



# Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the  
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

## Enjoying My Time as the President of this Amazing Club

by President Erin Squires

I have been enjoying my time as the President of this amazing club. The e-board had been working diligently to leave a mark on the club that has offered so much to so many of us. We have decided that we want to look for ways to save money to ensure PVHC stays strong financially. At the same time we would also like to invest in fun activities to bring us together. It would appear that we enjoy social gatherings due to the recent attendance at our picnic.

The e-board is also invested in increasing attendance at our monthly meetings. We were able to book Tom Ricardi to attend our September clinic and we are planning some more interesting clinics this year. We have agreed to have two surprise raffles this year. One was at our April meeting. The other surprise raffle will be a surprise. There are plans to have a game night at one of our meetings and we are just getting started.

The monthly meetings are a great way to meet other members of the club, ask questions about our Team Up app, and peruse our collection of books. The monthly meeting is a great place to swap equipment you no longer use and ask other members what equipment they trust the most. Every other month we do hike planning. You can connect with other members to plan to co-lead a hike or plan your own hike. We always need hike leaders!

Hope to see you at our next meeting,  
--Erin

Volume 29, Issue 5

Sept, 2025

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## PVHC Leadership Training

by Lori Tisdell

The idea for a leader's guide or manual came about during a clinic on the future of the club. One of the newer members mentioned that a previous club he had been a member of had an adventure guide. After that the ideas came fast and furious. With PVHC, one of the major issues has been finding enough people to lead hikes. The biggest issue seems to be, from our conversations with people, is that they are nervous about leading. All the conversations we've had with members over the years haven't been enough to convince people to lead. Or not enough people to lead.

So, when the idea of an adventure guide came up, it seemed like a good solution to help resolve the issue. The guide includes lots of helpful information for first time as well as seasoned hike leaders. We included gear lists, helpful hints, websites, worksheets, the release form, the PVHC ratings guidelines, car spotting instructions, and a number of easy, moderate, and difficult hikes.

The hike descriptions include maps, addresses, the type of hike, distance, elevation, and a description of the route. There is a lot of information in the guide. You won't need all of it. Choose what will be most helpful to you. You'll be able to print specific pages as needed. Example – the Release form, Hike Description, and maps.

The guide is a living document. We will add, make changes, and edit as needed and update. We will continue to add hikes as members send them to us. And from there the club decided to form a Leadership Committee.

The Leadership Committee members are Sandy Segó, Debbie Bombard, Cheryl Stevens, Karen Markham, and Lori Tisdell. We had several Zoom meetings with PVHC members who were interested in leading hikes. The meetings were productive - lots of questions were asked and answered, See *PVHC Leadership Training* continued on page 3

*"So, when the idea of an adventure guide came up, it seemed like a good solution to help resolve the issue."*

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*~ Lori Tisdell*

**PVHC Leadership Training** *continued from page 2*

feedback given and lots of direction. We offered to set a prospective leader up with a seasoned leader to lead a hike together.

We’d like to have more Zoom meetings if people are interested or possibly meet in person before or after one of the monthly club meetings. We can set up either or both on the schedule once we gauge interest. Also, if you are interested in leading, contact one of the committee members – we are in the directory. We can answer questions, co-lead a hike, or set you up with someone who can lead a hike with you.

The Leader’s Guide is available on the club’s website, making it easy to access all the information you need to prepare for leading a hike. Here is the link to it:

[Pioneer-Valley-Hiking-Club-Leaders-Guide-Jan-2025-Revised](#)

PVHC is always looking for new leaders – without them it’s hard to get hikes on the schedule! So, if you are interested, please contact me at [lori.tisdell@gmail.com](mailto:lori.tisdell@gmail.com). The committee will set up more meetings if there is enough interest.

Here are the main benefits for new leaders in the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club (PVHC):

- **Comprehensive Resources:** The Leader’s Guide is packed with everything you need, from gear lists and hike descriptions to maps and safety tips. It’s like having a hiking mentor in your pocket!
- **Supportive Community:** The Leadership Committee is there to help you every step of the way. They hold Zoom meetings to answer questions, give feedback, and even offer opportunities to co-lead hikes with experienced leaders.

