



Bootprints

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the
Pioneer Valley Hiking Club

President's Corner:

One of the Joys of PVHC Membership: Leading Hikes

by President Erin Squires

One of the joys I get out of being a member of PVHC is leading hikes. I am a weekend warrior and by leading a hike I am assured of getting out on the trails. I keep hike leading very simple by selecting trails that I know well. I am also confident that there will be someone who signs up for the hike who also knows the trail and can assist with leading or sweeping the group. If I am going to do a trail that I do not know well I would list the hike as exploring. I lower the expectations of a well-planned hike to a hike that could add extra miles, a turnaround, or maybe not ending where the cars are parked (it only happened one time and it was during COVID days).

One of the most important parts of being a hike leader is not losing anyone. Last year I wrote an article about how to lose 7 hikers on a trail. On that hike there were 11 of us when we started the journey. Well, I still have not learned the lesson of not losing a hiker. Just recently I lead a hike to The Notch. There were 9 of us in total. At the end there were 5. Not to worry, everyone is safe and sound.

Another important lesson about leading a hike is to bring "extra." I bring extra water, snacks, socks, bandannas, and there is another set of poles in my car just in case. I also check that my first aid kit is well-stocked without expired medications. I make sure I have a compass and a paper map. I tell a family member my plan and how long I expect to be out. That's why if something did go wrong I am confident that my family would send out an alarm.

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If you are ever interested in learning more about being a hike leader I am happy to be your co-leader. It would be best if counting was not your strong suit as I do tend to lose hikers. It is a fun experience and once you are comfortable to lead on your own you can share your favorite spots with a group of people who love to be outdoors. Happy trails!

Best,**Erin**



Smurfy advice for the trail...

Twisted on the Trail

by John "PaPa Smurf" Klebes

I was going through my little hiking first aid kit the other day. Something you should really do each season, or after using an item or two, to be sure you are ready if needed. When was the last time you checked yours? Are your medications expired, crushed or damaged? I find things like diarrhea pills, Benadryl, aspirin, etc. need updating after a few years. And carrying only a few band-aids they need to be replenished due to use or just wear and tear in my backpack.

I don't use my first aid kit often but it comes in handy. Reflecting on what I have actually used, such as the occasional band-aid, ibuprofen, or Benadryl; it's been useful but not life changing. One item, however, that I have used multiple times for myself and others is a small 2-inch wide ace elastic bandage. Why? It turns out that a twisted/sprained ankle or wrist has been one of the most common injuries I have encountered that can really affect the ability to continue a hike.

Let's explore how you may be able to deal with a sprain on the trail, reduce pain and swelling, and prevent further injury while hiking.

What is a Sprain

When a joint is twisted or stretched beyond it's normal range of motion the ligaments can tear where they attach one bone to another. It is a common for the ligaments on the outside of the ankle joint to be damaged when the foot is rolled inward while stumbling or falls on uneven surfaces.

Symptoms

Most common symptoms are tenderness to the injury site, swelling, bruising, and pain when you try to move the joint. It's important to assess how severe the symptoms are as they are also the same for a bone fracture versus just a ligament sprain. If you suspect the bone is actually fractured you may do more damage trying to hike out.

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"Let's explore how you may be able to deal with a sprain on the trail, reduce pain and swelling, and prevent further injury while hiking."

~ PaPa Smurf

Twisted on the Trail continued from page 3

Treatment

The recommended treatment for a sprain begins with R-I-C-E-S (rest, ice, compression, elevation, stabilization) Resting takes the stress off the injured joint to prevent further damage. Ice reduces swelling. Compression wraps prevent further swelling and provide support.

Immediately after a sprain give it some rest time, and if possible, cool it in a cold stream. Immediately after removing it from cold water apply a compression wrap before further swelling occurs.

To wrap the joint begin wrapping at the toes and move up the foot and over the ankle while keeping the foot at a 90-degree angle. Bring the bandage diagonally across the top of the foot, under the arch and around the ankle in a figure-eight pattern around the ankle.

The wrap should be snug but not so tight as to cause numbness or increased pain. Elevating the ankle above the heart can further reduce swelling but is often not practical if you need to continue hiking. Finally, especially if you need to hike out, stabilize the joint using tape or a splint, to prevent further movement of the injury.

