



# Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the  
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

## **PVHC: A Wonderful and Rich History**

by President Lori Tisdell

I often find it difficult to think of a new topic to write about every two months. This month was no exception. But then I thought about how long PVHC has been around. This year marks PVHC's 32nd year in existence – pretty amazing for a club that started out in 1991 and by the end of 1992 had 30 members. Occasionally I will go into the *Bootprints* archives to see what was happening way back when. Long before I was a member...or even thought hiking would ever be a part of my life.

The first newsletter in the archives is from April, 1992, which had the title *Western Mass Outdoor Adventures Hiking Club Monthly Newsletter*. *Bootprints* is certainly less of a mouthful. Elections had been held the previous meeting and there were four positions with one unfilled. I guess even then it was hard to get people to serve on the board. Ed Lizotte was president, Jeff Greb, Treasurer, and Ray Tibbetts, activity director, secretary was "vacant." So, Ed was going to have to be secretary too! Thank you, Lani, I wouldn't want to have to do both jobs. Some things haven't changed so much. Plans for the month included a Map & Compass Class, an AT hike, and a *What to pack* clinic.

In May, 1992, there were 20 active members. Deb and Cheryl have nearly that many people regularly participating in their Wednesday hikes! The calendar of events was in the monthly newsletter and had nine activities. We have that many in a week now! I wonder if Ray Tibbetts (PVHC founder) could have imagined back then how the club would grow over all these years?

In August, 1992, the club adopted a trail in Beartown State Forest to maintain. It was an overnight hike/backpack to scout and do maintenance. The See *President's Corner continued on page 2*

Volume 27, Issue 2

Mar, 2023

### **Inside this issue:**

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***President's Corner*** continued from page 1

newsletter had an article on first aid kits, a list of items, when to restock, etc. Maybe we should have an updated reprint of that article. Founder Ray Tibbitts was in the hospital with a broken back but was doing well.

By October of 1992 the club was starting to form committees for Fund Raising, Public Relations and Trail Maintenance. Ray was back at the store and attending meetings. There were 12 activities scheduled for Oct-Dec. That month, the informative article was about layering to regulate your temperature when hiking in the cold weather.

The newsletter name continued to evolve. It changed to *Backer News: Western Mass Outdoor Adventures Hiking Club Quarterly Newsletter* to *The Backpacker News, PVHC Quarterly Newsletter* and finally *Bootprints!*

In January, 1993, there were 34 members, our bank account held \$385 (we currently have \$9000+) after expenditures. PVHC had insurance through Ed Lizotte and his business because the club couldn't have afforded it back then! Some of the hikes that winter were Mt. Greylock, Mt. Alander, Holland Glen, Beartown and Seven Sisters.

In 1999, the club decided to start recognition awards at the annual holiday party. The first ones were given to Dave Rotundo, John Klebes, Mike Gross, and Jennifer Lamothe. In February, 2001, Gary Dolgoff led a dinner, movie and walk night. Some things never change. In that year our first website was launched, it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual NYC Bus Trip and Dick Forrest was even then writing book reviews. The club officers were Rob Schectman, President, John Klebes, VP, Ann Marie Visconti, Secretary, and Shari Cox, Treasurer.

It's been more than 20 years since then and we are stronger than ever. Though our membership was down to 201 during the height of the Pandemic we are currently at 270+. Thanks to all the members who made that happen and keep us going year after year. Pioneer Valley Hiking Club has a wonderful and rich history. I encourage members to check out the archives and read some of the old *Bootprints* and previous incarnation of the newsletter. And once again, thanks to Dick Forrest for all  
See *President's Corner* continued on page 3

*“Though our membership was down to 201 during the height of the Pandemic we are currently at 270+.”*

*~President Lori Tisdell*

**President's Corner** continued from page 2  
your hard work keeping *Bootprints* going!

**Fun facts from our founding year, 1991:**

Top grossing Movie – *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*

Highest rated Television show – *Cheers*

Top song – *(Everything I Do) I Do It for You, Bryan Adams*

Best Picture – *Dances with Wolves*

The New York Giants won the Super Bowl

--President Lori Tisdell



Smurfy advice for the trail...

## **Lions, Tigers and Bears, Oh My!**

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

*"As a known hiker I routinely get the question, "Aren't you afraid of encountering a bear?"*  
~ PaPa Smurf

Well, maybe not tigers. But certainly mountain lions and bear sightings are common in the United States. As a known hiker I routinely get the question, "Aren't you afraid of encountering a bear?" So, today's column is about what to do if you encounter wildlife on your hiking adventure.

