



Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

Manhattan End-to-End Trip (aka, Battery Park or Bust)

by Cindy Dolgoff

15 hikers ...
13 miles ...
One Borough.

"Do you think November 21 is too late?" Jeanne Kaiser asked me and Gary. Jeanne was going to lead a tip to tip walk through Manhattan. She knew that Gary and I had done this before. It was either the end of November, or wait until spring. Jeanne decided to take a chance on November.

The scheduled date turned out to be the perfect weather day. It was sunny and crisp, forecast of high in the 50s, with 0% chance of rain. Fifteen people signed up.

Our three car caravan descended upon the 5051 Broadway parking lot around 11:00 a.m., and we immediately set out on our journey. Since
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White Mt. Notch Hostel Weekend

by Lori Tisdell

Karen Markham and I have a habit of talking about hiking often. Frequently, one thing leads to another and poof - there we are leading a hike or special event! We've been talking White Mountains regularly over the last few years, and have both led a number of trips. When we saw that a new hostel had opened near Lincoln, we had to check it out. For the last 5 or so years, I've headed up to the Whites on the weekend
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Featured Club Member: Who Is PaPa Smurf?

by John Klebes



John Klebes, at the age of 11, hiking on the Jewell Trail on Mt. Washington in the White Mountains

When I was eleven years old, my oldest brother Mike took me on a backpack trip to the summit of Mt. Washington, the highest point in the northeastern United States. When we hiked above tree line I fell in love with the mountain summits. There is nothing like that feeling of wonder and accomplishment hiking above the clouds with everything below you. I think that was the seed for my love of hiking.

When I moved to Massachusetts, I picked a house near the M-M Trail and within walking distance of Robinson Park, and started exploring the hiking in the area. It was in that first year that I saw an article in the paper about the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club leading a hike out of Backpacking Etc. I held on to that article for over a year, always meaning to look into joining the club. My kids and I were active members of the NAFCA Camping Club that sponsors the Big E Camping Show, and it was here that I finally met Ray Tibbetts. I purchased a three-man tent and sleeping bags from Ray to get my two kids out backpacking with me, and mentioned to Ray that I had been meaning to ask him about the hiking club for the last year or so. Next thing I know, Ray talked me into leading hikes for the club, and before long, had me involved first as the *Bootprints* editor, then Vice President, trail maintenance coordinator, and ultimately, President of the club. See *PaPa Smurf* continued on page 9

“First Sunday of December” Mt. Greylock Hike

by Gary Dolgoff

On Sunday, December 6th, Lori Tisdell, was leading her yearly "First Sunday of December" hike up Mt. Greylock, the highest peak in our home state of Massachusetts.

Now, Lori had assured me on the subway in New York City, following a very long NYC hike two weeks earlier, that there would be ice and snow on the hike, as there has been every year she's led it.

I decided to do that hike. In fact, I had been looking forward to it for months, challenging myself, and with year-long encouragement from Lori, as well as Karen Markham, to stretch myself by doing
See *Mt. Greylock* continued on page 13

The Best Laid Plans of Mice and Men...in the Catskills

by Dick Forrest

On November 14, 2015, Karen Markham and I scheduled a hike to climb Peekamoose and Table Mountains in the Catskill Mountains of New York. We drove, six of us in two cars, approximately two and a half hours to our trailhead in the southern Catskills. We were minutes away from the trailhead, on a relatively narrow, two-laned road, probably within five to ten miles of our destination, when we encountered a lady in a bright yellow raincoat in the road who said that we had to turn back because there was a tree down across the road up ahead. We subsequently learned that there were electrical wires down, and that it would take four to five hours to open the road back up.

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“...there was a tree down across the road ahead...it would take four to five hours to open the road back up.”

~ Dick Forrest

Hiking - Leading and Following

by Lori Tisdell

When I joined PVHC in 2008, I never would have thought that I'd be so involved with the club. And leading hikes? Definitely not! I've been very lucky to see lots of terrific leaders in action over the years. And with a great deal of encouragement and support, I started leading hikes, too. I found I really enjoyed it, and if you're leading a hike, you have to show up! So it's a good way of making sure you don't stay home on the couch. Chip taught me that! I really do love being able to lead hikes and experience new trails, as well as revisit familiar ones. I've made lots of mistakes over the years, but have also, I hope, learned from them. And I've also learned there are times it can be challenging. Things go wrong - people are injured or get in over their head, you miss a trail and get lost, and sometimes not everyone listens. :-0

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“And leading hikes? Definitely not! I've been very lucky to see lots of terrific leaders in action over the years.”