Should I hike out?

Whether to hike out on a sprained ankle requires careful assessment. Determine if the sprain is minor or severe. The amount of swelling, bruising, and the ability to bear weight and move the joint should determine if you can hike on it. If putting weight on the injured joint causes extreme pain, or the limb looks misaligned or severely swollen, you should treat the injury as a possible fracture and avoid moving it unnecessarily. Get help.

If you can place weight on the leg and feel you can walk out, tape the ankle for support to help stabilize the joint while walking. Use trekking poles, or makeshift walking sticks, to reduce/limit stress on the joint. Take small, careful steps and avoid carrying heavy loads. Distribute your backpack to others hiking with you. While it may take a long time to hike slowly out, keep in mind that a rescue will require many hours before help arrives so it may still be your best trade-off. See *Twisted on the Trail* continued on page 5



PaPa Smurf

“Whether to hike out on a sprained ankle requires careful assessment.”

~ PaPa Smurf



“If you feel you are causing more damage it may be necessary to wait for help instead of hiking out.”

~ PaPa Smurf

Twisted on the Trail continued from page 4

Over-the-counter pain relievers, like ibuprofen or acetaminophen, can be helpful but avoid pushing through severe pain which can indicate you are worsening the injury. If you feel you are causing more damage it may be necessary to wait for help instead of hiking out.

Avoiding Injury Upfront

Be cautious on uneven terrain and take extra care when fatigued or hiking under wet or slippery conditions. Wear good, sturdy well-fitting boots and consider using trekking poles to minimize the chance of twisting an ankle. Stay safe out there.

--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)

The First Edition of "Boot Prints"

by Dick Forrest

At the April, 2026, monthly meeting of PVHC the club celebrated the 35th anniversary of our hiking club. Al Goodhind, an original member and the first president of our hiking club, gave me an original copy of the first "Boot Prints," which was not posted on our club's website "Newsletter Archive" page. I have since posted a copy of the newsletter at this URL on the "Newsletter Archive" page of our club's website: <https://pioneervalleyhikingclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/bp1997feb.pdf>

At the top of the club newsletter it reads: Pioneer Valley Hiking Club, Volume 1, Issue 1, with a publish date of February 1, 1997. The club has existed with the name Pioneer Valley Hiking Club as early as 1993, and incidentally, I suggested the club name to the then current members that was subsequently adopted, but 1997 is the year of the first "Boot Prints" newsletter. (The newsletter name was eventually changed to "Bootprints.") The name "Boot Prints" was suggested by then club member Ron Gaudreau, according to this newsletter.

The first "Boot Prints" editor was Joe Zawrotny. Joe is no longer a member of our club and is very talented as a home remodeling contractor. I especially remember Joe in leading an incredible and potentially dangerous effort to build a bridge at Bartholomew's Cobble, where we annually helped the Trustees of Reservations property with maintenance of their grounds. Fortunately, none of our club members got hurt while moving huge trees for the bridge's supports. Al Goodhind was responsible for getting our club connected to the director/property manager of Bartholomew's Cobble.

There are two big articles in this newsletter, written by former club members. One is by Bruce Tingle, who wrote about a Mt. Alander Backpacking Trip. What I remember about Bruce is that he was undergoing a midlife crisis – enough said. The other was written by Terry Cripps, who wrote about a "Savoy State Forest Weekend." As a
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"At the top of the club newsletter it reads: Pioneer Valley Hiking Club, Volume 1, Issue 1, with a publish date of February 1, 1997."

~ Dick Forrest



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club we used to rent cabins at Savoy Mountain State Forest, ones which you can still rent today. Terry Cripps died in January, 2025, at the age of 85 years old. Regrettably, his wife, Sandy, died in October, 2025. Sue and I had good times at the cabins with Terry and Sandy and other club members.

I have to relate one interesting story about Terry. We, both couples, walked the frozen ponds together at Savoy with snowshoes on. Terry's snowshoes had no traction on the bottom of them so they were slippery on ice. Well, Terry slipped and fell on the ice, and Sue and I were immediately aghast. It looked like red blood was spurting out of him as a result of his fall. It turned out that he had a juice box in his pocket with red liquid in it, that he fell on, and because it was under pressure, it began to spurt red juice that looked amazingly like blood. Sue and I could only think, "Whew!" after Terry explained the truth of the situation. Emergency averted!