See *PVHC Leadership Training* continued on page 4

**PVHC Leadership Training** *continued from page 3*

- **Flexible Learning:** The committee plans to hold more meetings, both virtual and in-person, depending on what works best for you. This flexibility makes it easier to fit leadership training into your schedule.
- **Encouragement and Motivation:** PVHC is all about encouraging members to step up and lead hikes. They emphasize the importance of new leaders to keep the hike schedule full and exciting, so you'll always feel valued and motivated.
- **Accessible Information:** The Leader's Guide is available on the club's website, making it easy to access all the information you need to prepare for leading a hike.

These benefits make it a great opportunity for anyone interested in leading hikes to get involved and feel confident in their role.

--Lori Tisdell

*“PVHC is all about encouraging members to step up and lead hikes.”*

*~ Lori Tisdell*



Smurfy advice for the trail...

## **Cellphones in the Wild**

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

*"The smartphone has become the go-to device for hiking."*

~ PaPa Smurf

The smartphone has become the go-to device for hiking. It can perform many functions, such as a camera, GPS, electronic map, weather radio, trail data repository, communications device and emergency communicator. With so many functions dependent on one device it's important to understand what happens when you lose cell coverage.

If you are heading out into nature you should assume that at some point you will lose cell service. Even before you get to the trailhead it's possible you might have already lost coverage without noticing it. I recall many trips where I used Google Maps to navigate to the trailhead and I had no coverage right at the parking lot. After hiking and returning to my car I was unable to reload Google Maps and had trouble finding my way back to the main roads.

Out on your hike you might find your cellphone unable to provide many of the functions you depend on.

### **Be Ready Before you Go**

Before heading out on a hike make sure you download trail information, contact information, and off-line maps. And as always, carry a physical map, compass/gps, and backup paper trail and contact data in case your cellphone fails.

First off download an off-line copy of maps covering your area. This includes street maps, gps topo maps and tracks, and supporting data for the applications you use on your phone. It's important to download not only the trail you are hiking but the street map information for getting back to your car should you exit from an alternate road in an emergency and also to find your way home from where your car is parked.

See *Cellphones in the Wild* continued on page 6

*"Before heading out on a hike make sure you download trail information, contact information, and off-line maps."*

~ PaPa Smurf

**Cellphones in the Wild** *continued from page 5*

Most apps such as Google Maps, Apple Maps, Waze, Alltrails, Ko-moot, FarOut, Gaia, Garmin Explore, Avenza Maps, and Strava, have a feature to download maps and data for off-line use. Many times you might think you have the map on your phone because you opened it while you had cellphone/internet coverage but if you close the app or get a glitch you may not be able to re-open the map without a cell signal. Downloading maps allows you to use the app with your phone in airplane mode or in a location without cell coverage.

It's also a good idea to make sure you have stored on your phone (and a paper backup) the contact information for your emergency contacts and emergency services for the area, such as the local park service, park ranger station, police, or search & rescue services. You may find this information posted in local/state/federal park literature or at the trailhead for the area you are hiking.

If you are meeting others designate a place in advance to meet or leave written messages, such as at a campground bulletin board, ranger station, car, trailhead, or road junction. Just in case you can't get phone coverage before meeting up and plans change.

**How to Survive without a Cellphone Signal**

As you head out into the wild, keep an eye on your phone to see where you lose the signal. This way you will know how far you might have to backtrack to make a call in an emergency.

Once you lose coverage turn your phone to airplane mode so it doesn't drain the battery searching for a signal. Your GPS mapping applications should work in airplane mode if you have loaded an off-line map. (Test it out and if it doesn't you might have to turn on location services on some phones) You might also want to disable WI-Fi or Bluetooth connectivity to conserve more battery power and/or bring a spare backup battery.