Bears are one of the number one fears that seem to come up with new hikers. Running a close second are snakes and moose. Bear attacks are quite rare and rattlesnake bites, while serious, are also very rarely fatal. More likely than not your encounters with wild animals will add to the adventure.

While I was only half joking about mountain lions, I have had three encounters so far in my travels, they are not common in the USA outside the northern mid-western states. But in New England black bears typically become active in late February to mid-March. Just about the time you are reading this article. Though bears can be active any time of the year, including occasionally during the winter hibernation.

What would you do if you encounter a black bear on your hike? I'm going to use the black bear as an example but almost everything I suggest should also be applicable for any wildlife you encounter in the woods. Animal encounters are both exciting and potentially dangerous. And the danger is probably greater to the wildlife you encounter than to you. So stay calm and be a good forest visitor.

*"Animal encounters are both exciting and potentially dangerous."*  
~ PaPa Smurf

### **Animal encounters:**

I like to think of animal encounters as a real blessing. An opportunity not to be scared of but happy that you could experience nature's beauty. But, the number one rule is not to startle the wildlife. In most  
*See Lions, Tigers and Bears continued on page 5*

**Lions, Tigers and Bears** *continued from page 4*

cases wildlife hear you coming and move out of the way long before you see them. If they don't have time to hide they may just freeze in place hoping you don't see them. If you are lucky enough to encounter such an animal just enjoy the encounter and don't scare it by overreacting.

If you come across an animal it's probably because it was busy feeding or it was distracted and didn't hear you coming. This is especially true in areas where background noise, such as babbling brooks, waterfalls, or windy areas, mask the sounds of your approach. Most of my encounters have been in areas, such as berry patches or apple trees, where a bear was feeding and was too busy to notice my approach; or when I was very quiet and hiking alone, not making much noise, or near a loud source of water by a stream or brook. Once I found a bear busy eating termites out of a dead tree and got a wonderful movie before realizing that it was better to let her know I was there and move on gracefully.

When you do encounter a bear (or moose, snake, coyote, etc.) just be still, talk calmly and friendly to the animal to make sure it knows you are there, then slowly back away from the animal to show you are not a threat. Make no sudden moves and staying calm should be all that is necessary to not spook the animal. After you are safe distance away, then is the time to try and get that camera out a take a picture of your wonderful wildlife encounter, if you can. But don't ever approach closer after you first encounter them, just for a picture. That will be perceived as a danger to the animal, making its response unpredictable and dangerous.

It is best if you make some noise, talking back and forth, tapping  
See *Lions, Tigers and Bears* continued on page 6

*"If you come across an animal it's probably because it was busy feeding or it was distracted and didn't hear you coming."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*



*"Remember that you are not the only one being startled when you encounter an animal."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

*"I find the most difficult bear is a bear that has become habituated to people."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

***Lions, Tigers and Bears*** continued from page 5

hiking poles, etc., will give the bears and other wildlife plenty of notice that you are in the area. Remember that you are not the only one being startled when you encounter an animal. The stress on the animal is significant. If a bear, moose, or deer bolts into the woods it risks bumps and bruises, broken legs, and may alert other predators of the animal to its presence and may be in a weakened state just from running from you. And it wastes precious calories that are hard to replace at certain times of the year when food is in short supply. Scaring a wild animal doesn't just endanger you by its unpredictable behavior but greatly stresses and endangers them, as well. Try to not scare the wildlife anymore than necessary should you encounter them.

Female bears stay with their cubs for two years and are very protective of their young. Getting between a mother and her cubs will likely be very upsetting for her and she will typically chase the cubs up a tree to protect them. It's very unlikely that she will rush unless she feels cornered, so don't panic. Just be aware that she is probably much more afraid of you and just wants to keep you away from her cubs.

I find the most difficult bear is a bear that has become habituated to people. They can be mostly found near trash cans at trailheads and rest areas, heavily used campsites, and areas where they have become accustomed to finding a reliable handout or unprotected food. As the bear becomes used to people their natural fear is replaced with an opportunity instinct to get food from you.

I have had such bears follow me on the trail, stalk around my campsite trying to get to food when I'm not looking, or even just  
See *Lions, Tigers and Bears* continued on page 7

***Lions, Tigers and Bears*** continued from page 6

hangout waiting for an opportunity. I've had to resort to yelling and screaming and making loud noises to chase it away, which is usually successful. Just be sure to secure your food supplies because it might come back. Do NOT allow the bear access to your food. Getting your food will only encourage the bear and make the problem worse for others.

