



Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

An Honor to be Elected President

by President Erin Squires

First, I would like to start by saying thank you to everyone who voted for me. It is an honor to be elected as the President of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. This club has been an amazing force in my life. I have made wonderful connections and lasting friendships. The adventures I have been on have helped me to see that I am strong and I can accomplish anything I set my mind to. Now I am tasked with giving back to a club that has given me so much.

It is also a great honor to be working with Vice President Ed Marrone, Secretary Brenda Doucette and returning Treasurer Judy Alfano. We have been on many hikes together and have enjoyed each other's company. Together you can be assured that the club is in great hands.

This year is the club's 34th year. The e-board has had its first meeting and we are talking about the mark we would like to make on the club this year. We have a very strong idea on what we would like to accomplish but it is the early days yet. Once we have formulated what our goal is and how we plan to get there we will share our exciting plans with everyone.

Looking forward to a great year.

Erin

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“Winter is a time of magical views, crisp air, and if you are lucky, a wonderland of ice and snow.”

~ PaPa Smurf

“There are different degrees of frostbite but basically it’s when your skin and underlying tissues freeze.”

~ PaPa Smurf

Smurfy advice for the trail...

Frostbite

by John “PaPa Smurf” Klebes

Winter is a time of magical views, crisp air, and if you are lucky, a wonderland of ice and snow. I remember playing outside as a kid till we couldn’t feel our hands and ears. Cheeks rosy red and the tips of our ears white as snow. Coming inside I remember my hands and ears burning as they slowly warmed. The first signs of frostnip. Both young and foolish, it’s fortunate that we, as kids, were more resilient and that we didn’t do any lasting damage.

While chills that slowly creep into your hands and fingers can take some of the fun out of a hike, it doesn’t stop most of us from having a great time. But, the risks of frostbite are real. Having done many climbs up high peaks in winter I have pushed the limits myself and done some light damage. It’s easy to cross the line and risk frostbite.



What is Frostbite?

There are different degrees of frostbite but basically it’s when your skin and underlying tissues freeze. Recognizing the symptoms early is crucial to preventing permanent damage. At first, the cold affects only the top layers of the skin. This mild form of frostbite is called “frostnip.” The signs include numbness, tingling, and reddened or pale skin. As the skin warms, it can be painful, but it doesn’t cause permanent skin damage. It is usually easily reversible if warmed in time. Think of it like a case of sunburn.

Frostbite continued on page 3

Frostbite continued from page 2

As the cold penetrates deeper and freezing extends into lower tissues the skin becomes white and hard and may even start to feel warm, which is a real sign of trouble. The tissue, nerves and blood vessels are freezing. Rewarming will be painful and blisters may develop and may result in



permanent damage. Even after recovery and healing the areas hurt by frostbite may become much more susceptible to freezing in the future.

Finally, severe frostbite results in deep tissues freezing. The skin turns white or blue-gray and you no longer feel sensations of cold or discomfort. Skin and tissues have begun to die. Permanent damage has occurred and there is the potential for loss of fingers, toes, and surrounding tissue. As the area is rewarmed blisters form and the skin turns black and hard as it dies.

Prevention

Limiting exposure to the cold is the first line of defense. Clothing that wicks to keep moisture from conducting heat away is a key feature of most winter layering systems. A wicking layer, followed by an insulating layer to keep heat in, and a cover layer of wind and water protection should be your go-to clothing options for winter.

Exposed skin is the first place that frostbite will take hold. Be ready with a hat that covers your ears, and use gloves and mittens. In extreme cold or windy conditions, even that is not enough. Be prepared with a balaclava, a neck scarf, and even ski goggles. If you find exposed skin that is turning white or bright red it's time to cover up or move inside.

Frostbite continued on page 4

"As the cold penetrates deeper and freezing extends into lower tissues...."

~ PaPa Smurf

"Finally, severe frostbite results in deep tissues freezing."

~ PaPa Smurf

"Exposed skin is the first place that frostbite will take hold."

~ PaPa Smurf



“So pay attention if someone else says that you display warning signs, and be sure to look out for others, as well.”

~ PaPa Smurf

“If you suspect frostbite act promptly to prevent further damage.”