See *Cellphones in the Wild* continued on page 7



PaPa Smurf

*“It's also a good idea to make sure you have stored on your phone (and a paper backup) the contact information for your emergency contacts and emergency services for the area,....”*

*~ PaPa Smurf*

*“As you head out into the wild, keep an eye on your phone to see where you lose the signal.”*

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*“If your phone says it has no signal it may still be possible to get a call out to emergency services.”*  
~ PaPa Smurf

*“If you still can’t get a signal out try sending just a simple SMS text message.”*  
~ PaPa Smurf

**Cellphones in the Wild** continued from page 6

### Calling for Help with No Cell Coverage

If your phone says it has no signal it may still be possible to get a call out to emergency services.

Emergency calls receive a higher priority on most networks and are allowed on any network, even if your phone is not registered on that service. There might be no coverage for your carrier but you might be able to use another network’s cell tower.

First, be sure you don’t have phone coverage. Shut off and restart your phone. Sometimes the phone will give up trying to connect to a weak signal. Restarting may allow you to connect back to the weak signal.

If you still do not have a signal try placing an emergency call. Calling 911 in the USA on an Android or iPhone should automatically connect to the network with the strongest coverage. (Use 112 for Europe and International coverage) Most phones have an emergency call icon on the sign-in screen and will let you make an emergency call even if you don’t have a cellphone plan and/or SIM card or are using a locked phone from someone who is injured and can’t unlock it.

Another technique on iPhones and Android smartphones is to press and release the power button 5 times to trigger an emergency call if this feature is enabled on the phone.

If you still can’t get a signal out try sending just a simple SMS text message. Even if you can’t get a stable connection you might be able to shoot out an emergency text message. Try to get as high as safely possible, up and out of valleys and away from rocks, and wave your phone around a bit. It only needs to grab a tower for a few seconds to send out a text message.

See **Cellphones in the Wild** continued on page 8

**Cellphones in the Wild** *continued from page 7*

If you have a newer iPhone it might have a built-in satellite SOS system that doesn't require a cell phone connection. T-Mobile and Verizon are also offering satellite messaging on Android which allows users to send and receive text messages via satellite when there is no cellular or Wi-Fi coverage on selected phones, such as Samsung Galaxy S25 and Google Pixel 9. In an emergency give it a try even if you didn't pay to turn on the satellite service. Most companies will allow the 911 call to go through without a service plan. Keep an eye out for the satellite messaging feature for your next phone purchase. Alternatively, you may want to invest in a satellite messaging device, such as Garmin InReach or one of the other competitor satellite messaging devices to provide communications when you lose cellphone coverage. They are more reliable in remote areas.

Never put all your faith in technology. Cellphones are mechanical devices that can fail, become lost, damaged; or you could even drop it off a cliff, between some rocks, or into a river. Be sure you can still be safe even if you lose access to your phone by having a plan B. Paper maps never run out of battery power!

--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))

*“Never put all your faith  
in technology.”  
~ PaPa Smurf*



## **Some Stories of Hiking Adventures by a PVHC Member**

by Dick Forrest

People who hike a lot, or who have hiked a lot in the past, have many stories to tell of their hiking experiences. I would like to relate a few of my hiking experiences in the Adirondacks of New York that may be of interest.

Partially thanks to club member Ann Mundy (which is another story in itself), my wife, Sue, and I are Adirondack 46ers. My registered number is #7290, and her registered number is #8074. She completed one half (23) of the 46 high peaks with me. And I completed an additional 23 high peaks with her to help her complete her 46. Currently, there are 16,283 registered ADK 46ers, and you can find a member roster at [adk46.org](http://adk46.org) which has 291 pages of registered 46ers on a PDF.