~ Lori Tisdell



“The weather is wonderful - in fact, we are so warm that we’re peeling off some of our outer layers. This is heaven in November.”

~ Cindy Dolgoff

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we technically were not at the beginning of Manhattan – the official point was three blocks north – we took a vote whether or not to double back or just start from 215th Street. Yes! We must start from the very beginning. So we sauntered up to 218th Street and took a group photo. “Let’s go for a little walk!” I said to Gary in my Mickey Mouse voice. That’s what I say to my cat Dee when I take him for a front-yard stroll on his leash.

The long journey begins. We’re walking along, fast. The blocks are melting away quickly at this point – we’re full of energy and engaging in lively conversations. At 165th Street, we leave Broadway and cross over to Riverside Drive. The Hudson River is to our right, and the scenic New York City buildings are to our left. The weather is wonderful - in fact, we are so warm that we’re peeling off some of our outer layers. This is heaven in November.

At around 1:00 p.m., we stop at the Riverbank Playground, which actually has a public restroom, a rarity in NYC. We realize that we’re already up to 142nd Street. That means we have walked 76 blocks already. Many blocks remain. Our group breaks in half – one of the groups leaves Riverside Drive to reconnect onto Broadway, so that Erin’s daughter, Emily, can view Columbia University.

An hour later, everyone converges on 95th and Broadway for a short lunch break. Some of the hikers elect to eat pizza slices at Two Boots Pizza, which I am told was excellent. Me, I’m happy to munch on my peanut butter sandwich, while leaning against a trash can in the warm but fading November sun. One hiker offers ibuprofen, which most of us happily accept. I’m starting to feel creaky in my leg joints, and my arthritic toes are not so comfortable.

Back on the “trail,” which is now Broadway and will be for the duration of the walk, we reach Zabar’s around 2:10 p.m. This is approximately the half-way point.

We debate on whether or not to detour to West Central Park and the
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consensus is – sure, why not? It's a picture-perfect day, and the park is full of throngs of people. We stop briefly to admire the Strawberry Fields monument; then we're back on the road. We can see the Dakota Building from the park. One thing I must note about the walk: we see numerous sites, but we're moving along quickly. "There it is – there it goes."

Central Park West must be setting up for the Thanksgiving Day parade next week. Steel bleachers, blocks long, line the sidewalk. This makes for a welcome, albeit brief, pavement change for our tired feet.

When we reach Columbus Circle (59th Street), we divert into the Time Warner Building, which has a large and clean public restroom. Finding bathrooms was a challenge on the trip. I rate the Time Warner Building as having the best toilet of the day.

In a bizarre, off-hand conversation, we happen upon another group of people who are also walking Manhattan end-to-end. One of the fellows is wearing flip-flops! Is he crazy or what?

Next walking area is Times Square – crazy crowded; can't wait to get through it. We stop at a bench in Union Square around 4:45 p.m. for a brief rest. Set up on the sidewalks are holiday vendor booths displaying interesting merchandise for sale. But we have no time to shop; have to finish our march to the end.

Around 5:30 p.m., we make it to the last of the numbered streets. This means that we have walked 218 blocks. But are we done yet? No! Two miles to go. In one of the oddest sights of the
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"One thing I must note about the walk: we see numerous sites, but we're moving along quickly. 'There it is – there it goes.'"

~ Cindy Dolgoff

Manhattan *continued from page 5*

trip, we peer into what appears to be a vacant office space and spy flocks of painted live chickens! We read on the Internet the next day that they are part of a Manhattan performance. Only in New York City....

Our group has mostly stayed together for the entire journey, but we break off into groups of twos and threes towards the end. It's 6:00 p.m. Lori and I notice the rest of our group waiting across the street from the Staten Island Ferry. "Are we going to summit together?" YES! We walk to the building and take a group photo. Success! All fifteen hikers have completed the entire walk. Inside, there are more clean bathrooms, as well as a view of the Statue of Liberty.

After our semi-climatic finish, we break off into smaller groups and take taxi cabs to Greenwich Village. Miraculously, we all find restaurants with available tables, and we finish our well-deserved dinners at the optimistically-planned end time of 8:30 p.m. Onto the "A Train" subway and back to our cars at the Inwood neighborhood of uptown Manhattan.

Epilogue: Although the journey is 13 miles, we actually walked over 15 miles, probably due to our detour through Central Park. Our trip was full of humor and camaraderie, with few mishaps, notable exceptions being Jeanne's car bumper falling off and Lorraine's hand getting shut in the cab door (she was okay). We located bathrooms. We ate tasty food. No one got left behind.