~ PaPa Smurf

Frostbite *continued from page 3*

Block the wind from exposed surfaces and keep moving to stay active. Movement generates heat that can keep warm blood flowing to the extremities.

Detection

At the first signs of redness or pain on your skin, the CDC advises getting out of the cold and protecting any exposed skin, as this could be the early stages of frostbite. Other indicators include white or grayish-yellow skin, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, and numbness. It may be difficult to



detect frostbite on yourself because the frozen tissue on your skin is numb. So pay attention if someone else says that you display warning signs, and be sure to look out for others, as well.

Treatment of Frostbite

If you suspect frostbite act promptly to prevent further damage. Limit further exposure by moving to a warmer environment. If it’s not possible to easily get into a sheltered area, at the very least, add layers of insulation and/or heat. You can wrap your face using an extra tee shirt as a scarf, stuff your hands in your jacket and under your armpits, and use a spare pair of socks as mittens. Let others know you need help. Use of chemical hand or feet warmers are also a good option.

Once in a sheltered area remove wet clothing and warm the affected area. Avoid rubbing as this can do more damage. You can use slightly warm water but not hot water to gradually warm extremities. Avoid warming too quickly. Elevate hands or feet to improve blood flow and

Frostbite continued on page 5

Frostbite continued from page 4

limit swelling. Protect any parts that have frozen from refreezing. Once thawed, the tissue will easily refreeze.

Summary

Prevention is always the best approach but knowing how to recognize the warning signs and applying proper treatment can minimize the lasting risks of frostbite damage. Remember: numbness, tingling, and pale or hardened skin means it's time to act.



See also previous articles on "Hypothermia" (November, 2019, *Bootprints*) and "Warm Hands & Feet" (January, 2020, *Bootprints*)

-- PaPa Smurf

(If you have a suggestion for future topics or a hike-related question you would like covered in this column, please send a note to john.klebes@gmail.com)

*"Remember:
numbness, tingling,
and pale or hardened
skin means it's time to
act."*

~ PaPa Smurf



Websites of Interest Related to Hiking and Nature (chosen from YouTube videos)

by Dick Forrest

One of the websites I've chosen below has a title "You Don't Need to Watch Hiking Videos to Hike." I agree with that statement – you have to actively participate in hiking as much as possible. Life is too short to not experience hiking, if you're able, and there are scads of hiking videos/adventures online. So get out there and just do it, as the Nike slogan advises. But if, by chance, you are home in front of a computer screen the following videos might be of interest to watch. If you watch only one of these videos I would recommend the TED talk, "How I Imitate Nature's Voices I Snow Raven I TED." This particular video will give you a reason to get outdoors and listen to the natural world. And please don't overlook the sage advice of PVHC member John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes, as well, whose online articles appear in this and past issues of *Bootprints*:

Rescue in the White Mountains:

https://www.outdoors.org/resources/amc-outdoors/history/rescue-in-the-white-mountains/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=SRCH-NB-Re-sources&utm_content=640375788846&utm_term=&campaign=701Ht0000021JIHIAU&gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIyYWTnfjmiwMVki7UAR3iJx4ZEAAAYASAAEgK CdPD BwE

Two Hikers Stranded Overnight on Mt. Washington & Hikers Who Inspire Me:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS85RfwTgrU>

Freezing hikers stuck in waist-deep snow rescued during Mt. Washington whiteout:

<https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/06/us/hikers-rescued-mount-washington/index.html>

How I Imitate Nature's Voices I Snow Raven I TED:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3AU44HfpfE>

The Hiking Life: Trail Guides, Gear Reviews, and Backpacking Trips:

<https://www.thehikinglife.com/resources/websites/>

Websites of Interest continued on page 7

Websites of Interest *continued from page 6*

India hikes: Treks that transform lives

https://indiahikes.com/blog/ted-talks-on-hiking?videoId=section_e7n3qRvGB7s

3 Hours of Ambient Silent Hiking:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyQQJWmV1LE>

You Don't Need to Watch Hiking Videos to Hike:

<https://www.outsideonline.com/outdoor-adventure/hiking-and-backpacking/you-dont-need-watch-hiking-videos-hike/>

PVHC Newsletter Archive (Articles by club member and Triple Crowner John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes):