This is one of the reasons it's sometimes better to camp in less used areas, as not only bears but other animals including mice and rats become common visitors looking to score a meal. So keep a clean camp and don't let animals get rewarded by being able to get into your food or trash.

Wildlife encounters that result in attacks on humans are very rare. Statistically, in general, there are very few deaths or injuries to hikers. But of the accidents and incidents that do happen they are likely falls and slips, medical emergencies, such as heart attacks, drownings, or environmental causes like hypothermia. All of these are rare events but much more likely than wildlife attacks. You are more likely to win the lottery than be hurt in a wildlife incident, and then, it's more likely an allergic reaction to a bee sting or poisonous snake than a bear. Bear attacks are at the bottom of the list of likely risks you will encounter.

There are two major wildlife exceptions that include rabid animals and grizzly/brown bears. If you see an animal that seems unusually unafraid of you and active during the daytime it could be rabid. Give any animal a wide space if it's acting rabid. Grizzly/brown bears are rare and only in the northwest areas of the USA. In the very few places that have grizzly/brown bears you will most likely hear special warnings and suggested behavior from the park service around such trails. See *Lions, Tigers and Bears* continued on page 8



PaPa Smurf

*"Wildlife encounters that result in attacks on humans are very rare."*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

***Lions, Tigers and Bears*** continued from page 7

In general, if a black bear or other animal is acting aggressively toward you you can try and make yourself look as big as you can by standing tall



and waving your hands. If the black bear still attacks just play dead and it should leave you alone. The only exception is a brown/grizzly bear, where if it were to attack you, you should definitely fight back or use bear spray. Such aggressive confrontations are unlikely and most animal encounters will end with the animal fleeing in fear or just quietly wandering away.

Keep a calm head and you should be rewarded with an opportunity to observe nature's wonderful wildlife without fear; especially if you have your camera ready.

~PaPa Smurf

(If you have a suggestion for future topics or a hike-related question you would like covered in this column send a note to

[john.klebes@gmail.com](mailto:john.klebes@gmail.com))

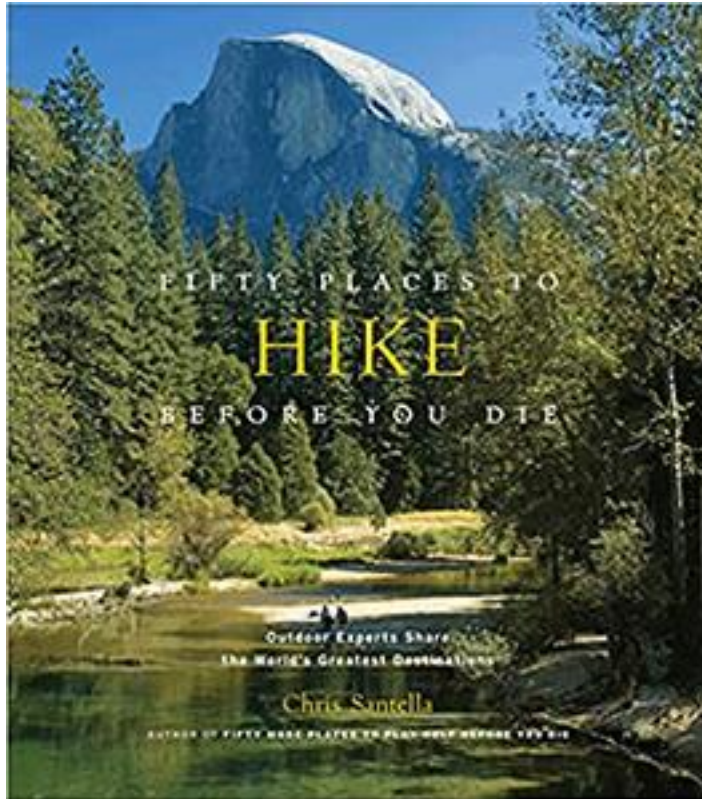


Book Review by Dick Forrest:

**Fifty Places to Hike Before You Die: Outdoor Experts Share the World's Greatest Destinations,**

by Chris Santella

I can't say that I'm a great book reader - I've got a friend who consistently reads over a hundred books a year. However, Fifty Places to Hike Before You Die, by Chris Santella, is one of the most interesting books I've ever read. Perhaps because it involves my passion, which is hiking. Incidentally, Chris Santella has also written a whole "50



Places" series of books, including 50 Places to Sail Before You Die, 50 Places to Practice Yoga Before You Die, and amusingly, 50 Places to Drink Beer Before You Die, among others.