A wonderful day in NYC! Thanks to Jeanne Kaiser for leading this special hike.
-- Cindy Dolgoff

Notch Hostel *continued from page 1*

after Thanksgiving. There's usually enough snow to make it interesting and pretty, but, generally, not too cold. Karen and I came up with the idea of staying at the Notch Hostel and leading some day hikes. We thought we'd get a few more interested parties if there was the promise of a sleeping indoors in a heated room, real toilets, hot showers and home-made meals. We were thinking 10, and in the end, had 15 participants, plus one extra club member that just happened to be staying at the Hostel that weekend.

The temperatures for the weekend were promising to be much higher than usual - in the mid-40's. Both days were forecast to be warmer, with low winds, and views. Lucky us!

The hikes went through several changes before finally settling on four, two each on Friday and Saturday. Eight of us went up on Friday morning to get an extra hike in before the "big" hikes on Saturday. Karen and Al hiked Sandwich Dome as part of their 100 Highest List. I led Mt. Tecumseh for a group of 6. It is one of
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Notch Hostel *continued from page 6*

the shorter hikes at 5 miles, and is also the shortest of all the 4,000'ers, and not too far from the Hostel. We dropped Karen and Al at their trailhead and went on to ours – fortunately, they were only about 5 minutes apart. Gina had already hiked Tecumseh, but decided to come along anyway - she's already working on her second round! There was also Angela, Eunice, Sandy, Jos and myself.

It was not the usual late November hiking weather. We hiked in short sleeves and kept taking layers off! It was a steady climb, steep in places but not overly so. And many steps placed by trail maintainers - amazing trail workmanship! We had a good view from the summit. It was very different from my first time - there was only a key hole view from the summit. Unfortunately, or not, depending on your POV, illegal cutting was done a few years ago, creating a view from the summit, from a previously limited view.

After our hike we headed over to pick up Karen and Al, who conveniently finished about a minute after we arrived at their trailhead. Perfect timing! We all drove over to the Hostel and checked in - Mike was already there, Rick arrived as we were checking in, shortly after that, Lisa, Rob and Dale, and finally, Shari and Eva, rounding out our group.

Shari and Eva were hiking Mts. Passaconaway and Whiteface, with Tom joining them at the trailhead, for Eva's 48's, while the rest of us were hiking the Osceolas. Some of the group working on their 48's and others were along for the "ride." The Osceolas took some planning. We discussed it for quite some time. I wanted to lead my group on a traverse from Greeley Ponds to Tripoli Road, as I'd never hiked the steeps up to East Peak. And it was shorter! But the car spotting would take a significant amount of time. The rest of the group planned to hike an out-and-back from Tripoli Road doing one or both peaks. In the end, Karen came up with the idea of doing a key exchange. Eureka! Also, she thought a traverse from Tripoli Road would be fun, as she'd never done the part of the trail from the road to the main peak, having hiked the Osceolas only in winter when Tripoli Road is closed. For those of you who don't know, a key exchange is when two groups/people start at opposite ends of a hike, exchange car keys when they meet, and take the other's cars at the end and meet back up. It avoids car spotting. Never a bad thing!

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Notch Hostel *continued from page 7*

Shari and Eva were off very early as their trailhead is much further from the Hostel than ours. Most of us left around 7:30-8:00 a.m. So my group was not at its peak of excitement that morning. In fact, we were downright sluggish, and even a bit cranky, I might add. We barely spoke a word to each other for the first mile and a half! It's a rare occurrence for this group to start off like this - we are generally a talkative, enthusiastic group. Gina even took out her kazoo to try and rouse us, but to no avail! Once we hit the icy areas on the steeps, and had some food and drink, we finally came out of our hiking coma.

The steep trail was very cool with some nice climbing over rocks and boulders. There was only one very short section that we needed to put traction on, to get by. There were a few spots that were supposed to have views, but we just saw clouds with one very limited view through the trees of a mountain with an under-cast. After that, it was done for the day. The forecasted clearing never happened. Such are the White Mts.

We hit East Peak, as well as our stride. Then it was down and to "The Chimney." Just before it, we met up with our counterparts - Karen, Al, Mike, Dale, Rick, Lisa and Rob. Karen, Al and Mike - who were traversing opposite my group, so car keys were exchanged, while we stopped and chatted a bit. Gina and Jos were anxious to see the Chimney and went on ahead to get a look at it. They were excited and couldn't help themselves from starting up. Those two sure love rock climbing! It was not too difficult, as Rick had kicked off the ice that was in a strategic foothold, and we all made our way to the top. After that, we moved easily up the trail to the main peak. We had some fun on the big open ledge, and for the first time that day, actually felt cold. Then we headed down and hit the real ice of the day - lots of it. As a leader, I should have had everyone put on traction, but we could avoid most of it, so we never did put any on. Several of us fell, including Sandy's slide down the ice on all fours. Fortunately, she was saved by Angela's quick reflexes when she caught Sandy's pack and stopped her.



