden Service, who are leading the investigation, do not think that there was foul play involved, but they have not conclusively ruled that out, pending an autopsy of Geraldine's remains. The location of her decomposed body and gear has been solved, but the mystery still exists, "Why were her remains found so far off a clearly marked trail?"

-- Dick Forrest

## Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

### Nov. Renewals

Marie Babbit  
 Terry L. Champiney  
 Barbara Considine  
 Donna Diduk  
 Lynn Gebo  
 Richard Harris  
 Tracy Harrity  
 Traci Hopkins  
 Jill Keene  
 Edward Laroche & Mimi  
 Watroba /Laroche  
 Helen MacMellon  
 Mary Moriarty  
 Enola Nelson  
 Bill Packard  
 Jeffrey & Marian Parentela  
 Cathy Sena  
 Chuck Serafin  
 Peter Thieme  
 Lori Tisdell  
 Warren Wilkinson

### Dec. Renewals

Wendy Eaton  
 Steven Fox  
 Frank Kamlowski  
 Debbie Mac Neal  
 David Pierrepont & Theresa  
 Murphy  
 Ruth Preston  
 Cragi Stevens  
 Rick & Sandy Wallis

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)

### Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Chip Pray, President  
 Marcia Kelly, Vice President  
 Lori Tisdell, Secretary  
 Paul Kozikowski, Treasurer  
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

### Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Jeanne Kaiser & Chip Pray  
 Backpacking Coordinator: Rick Briggs  
 Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman  
 Club Website Editor: Dick Forrest  
 Non-Member E-mail Coordinator: Rob Schechtman  
 Club E-mail Coordinator: Chip Pray  
 Quartermaster: Mike Carrier  
*Bootprints* Newsletter Editor: Dick Forrest

*Bootprints* is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Please email your story/event contributions to Dick Forrest at: [dforrest@charter.net](mailto:dforrest@charter.net).

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

#### September

Lorraine Baron  
 Eileen Bryson  
 Albert Gordon  
 Bill Grygiel  
 Devora Jacobson  
 William LePage  
 Annie Schultz

#### October

Donna Dunn  
 Pennington C. Pitts



**UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS**

- Every Mon. (MA) Mornings w/ Chip & Ashley Reservoir evening
- Every Wed. (MA) Evening walks with Marcia
- Every Thurs. (MA) Afternoon walks with Ruth
- Every Thurs. (MA) Mornings w/ Harry & Ashley Reservoir evening
- Nov 1 (CT) Chauncey Peak/ Lamentation Mt
- Nov 7 (MA) Club Maintenance
- Nov 14 (MA) Mt. Watatic & (NY) Catskills
- Nov 21 (NY) Manhattan End-to-End
- Nov 28 (MA) Mt. Toby
- Nov 27-29 (NH) Notch Hostel Whites
- Dec 5 (NH) Strawberry Banke
- Dec 12 (MA) Holiday Party
- Jan 2 (NH) Mt. Monadnock

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:  
 Nov. 3, 2015, 7 pm at **FBC**  
 Dec. 1, 2015, 7 pm at **FBC**

**FBC - First Baptist Church, 337 Piper Road, West Springfield**

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is Dec. 20th, 2015

**\*\* Check out our web page at:**  
[www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org](http://www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org)

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to:  
[pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com](mailto:pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com)



----- fold here -----



A publication of the  
**Pioneer Valley Hiking Club**  
 P.O. Box 225  
 West Springfield, MA 01090-0225