The author, Chris Santella, consults with some of the leading expedition leaders, naturalists, and adventure travel writers to come up with his 50 places to hike around the world. Many of these places that he  
See *50 Places to Hike* continued on page 10

*"The author, Chris Santella, consults with some of the leading expedition leaders, naturalists, and adventure travel writers to come up with his 50 places to hike around the world."*

*~ Dick Forrest*



*"What's great about this book is that Chris Santella may not have gone to all of these places but he talks to people who know and appreciate these places intimately."  
~Dick Forrest*

*"Years ago, I invited one of Chris Santella's 50 consultants to a Pioneer Valley Hiking Club meeting and he came and spoke to our club."  
~ Dick Forrest*

### **50 Places to Hike** continued from page 9

features in his book are in the United States/North America. I can't say that I have spent excessive amounts of time in any of these places but here are a number from the book that I've gone to (in no particular order): Tennessee/North Carolina: Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Alberta, Canada: Banff National Park; Arizona: Grand Canyon National Park; Maine: Acadia National Park; Maine: Baxter State Park; Montana - Whitefish: Glacier National Park; and, lastly, Vermont: The Long Trail.

What's great about this book is that Chris Santella may not have gone to all of these places but he talks to people who know and appreciate these places intimately. And at the end of each of the 50 short chapters he adds an "If You Go" section, which includes 4 important things to know about a place: "Getting There," "Best Time to Visit," "Accommodations," and "Guides/Outfitters."

I think of some of the people in our hiking club or others who I know who have been to different parts of the world featured in this book. For instance, former club member Marcia Kelly took people to the Amalfi Coast in Italy and the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco. A number of club members have done the Haute Route in Switzerland. A family friend has hiked in the alps of Slovenia. I think of one hiking club member who, with his brothers, has hiked in a part of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Great Smoky Mountains. Another friend recently told me about his experience on the island of Kauai, one the Hawaiian Islands, and that he's hiked a portion of the Kalalau Trail there, though he didn't remember the name of the trail when he told me about it. Another club member who completed the Pacific Crest Trail traversed through North Cascades National Park in Washington state. So it's a big world that we live in and there are so many destinations around the world where we can enjoy wilderness hiking.

Years ago, I invited one of Chris Santella's 50 consultants to a Pioneer Valley Hiking Club meeting and he came and spoke to our club. His name is Michael Lanza. Michael Lanza spoke about and  
See *50 Places to Hike* continued on page 11

**50 Places to Hike** *continued from page 10*

promoted his new book, at the time, called New England Hiking. Currently, Michael Lanza is a freelance writer and photographer and is the Northwest editor of *Backpacker* magazine. Michael Lanza likes the remoteness, the bunch of wilderness areas within the park, and limited access to the two million acre North Cascades National Park in Washington state. From the chapter, Washington – Marblemount: North Cascades National Park, the park is home to more than 300 glaciers, 120 alpine lakes, almost 400 miles of trails, and abundant wildlife/fauna, all within a morning's drive of Seattle. Lanza details a time when he and his wife climbed ice-clad, 10,778 foot Mt. Baker, the highest point in the park. The weather was so bad that they set up their tent and tried to stay warm, but the weather cleared and they made their way to the summit, where they had the summit to themselves on a popular mountain. It was a special moment for them.

50 Places to Hike Before You Die, originally published in October, 2010, is a fascinating book with fascinating stories. From the introduction, Chris Santella "interviewed a host of people closely connected to the walking world and asked them to share some of their favorite experiences."

--Dick Forrest

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~ Dick Forrest



## **Future Events in 2023**

**March 20-22** - (VT) Merck Forest led by Karen Markham and Rick Briggs

**April 21-23** - (NH) 52 With a View (WAV) led by Jim Brown

**May 19-21** - (NH) White Mt. Greenleaf Hut Trip led by Karen Markham

**June 23-25** - (NH) White Mt. Sampler organized by Al Goodhind

**July 14-16** - (NY) ADK Heart Lake led by Dick and Sue Forrest

**August 20** - PVHC Annual Picnic organized by Pat Davison

**September 11-15** - (ME) Acadia National Park led by Erin Squires and Lori Tisdell

**September 19-25** - (ME) Maine Camping Trip at Lily Bay State Park organized by Karen Markham

**September 23** - (NY) NYC Trip, led by Jeanne Kaiser and Gary Dolgoff

**September 29-October 1** - (NY) Johns Brook Lodge (JBL) led by Karen Markham

**October 16-20** - (MA) Cape Cod Trip led by Cheryl Stevens and Deb Bombard (Currently Full)

**December 9** - PVHC Annual Holiday Party organized by Karen Markham, Al Roman, and Lani Giguere

## PVHC 2023-2024 Executive Board



Left to Right: Lori Tisdell, President; Erin Squires, Vice President; Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer; Lani Giguere, Secretary