After our hikes, we all met back up at the Hostel for our group dinner. Karen and I had decided on a menu and shopped earlier in the week. Angela and I had a fun time making dinner for the 16 of us, plus our hosts, with help from several others in the group. We made marinated and herbed roasted chicken breast, garlic and shallot jasmine rice, roasted Brussels sprouts with dried

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Notch Hostel *continued from page 8*

cranberries and walnuts, string beans Almandine, a tossed salad (Karen, Al and Rick got this done while Angela and I cleaned up) and garlic bread (thanks Lisa!). We all brought appetizers and dessert to share. You come for the hikes and stay for the food! Justin and Serena, the owners of the Hostel, allowed us full use of the kitchen...as long as we shared! Not really, but there was certainly enough to go around.

As I looked around during and after dinner, it was such nice feeling to see everyone so relaxed and happy, enjoying each other's company. There was lots of camaraderie, laughs, exchanged memories of other trips, and now making new memories. It made me realize again just how lucky we are that there are so many wonderful people in Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. They are so generous and supportive - hard to find a better group of people. And the Hostel is very homey and welcoming with a lovely common room, big dining table, and reading nook, and roomy enough for all of us, plus the other guests.

On Sunday, after our shared breakfast of scrambled eggs with cheese and vegetables, bacon, sausage, home fries, toast and fruit salad (see, the food alone makes it worth the trip!), we all packed up and headed out. Some went into Lincoln and stopped at the Mountain Wanderer and met Steve Smith, and/or checked out Lahouts, and some of us headed on home. It seemed the mountains had a gift for us though, maybe to make up for the lack of views on Saturday. As we drove down route 118, near Moosilauke, the tops of the trees were covered in rime ice with sunlight on them, making them sparkle and stand out against the bright blue sky. Breathtaking! Perfect end to a great weekend. Thanks to Karen for all your hard work to make the weekend run smoothly, as well as all who participated.

-- Lori Tisdell

PaPa Smurf *continued from page 2*



When I first started leading hikes, I tried to come up with a theme for a monthly hike to lead each year. Many of you may recall the first hiking series on "Waterfall hikes of New England." It was on this series that I discovered the plans for the Tully Loop Trail, which prompted our club's involvement in trail maintenance to help finish the trail from Tully Mountain, the first thru-hike of the unfinished loop, and, ultimately, our club's involvement in building the Falls Brook Shelter along

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The construction of the Falls Brook Shelter

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the Tully Loop and NET Trails! If you haven't been to our shelter, it's a must see!



Exploring a crevasse on Mt. Rainier

Or perhaps you may recall the year of the High Points of each of the New England States series? In researching the hikes for this series, I discovered and joined the Highpointers Club, which put in motion a guided hike to the summit of Mt. Rainier, and attempts on the high points of Mt. Gannet in Wyoming and Mt. Hood in Oregon. I currently have 20 state high points under my belt.

One of my favorite hike series was the "Oceans and Sea Shore hikes," that concluded with a week long series of day hikes through every major peak in Acadia National Park in Maine, with a record turn out of club members, and the Grand Acadia Traverse.

A big part of my participation in the hiking community is to give back to trails through teaching good land stewardship and providing trail maintenance and improvement. While on the Conservation Committee in Kingston, New Hampshire, I helped establish their first hiking trail in the town forest created by a private party land donation. During my tenure as VP of the hiking club, I championed the adoption of sections 1 & 2 of the Metacomet-Monadnock trail, where we have constructed bog bridges and stone steps to improve the quality our backyard trail. This trail now is part of the newly created "New England National Scenic Trail."

My first serious backpack with the club was a winter climb of Mt. Marcy, the highest point in New York and the Adirondacks, led by Joe Zawrotny. Two feet of fresh snow on top of several existing feet of snow made for a challenging snowshoe hike, where only two of our large group made the summit. And one of my most memorable hikes was on a summit climb of Mt. Washington, led by Rob Schechtman, in minus thirteen degree weather and 65 mph winds with a wind chill of -75 degrees.