<https://pioneervalleyhikingclub.org/newsletter-archives/>

-- Dick Forrest



Future Club Events

2025

March 29-30 - (VT) Fondue Backpack, Stratton Pond Shelter organized by Karen Markham

April 19 - (NY) NYC Day Trip organized by Jeanne Kaiser, Gary Dolgoff & Lori Tisdell

May 18 - (MA) Spring Kick-Off organized by Erin Squires, Ed Marrone, Judy Alfano & Brenda Doucette

May 23-25 - (NH) White Mt. annual hut trip to Lonesome Lake organized by Karen Markham

June 20-22 - (NH) White Mountain Sampler organized by Jeanne Kaiser & Lori Tisdell

August 31-Sept 5 - (ME) Lily Bay State Park Maine Camping Trip organized by Karen Markham

September 18-21 - (NY) Johns Brook Lodge Backpack organized by Karen Markham

October 20-24 - (MA) Cape Cod Trip organized by Cheryl Stevens & Debbie Bombard

December 6 - (MA) Holiday Party organized by Karen Markham, Al Roman & Lani Giguere

PVHC 2025-2026 Executive Board



Left to Right: Brenda Doucette, Secretary; Judy Alfano, Treasurer;
Erin Squires, President; Ed Marrone, Vice President

Important Membership Renewal Notices

The following memberships are up for renewal:

Mar Renewals

Kathleen Bishop
 Debbie Bombard & Cheryl Stevens
 Kay Byington
 Mike & Gail Carrier
 Theresa Corey & Josh Alexander
 Joseph Holmes & Elizabeth Dyer
 Nancy Hoople
 Deborah Jacobson & Margaret Mastrangelo
 Page Janeff
 David King
 John Klebes
 Edmund Marrone
 Karen Normand
 Heidi Ostendarp
 Lorraine Plasse
 Thomas Pospisil
 Sidd & Sue Purkayastha
 Linda Quesnel
 Joyce Samet
 Greg Socha & Tracy Wilson
 Steve Sussman
 Charles Vanasse
 Dave Wells
 Susan Wills
 Kevin & Robin Withers
 Ashley Zimmerman

Apr Renewals

Jacki Barden
 Marianne Baush
 James Bouchard
 Bernice & Elbert Bowler
 Norma Casillas
 Roy Caso
 Bev Dyer
 Peter Haas
 Janna Hall
 Barbara Havlicek
 Holly Keith
 Christine King
 Susan McGurk
 Patricia Michalski
 Robert Morgan
 Asa & Per Nilsson
 Barbara Pearson
 Tom Pedersen
 Donald (Kent) Rogers
 Albert Shane
 Jacqueline Sheehan
 David Weinberg
 Susan Young
 Kathy Zeiben

Please renew early, and renew by mail. (Make checks payable to Pioneer Valley Hiking Club (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 01089
 (Dues are: \$25 individual member, \$40 family, and \$15 for students)

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers

Erin Squires, President
 Ed Marrone, Vice President
 Judy Alfano, Treasurer
 Brenda Doucette, Secretary
 Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Schedule: Jos Brannan & Lori Tisdell
 Backpacking Advisor: Rick Briggs
 Trail Maintenance: Chip Pray & Rob Schechtman
 Club Website Editor: Dick Forrest
 Non-Member E-mail Coordinator: Rob Schechtman
 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

January

Peter & Lisa Engel
 Susan Farber
 Joel & Kate Feldman
 Tina Giachello
 Donna Kendall

February

Harriet Barnes
 Scott Hughes
 Jennifer Murray
 Jeffrey Pollock
 Melinda Shaw



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Mondays Morning hike
- Tuesdays Morning & Evening hike
- Wednesdays Morning hike
- Thursdays Morning hikes (2)
- Fridays
- Saturdays Morning hike
- Sundays Morning hike
- March 4 Club Meeting
- April 1 Club Meeting

- PVHC <https://teamup.com/ksz8qkbizhndt3qjt7>
- Schedule of Events

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings

March 4, 2025, 7 p.m. at **ROC**
 April 1, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is March 20, 2025
 Deadline for submissions to the next *Bootprints* is April 20, 2025

**** Check out our club website at:**
www.pioneervalleyhikingclub.org

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



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P.O. Box 225
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