This issue of "Boot Prints" gives a list of activities of the club in 1997. Here's the list:

February 21-22 – Mt. Washington Backpacking Trip

March 1 – Suffield Cross Country Ski Outing

March 4 – Monthly Club Meeting (on the 1st Tuesday of the month, even back then)

March 31 – Trail Maintenance & Picnic at Beartown State Forest (Al Goodhind got our club involved with helping with maintenance at Beartown State Forest)

June 14 to 15 – Battenkill River Canoe & Car Camping Trip (we did this trip for many years until it was determined to be too dangerous for novice canoeists)

If you go the "Newsletter Archive" page on our club website and scroll down to the bottom of the page: <https://pioneervalleyhikingclub.org/newsletter-archives/> you will see that there were other newsletters before "Boot Prints," which first appeared in February, 1997. If there were other issues of "Boot Prints" in the year of 1997, I don't have them. But this newsletter which I have been referring to is the first issue of the current "Bootprints" newsletter. From 1997 to 2026, "Bootprints," has been going strong for 29 years and that's something that our club should be proud of in the totality of our club's 35-year history.

--Dick Forrest

"It looked like red blood was spurting out of him as a result of his fall."

~ Dick Forrest

"From 1997 to 2026, "Bootprints," has been going strong for 29 years and that's something that our club should be proud of in the totality of our club's 35-year history."

~ Dick Forrest



Future Club Events

2026

May 14 - WAV Owls Head (NH) organized by Jim E. Brown

May 15 - WAV Bald Peak (NH) organized by Jim E. Brown

May 29-31 - Mizpah Hut Trip (NH) organized by Karen Markham

June 19-21 - White Mountain Sampler (NH) organized by Jeanne Kaiser and Lori Tisdell

October 19-23 - Cape Cod Trip (MA) organized by Debbie Bombard and Cheryl Stevens, email or call Deb/Cheryl for more information

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:

May Renewals

Jill Abrahamsen
 Monica Bourgault
 James & Diane Brown
 Regina Crimmins
 Steven & Amy Dane
 Laura Deforge
 Nora Dryjowicz
 Debi Garlick
 Ruth Harper
 Tom Lake
 Phyllis Levenson
 Lisa Martial
 Ann Matthews & Clark (Skip)
 Peggy McLennan
 Ron & Eleanor Morrissette
 Colleen Murray
 Carol & Tom Permar
 Leslie Reed
 Michael Reed & Deb Gebo
 Susan Reeder
 Michelle & Don Salva
 Karen Savoy
 Sara Scagliarini & Richard Rabor
 Erin, Peter & Emily Squires
 Robert Trombley
 Janice & Buddy Webb
 Therese Williams

June Renewals

Judy Alfano
 Raymond Bourbeau
 Robert & Debbie Duclos
 Wendy Dudas
 Gina Geck
 Marie Holmes & Dan Ingram
 Richard Howitt
 Mike Kurowski
 Peter & Beth Ouellette
 Ed Page
 James (Brad) Permar
 Donna & Dave Slozak
 Jim & Peggy Tibbitt
 Brian & Rita Toole
 Anna Viadero
 Pamela Wright

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

March

Theresa Hickson

April

Danni Bellows
 Kerisa Fitzgerald
 Anne Goncalves
 Nooni Hammarlund
 Nancy Mead
 Liz Schwellenbach
 Diane Stock
 Idali Torres & Tom Hidalgo
 Natalie Zombik



UPCOMING EVENTS AND THE USUALS

Mondays Morning hike
 Tuesdays Morning hike
 Evening hike
 Wednesdays Morning hike
 Thursdays Morning hike
 Fridays Occasional hike
 Saturdays Morning hike
 Sundays Morning hike
 May 5 Club Meeting
 June 2 Club Meeting

PVHC <https://teamup.com/kszbqkbizhndt3qjt7>
 Schedule of Events

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Next Club Meetings

May 5, 2026 7 p.m. at **ROC**
 June 2, 2026, 7 p.m. at **ROC**

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

Deadline for submissions to the next *Footprints* is June 20, 2026

**** 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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