Over the early years of the club, Ed Laroche started our famous "Death March" hikes, where Ed, Rick Briggs and I became great hiking partners. The yearly "Death March" on the Summer Solstice hikes included a Who's Who of America's Hardest Dayhikes, including the iconic NH White Mountain Presidential Traverse in 2003, followed yearly, by the Devil's Path in the Catskills, the Pemi Loop (On the list of America's Hardest Dayhikes - Pemigewasset-Franconia Ridge Loop, White Mountains NH), the MSGT - Monadnock-Sunapee-Greenway Traverse (Two-day 50-mile Solstice Death March), The AT Loop - Old AT meets the new on a 36-mile Solstice Death March loop of the Connecticut Appalachian Trail, the Wapack End-to-Ender - Two-day Solstice Death March of the Wapack Trail, and the Taconic Crest Trail (35.5 mile traverse of the Taconic Crest Trail in western Massachusetts). My longest
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hike in a day was the Appalachian Trail Four-State Challenge (47 miles thru VA, WV, MD & PA) Not on the solstice, but it's a death march, for sure, with a fully loaded backpack.



Summit of Mt. Whitney, CA, highpoint of the Lower 48

Rick, Ed and I continued our close friendship with many backpacking adventures over the years, including our first climb of Mt. Whitney, the highest point in the lower 48 states, Rick's fantastic High Sierra Route section hikes within some of the most breathtaking areas of the western national parks, and many memorable New England backpacking trips in all seasons. Some of the most memorable in winter, and, of course, sharing our love of the sport in many beginner backpacking trips for new to backpacking members.

It was during these years that I found out about the crazy peak baggers climbing all of the NH 4000-foot peaks. When I saw a hike to the White Mountains on the club's schedule one year, I immediately signed up. All my hikes in the Whites had been wonderful peaks, and I looked forward to this one, even though I knew nothing about it. On the ride up to the Whites, I started reading the write-up on the trail to the Hancocks, and read how it had limited views, which would be even less inviting due to the rain. Why, I asked, are we going all the way to the Whites for this peak when there are so many other better ones? It's on the list I was told. I laughed at how silly this seemed, but despite my reluctance to embrace the lists, someone finally pointed out that, without trying, I had already climbed most of the NH 4000. I joined the bandwagon and started finishing up that list. At first reluctant, I soon realized that the list had me hiking out to other locations that seeded my plans for more hikes. Soon I was leading backpacking trips to get to remote spots that I saw on my peak quests, and was exploring more and more of the less visited wonderful areas of the White Mountains.

When I finished the NH list and had hiked over most of the best features in the White Mountains,
See *PaPa Smurf* continued on page 12



PaPa Smurf *continued from page 11*

I decided that it was time to explore something new. The Catskills were nearby, and, for some reason, the PVHC didn't lead many hikes there. I decided I would head hikes to the nearby Catskills to explore! Not knowing anything about the peaks and trails in the area, I decided the Catskill 3500 peak bagger list was a place to start. It was a great way to get started exploring, and the Catskill 3500 list has a bonus - over a third of the list of peaks does not have trails. Therefore, it was a great way to learn map and compass. Knowing that most of the *un-trailed* peaks were difficult bushwhacks without much of a view, I decided it was unlikely that anyone else would enjoy this type of hiking, and I did many of them solo, which really boosted my confidence off trail. And, as in the Whites, I returned to lead some great backpacks for the club to areas I discovered during my Catskill 3500 quest.

Once bitten, it's easy to get sucked into the lists. With the help of Adirondack Annie (Ann Mundy), our Heart Lake summer and John's Brook fall trips to the Adirondacks became a quest to finish the Adirondack 46ers. This was followed by the realization that, with the state high points and the NH 4000 peaks, I was well on my way to completing the New England 4000 footers. So, it was off to Maine to clean up the list, and, by default, to add the New England 111ers to the list. It didn't take long after that to move on to the more difficult peaks of the New England 100 Highest, which includes some of the most remote and difficult to find peaks on the lists, but enough of peak bagging...

In 2009, I got my first taste of thru-hiking, with one of the earliest documented thru-hikes of the M-M Trail (before it became the New England National Scenic Trail), from the Connecticut border to Mt. Monadnock. While only 117 miles in just over five days, it was my longest solo hike and I really enjoyed it. Also in 2009, my job situation changed, and instead of looking for another job, I decided to thru-hike the Long Trail in Vermont, where I encountered snow and ice and the short days of late fall. This was followed by the seldom hiked, 75-mile New Hampshire Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge-Greenway (SRKG) Loop. Putting all my worldly possessions in storage and minimizing my expenses, I then set off on completing my dream of hiking the three, big long distance trails in the

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PaPa Smurf continued from page 12

USA. Remember back in the beginning when I said my brother took me up Mt Washington at the age of 11? Well, it was then that I read about the triple crown, and thought, wouldn't that be a grand goal? I figure, life is short, and you have to take opportunities when they come. Here I was without a job, my kids finished school and were on their own, and no one was dependent on me. Why not go out and hike the dream? If there is one thing thru-hiking teaches you, it's that the most important things in life are not monetary possessions - they are experiences, adventures, and memories that make you happy. So off to the Appalachian Trail, followed by the Pacific Crest Trail, and, ultimately, the Continental Divide Trail for the completion of the Triple Crown.