## **Fun Pin Awards for Completing Hikes**

PVHC has started a new Fun Pin Award for participating in hikes with the club. There are three pins that members can earn:

1. **10 Hikes with PVHC**
2. **10 Mountains/Summits with PVHC**
3. **10 Trails with PVHC**

There is no double or triple dipping. One hike can be used for just one hike or summit or trail. You can count weekly hikes, summits or trails more than once if you do them on different dates. Examples - the Monday Morning hike can be used several times in the hikes log as long as you do them on different dates, Mt Holyoke can be listed several times as long as it is hiked on different dates, same with trails.

We hope you have fun hiking with PVHC and earning your Pins!

The logs for each pin are posted on the club website. Once completed you may turn it in at a club meeting for your pin award.

## **Slide Show Photos**

Please send all slide show photos for the 2023 PVHC Holiday Party multimedia slide show to the following email address:  
pvhcpictures@gmail.com

## Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

### Mar Renewals

Bob & Laura Bishop

Kathleen Bishop

Debbie Bombard &  
Cheryl Stevens

Jeff Briggs

Kay Byington

Patty Carmody

Mike & Gail Carrier

Theresa Corey

Connie Dawson

Dan Harrington

David King

John Klebes

Edmund Marrone

Margaret McLaughlin

Lorraine Plasse

Thomas Pospisil

Linda Quesnel

Greg Socha & Tracy Wil-  
son

Maryellen Sullivan

Charles Vanasse

Susan Wills

Kevin & Robin Withers

Denis Wogan

### Apr Renewals

Jacki Barden

Marianne Baush

Karon Belunas

Bernice & Elbert Bowler

Virginia Brown

Norma Casillas

Dorrie Christman

Jessica Daniels

Jane Glushik

Bryan Goodwin & Joan  
DelPlato

Peter Haas

Barbara Havlicek

Susan McGurk

Lori McMahan

Robert Morgan

Asa & Per Nilsson

Tom Pedersen

Joni Sexauer

Albert Shane

Jacqueline Sheehan

Susan Young

Kathy Zeiben

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:

Peggy Tibbitt

413 South Gulf Rd.

Belchertown, MA 01007

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

## Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Lori Tisdell, President

Erin Squires, Vice President

Peggy Tibbitt, Treasurer

Lani Giguere, Secretary

Ray Tibbetts, Founder

## Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Lori Tisdell

Backpacking Advisor: Rick Briggs

Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman

Club Website Editor: Dick Forrest

Non-Member E-mail Coordinator: Rob Schechtman

Club E-mail Coordinator: Lori Tisdell

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

### Jan

Rebekah Anderson & Rich Baker  
Joanie Bowen  
Linda & Steve Jones  
Jessica LaCroix  
Susie Macrae  
Liz Massa  
Deb Neubauer & Doug Donnell  
Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak  
Karen Scagnelli  
Pat Wadsworth  
Steven Whitaker  
Isaac Yglesias

### Feb

Maria Copoulos  
Maria Davis  
Debora Eggleston  
Kay Flatten  
Shalan Glenn  
Hall/Jay Katherine/Jonathan  
Charlotte Hansen  
Brigitte Holt  
Jim & Gen Katz/Kleinman  
Therese Moriarty  
Mays/DeCain Pamela/Donald  
Susan Myers  
Lisa O'Brien  
Joanne Powers  
Nancy Rapisarda  
Suzanne Roberts  
Nancy Seguin  
Patty Shillington

### UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Mondays Morning hike
- Tuesdays Morning hike, evening hike
- Wednesdays Morning hike
- Thursdays Morning hike
- Fridays
- Saturdays Morning hike
- Sundays Morning hike
- Apr 4 (MA) Club Meeting
- Mar 2 (MA) Club Meeting
  
- PVHC <https://teamup.com/kszb8qkbizhndt3qjt7>
- Schedule of Events

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings

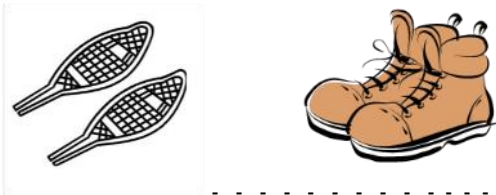
April 4, 7 p.m. at **ROC**  
 May 2, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

**ROC - Red Oak Church, 337 Piper Road, West Springfield**

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is April 20, 2023

**\*\* Check out our club website 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)



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