One of the peaks that we had to climb for the list of 46 peaks was Iroquois Peak (elev. 4840') in the MacIntyre Range, the 8<sup>th</sup> highest peak in the Adirondacks and New York. Well, in order to get to Iroquois Peak, most people, us included, climb the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest peak in the Adirondacks/New York first, and that's Algonquin Peak (elev. 5114'). So you go over Algonquin, and have go over a minor peak called Boundary, and then you get to Iroquois Peak. Not terribly difficult climbs but climbs with a lot of steepness, with many ups and downs. So Sue and I were close to the top of Iroquois Peak and there was a difficult spot where I tried to help Sue through a rock opening. She had a difficult time and was screaming bloody murder that she couldn't do it. At the same time, there was a woman who took a different, more difficult path up the rocks. She traversed the rocks like a mountain goat. Hearing Sue's sharp verbal complaint, this stranger said to me: "You've got a good one there." Her comment was both a surprise and a revelation. Yes, I was surprised that she made the comment and a revelation that Sue was indeed a very good sport by doing a quite difficult hike with me in the Adirondacks. This was an all-day hike and due to the steepness of it, both ways, our knees were quite sore coming back down Algonquin Peak.

See *Some Stories* continued on page 10

*"Hearing Sue's sharp verbal complaint, this stranger said to me: 'You've got a good one there.'"*

*~ Dick Forrest*

**Some Stories** *continued from page 9*

The second of my three stories involves my cousin John Baldwin. John hiked most of the Adirondack 46 high peaks with his father when he was in high school. For various reasons he never got the chance to finish them – he had seven peaks to go. So John, who lives in Virginia Beach, Virginia, asked me to help him finish his list of 46 high peaks. So, for several summers in a row, John would fly up to Bradley Airport from Virginia Beach, Sue and I would pick him up at the airport, and John and I would usually knock off a couple of peaks on his Adirondacks list. (John is a world-class geocacher – it’s his passion. He is a geocaching legend in the state of Virginia and currently has over 40,000 geocache finds.) On one of those trips north we were in the Santanoni Range of the Adirondacks. That time, even though John gets off the couch to geocache, he wasn’t in the greatest of shape and we were attempting to do three peaks on his list, two of which were in the Santanoni Range. I believe that he needed Couchsachraga and Panther Peaks. So on one day, John and I did another peak not in the Santononi Range – I believe that it was in the Seward Range. Then we geocached on the next day. And on the third day we tackled Couch and Panther. Sue joined us for the last hike – we picked her up early in the morning from the Adirondack LOJ to hike the Santanoni Range. Sue was especially along for the ride so she could drive us home from our arduous mountain climbing.

Well, on the mountains everything went according to plan except when we made our way down from Couch and Panther in the dead of night with headlamps. At one point John hit a wall – he could go no further. He felt nauseous and wouldn’t eat or drink anything. So Sue and I stood with him for twenty to thirty minutes on a wilderness trail at night in the middle of nowhere waiting for John to recover. He eventually recovered and we continued back to our car. We finished up at around ten o’clock at night and then had a five-hour drive home. John and I were both severely fatigued from the three days so Sue had to drive home. On our way home John and I both fell asleep but were jerked awake by Sue falling asleep at the wheel. After being jerked awake a second time we got off the road and spent 45 minutes sleeping in an empty Cracker Barrel parking lot. That rest

*See Some Stories continued on page 11*

*“At one point John hit a wall – he could go no further. He felt nauseous and wouldn’t eat or drink anything.”*

*~ Dick Forrest*



**Some Stories** *continued from page 10*

enabled Sue to drive the rest of the way home. Both John and I would not have been able to do it. When we got home, we had an hour's rest before we had to take John back to the airport.

The last story involves club member Jeanne Kaiser. Every year, thanks to Ann Mundy, who initially introduced our club to the Adirondack mountains through her many Adirondack trips, our club continues to go to Johns Brook Lodge (JBL), a longtime backcountry lodge in the Adirondacks. Al Roman and Karen Markham continue to lead trips to JBL and anyone who hikes in the Adirondacks can tell you about JBL. ("Adirondack" magazine just published some articles about JBL and the Garden, the parking lot access to JBL.) The Garden and JBL are 3 ½ miles apart, so you have to do a short backpack into JBL from the Garden, which is located in Keene Valley, New York, if you want to lodge there.