Appalachian Trail



Pacific Crest Trail



Continental Divide Trail

From ice-climbing and experiencing an avalanche in the Huntington Ravine, to the many other trips with the club, including a hiking tour in Ireland, scuba diving in Dominica, rafting the Grand Canyon, and touring Egypt, the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club has been the biggest part of my life's happiest moments.

As my journey has taken me away from New England, I still cherish the many friendships I've made with the members of the club. While I'm certainly not ready to start climbing un-named and un-climbed peaks in the Himalayas, I have a goal to keep exploring each year. I'm sure I'll see some of you on my next visit to New England, or even out on the trails. You never know when you might run into a fellow hiker in the wild; just ask Gary Dolgoff! On with the adventure. It's another FANTASTIC day on the trail.

-- John Klebes

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somewhat tougher hikes more often than I had been doing. And my favorite hikes are those that ascend to lofty peaks. Who was I to say no?

And that Sunday, off we went, all 18 of us!

I did a lot of last-minute and hurried packing for this hike. Although the temps were going to be in the 40s to low 50s, I was prepared for most anything. With too heavy, as I was to find out

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Mt. Greylock continued from page 13

shortly, gear, and multiple outerwear, a heavy down jacket, no less than three pairs of gloves (don't ask!), plus lots of other stuff, weighed the pack down to, by my estimates, 25 to 30 lbs.!

So here I am with the group, huffing and puffing my way up Greylock. Lori had chosen the most gradual route possible up the mountain. It wasn't steep at all; it just kept on going up, for an elevation gain of 2100+ feet. Lori was gently, and with good, camaraderie and laughter, saying, "You really need to get your gear up-to-date. There's much lighter winter hiking gear available these days! And besides, you're prepared, with all of your gear, for 0 degree weather!" (Now note, I do not consider myself a curmudgeon. So if a hiking comrade gives me good, well-meaning advice, I want to hear it!)

We continued to trek up the gradual hill, as the weather was warming up, and as we were warming up, we were shedding layers like a snake (which is why it's always good to wear layers when hiking, especially uphill).



Finally, Lori could take it no longer. She demanded that I "stop right then and there," in so many words, and said "shed some of that heavy gear!" Four of the ladies on the hike, Lori Tisdell, Gina Geck, Jeanne Kaiser, and Angela Whittaker actually, and quite kindly, relieved me of much of my excess gear, both what I was wearing, and what was in my backpack, and added it to their gear. Angela wore my weighty outer coat in front of her, like it was a papoose, and then we continued to trudge up the hill. My pack, as well as what I was wearing, was considerably lighter.

We got up to the summit, going at a compassionate, though pretty steady, pace. The view from the top, like always, was vast and grand!

At the summit, I was eager to eat my trademark, extra-thick, peanut butter sandwich, which my wife, Cindy, lovingly makes for me before every hike that I go on. I looked for it, but much to my chagrin, I couldn't find it! The kindness of my fellow hikers came to my rescue, including one butter sandwich the next day, I must admit, in another one of my backpack's compartments
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Mt. Greylock *continued from page 14*

Coming down from the mountain, the gradual walk was blissfully uneventful. I felt happy and fulfilled after doing the hike - I really do love to challenge myself. I was very appreciative of the kindness, as well as the camaraderie, of my fellow hikers, especially the hiking ladies who were so gracious, although I never would've expected it, in helping out an admittedly foolish, over-packed hiker.

Plus, I want to give an appreciative shout out to Lori Tisdell, who has been, and continues to be, such an encouraging, though not enabling, and all-around, fun hiking companion, a fearless leader, as well as my hiking barometer.

Hike on!

-- Gary Dolgoff

Catskills *continued from page 3*

Where we encountered the lady in the road was a turnoff for a small parking lot. So we parked and got out, and tried to decide what to do next. One option, which we really didn't consider, since it would take about an hour, was to drive around to the trailhead on the other side of the two mountains. Another option was to find another convenient place to hike. In the parking lot was a kiosk with a map of the Catskills on it. I saw a large area in the northeast corner of the Catskills, and saw the name Kaaterskill. I knew that Kaaterskill High Peak was on the Catskill 3500 Club list. So after briefly talking it over, we decided to give that mountain a try.

We got back in our cars, and drove back to the New York State Thruway. On the way, Al Roman did his best to find the shortest way to the trailhead. He read the Kaaterskill High Peak section in my book, [Hiking the Catskills](#), by Lee McAllister and Myron Steven Ochman, to find out where the suggested trailhead is. After finding the name of the road to the trailhead, Al consulted my "New York State Atlas & Gazetteer" to find our way there. (I don't know about you, but I find it almost impossible to read a detailed atlas, especially in a moving car.) Al did a yeoman's job of getting us to the trailhead, relatively fast. I give him all the credit, as navigator, for accomplishing such a difficult task.

There was a good-sized parking lot at the Kaaterskill High Peak trailhead. Initially, we started our hike by following a road up the mountain. There was a blazed trail at the beginning, which we followed. After a few miles, at about the 3000 ft. elevation level, it seemed that we were on a trail going around the mountain, and not heading up the mountain. Footprints in the light snow stopped, and showed the footprints leading into the woods in the direction of the mountain, but I was leery of leaving our main trail. So we continued on the main trail for another half mile, and seeing that

See Catskills continued on page 16



Catskills *continued from page 15*

there was no side trail to the mountain, we backtracked to the place where the footprints went into the woods. This time, close to that juncture, we met about ten people from the Albany Chapter of the ADK. The group's leader told us how to access an unmarked trail to the summit from a snowmobile trail just higher up the mountain. Since we didn't have a map of the northern Catskills, and hadn't originally intended on hiking this mountain, and after hearing that, I breathed a sigh of relief.

It was a rugged trail to the summit from the snowmobile trail, which paralleled the main trail that we had been on further down the mountain. Essentially, it was bushwhack to the summit. Fortunately we were able to follow the tracks in the snow of previous hikers that had climbed ahead of us. Slippery leaves on the trail and a few steep spots slowed us down, but all six of us persevered to the summit. On the way down, we had a joyous reunion with fellow PVHC club member, John "Papa Smurf" Klebes, and then, further down the mountain, John's buddy, PVHCer Rick Briggs. We had been hoping to hook up and hike with them over the weekend, since John had returned briefly to the area for his work.

The best laid plans of mice and men oft go astray, and they did, but our alternate "Plan B" turned out well that day in the Catskills. And as Al Roman said more than once that day, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."

-- Dick Forrest

Leading and Following *continued from page 3*

Sometimes we forget the basics when it comes to both leading a hike and being part of the group. So in the spirit of goodwill and kindness, I'd like to take some time to remind us all about some the guidelines we occasionally may forget.

Hike the leader's hike

When you sign up for someone's hike, please remember it is the leader's hike. Once your name is on the release form, you become part of a group. And isn't that one of the best parts? I love the social aspect of hiking. If we wanted to hike alone, we would, wouldn't we?

Trail junctions

We've all blown through them at one time or another. But, unless indicated by the leader, everyone must stop at all trail junctions. There are several reasons for stopping.

See Leading and Following continued on page 17

Leading and Following *continued from page 16*

1. To make sure we continue on the correct trail!
2. To insure if there is a hiker having a problem, we aren't spread out unable to communicate. And the hiker having a problem may need help from the group, or the leader needs to adjust the hike.
3. To adjust layers, drink fluids and eat some trail mix.
4. To give everyone a break. And please don't immediately leave once the last hiker gets to the junction, unless the leader indicates it is OK to do so.

Pace

Everyone has their own pace that is most comfortable for them. In a group situation there will be differing paces, but below are averages for the moving rate per hour of club hikes. As a club, we are generally pretty lucky - there isn't a huge difference in the group pace.

1. Most of our club hikes are moderately paced at about a 2-2.25 MPH moving rate over "normal" New England terrain - ascending and descending wooded trails with rocks, roots, etc. Flat terrain generally is 3-3.5 MPH moving rate. On a steep, rocky, bouldery, leaf or icy-covered trail it could be 1 MPH moving rate. The harder the terrain, the slower the pace.
2. PVHC hikes are for everyone unless the leader has deemed someone is not ready for the hike listed. Faster hikers will generally end up waiting. That is, unless the group is perfectly matched. So patience is sometimes needed when the group has a variety of paces.
3. On the flip side, if the hiker is meandering along and far behind but not having any issues and the ability to go faster, then they should pick up the pace.

Leading

PVHC does not require any special training to lead hikes, but we do a pretty damn good job. As leaders, we all make mistakes sometimes. Please forgive us - we aren't professionals. But here are some things to remember...