So, on one weekend at JBL, I wanted to do only one peak. Jeanne Kaiser, who had done only one 4,000-footer previously wanted to climb only one peak. So I said that I would climb Saddleback Mt. (elev. 4515'), and since I was only doing one peak, Jeanne Kaiser decided to hike with me. Jeanne and I hiked with a number of PVHC hikers from JBL until we got to a junction, and then Jeanne and I continued alone from the Orebed Brook Trail onto the State Range Trail.

As I remember it, we got to the top of Saddleback fairly easily and came back down the trail early in the day and the weather was perfect. When we got to the Gothics junction on the State Range Trail the trail sign said only 0.5 miles to the summit of Gothics. Since it was only a ½ mile to the summit I suggested to Jeanne that we should do it. I had done the Gothics Loop at least twice before so I knew what we were in for. Of course, Jeanne had no idea what she was in for. And once we climbed Gothics Mt. (elev. 4736'), I knew that we were committed to do Armstrong Mt. (elev. 4400') and Upper Wolfjaw Mt. (elev. 4185'), as well, since the way back down Gothics was very steep and not recommended.

See *Some Stories continued on page 12*

*"...the trail sign said only 0.5 miles to the summit of Gothics. Since it was only a ½ mile to the summit I suggested to Jeanne that we should do it."*

*~ Dick Forrest*

**Some Stories** *continued from page 11*

So Jeanne and I intended to climb only one peak that day, but instead, we climbed four peaks that day. She keeps telling me that she should never have done that hike, but I keep telling her that at the end of that hike of 4-4000 footers that she was a lot fresher than I was. And she was. At dinner that night she might have even achieved rock star status. I was proud of her for pushing her limits, even though I might have pushed her a little too far out of her comfort zone.

--Dick Forrest

*“So Jeanne and I intended to climb only one peak that day, but instead, we climbed four peaks that day.”*

*~ Dick Forrest*



## Future Club Events

### 2025

**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:

### September Renewals

Patricia Appelbaum  
Chris Boyd  
Lara Brown  
Liz Brown  
Cindy Cary  
Rika Clement  
Shari Cox  
Celeste Demarsico  
Nicole Fonsh  
JoAnne Gebski  
Lani & Rick Giguere  
Lisa Golob  
Carolyn Keeffe  
Laurie Mahoney  
Anne Muench  
Stacey Munro & family  
Penny Pitts  
Lisa Ryan  
Marty & Meg Schoenemann  
Lynn Schwartz  
Susan & Taylor Seybolt  
Mary Tigner-Rasanen  
Carl Todd  
Paul & Kathleen Tonelli  
Vance Von Jarowski  
Mike Winters

### October Renewals

Donna Back  
Julie Bermant  
Paul Curtis  
Michael Delaney  
Joanne Fortin  
John & Regina Fortune  
Barbara Graf  
Brenda Jorgensen  
Betty Lempke  
Michael Lillpopp  
Karen Markham & Al Roman  
Jettie McCollough  
Jim McNerney  
Elizabeth Post  
Maria Rocco  
Celeste Rosselli  
Carolyn Young

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](mailto:dforrest@charter.net)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### July

Ellen Cookson  
Jennifer Gazda  
Lisa Jones  
Lois Levin  
Carl Schatz

### August

Martha Crane  
Michael Daigneau  
Jason Garand  
Bryant & Elle Morgan  
Becky Reed  
Anthony Shaw



### UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

- Mondays Morning hike
- Tuesdays Morning bike ride
- Wednesdays Morning hike
- Thursdays Morning hike
- Fridays Occasional hike
- Saturdays Morning hike
- Sundays Morning hike
- Sept 2 Club Meeting
- Oct 7 Club Meeting
  
- PVHC <https://teamup.com/ksz8qkbizhndt3qjt7>
- Schedule of Events

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

### Next Club Meetings

September 2, 7 p.m. at **ROC**  
 October 7, 2025, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is October 20, 2025

**\*\* 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**