1. Be prepared. We're not Boy Scouts, but it's a good thing to do! Have maps, directions, etc.
2. Don't be afraid to lead!
 - a. If you think someone isn't ready for your hike, it's OK to tell them so...in a really nice way. Suggest another hike on the schedule, something a little less difficult. If you're leading a 12-mile hike with 3,000 feet elevation gain and the person asking to join your hike has only done city walks, it's not gonna be pretty. And there are safety issues to consider.

See Leading and Following continued on page 18



Leading and Following *continued from page 17*

- b. If your group isn't following your directions, let them know in a nice way – (i.e., don't follow HB's example). I'm trying to become a kinder gentler version of myself!
3. If someone has a good suggestion, consider it. It may make the hike even more enjoyable.
4. If you have a newer member on your hike, take some time to assess their level of experience. We want to make their first hike with us so enjoyable they can't wait to do it again!
5. Assign a sweep or be the sweep, and have someone who knows the trails up front. This is especially important in a large group (10 or more), or you know the group will be spread out.
6. If there's a bigger issue going on with pacing, or someone just isn't able to keep up, the group may have to be split up. I've done it more than once, as long as there's 1 or 2 remaining at the finish to make sure everyone gets out safely.

Follow the leader

1. Each leader has his or her style of leadership. Some are very laid back; others a bit more controlling. You all know who I'm talking about, right? As "followers," we should try to make it easier on leaders so they will continue to lead us.
2. It's OK to make suggestions to the leader, but don't be offended if they don't take your suggestion. The leader has usually planned things out ahead of time. But if you absolutely know there is a problem or issue with the leader's plan, please go ahead and tell them.

Leading and following

We need both leaders and followers, so we should help each other out when we can. Be respectful, courteous and compassionate. It's all about having a good time, getting some great exercise, and enjoying the outdoors and each other.

Happy Hiking!

-- Lori Tisdell

2015 PVHC Holiday Party

"Thank you Chip, Brenda, and Marie for another great holiday party! All your hard work showed in how smoothly everything went. Good food, good friends, good times!" ~ Lori Tisdell

"Exceptional! You outdid yourself, Lori. Hours and hours of hard work. I'm very impressed! The slideshow really brings the club together annually, and encourages those who don't hike, to get out on the trails with those who hike much more frequently." ~ Dick Forrest



2015 PVHC Member of the Year: Jeanne Kaiser



Our Recently Updated PVHC Logo

Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

Jan. Renewals

Katherine Campbell
 Ken & Kim Carson
 Paula Christian
 Jim Corker
 Kathleen Damon
 Gary & Cindy Dolgoff
 Carole DuPont
 Carol Fox
 Sue French
 Thomas Harrington
 Steve Henderson
 Janet Howard
 Ted Jarowski
 Michael & Jeanne Kiendzior
 Kim Lange
 Diane Moriarty
 Harry (Chip) Pray
 Mady Schorsch
 Elaine Tryjankowski
 Ann Wood

Feb. Renewals

Ali Baldwin
 Amy & Len Cohen
 Steve Daly
 Misa Dargie
 Richard Harrington
 Jeannie Jones
 Susan Jones
 Pat Jorczak
 Paul Kozikowski
 Paul & Maxine Lessard
 Paul Plasse
 Lewis Popper
 Jane & Rick Ricci
 Helaine Selin
 Carol Vanderheiden

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.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

November

Lindsley Colligan
 Brenda Davies
 Joyce Korona
 Karen Leary
 Teri O'Connor
 Mark Ruddock
 Martha Spiro
 Emily Squires
 Jeannette Tokarz

December

Ted McElwain
 J B DeJean



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Every Mon. (MA) Mornings w/ Chip
- Every Wed. (MA) Evening walks with Marcia
- Every Thurs. (MA) Afternoon walks with Ruth
- Every Thurs. (MA) Mornings w/ Harry & Ashley Reservoir evening
- Jan 9 (CT) Penwood St. Forest
- Jan 16 (MA) Noho End-to-End
- Jan 23 (CT) Bear Mt.
- Jan 30 (CT) Steep Rock Preserve
- Feb 6 (CT) Tunxis Trail
- Feb 13 (NY) Blackhead Mt/Catskills
- Feb 20 (MA) Mt. Tom
- Feb 27 (MA) Sledding Party/Potluck
- Mar 5 (VT) Brattleboro Museum
- Mar 6 (MA) Bear Swamp/Pancake Breakfast

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings:
 Jan. 5, 2016, 7 pm at **FBC**
 Feb. 2, 2016, 7 pm at **FBC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is Feb. 20th, 2016

**** 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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