



Forever Wild

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BAXTER STATE PARK
FALL 2005 VOL. 4 No. 4

Search for New Park Director Underway; Interim Director Jensen Bissell at the Helm

President's Column

by Charlie Jacobi

Moose Have the Right of Way

Buzz Caverly has retired from Baxter State Park after 46 years of service. It's hard for me to imagine doing anything for that long. I was...well, let's just say I wasn't that old when Buzz began his career there. Buzz obviously loved going to the office every day (we should all be so lucky) and what an office he had! He also had, and still has, an immeasurable passion for the Park and its wilderness values. Buzz may have retired from Baxter Park, but Baxter Park will never retire from him.

The Baxter Park we know and enjoy today is very much the result of his leadership. Buzz has been a stalwart defender of wilderness values in so many ways, always referring back to the original sources, the Deeds of Trust, for guidance. As the point person for the Park, he was always willing to take the heat for decisions unpopular with some constituents but in line with the Deeds and the mission of the Park. We thank him and his talented staff for their mission focus, courage, and tireless efforts on behalf of the Park's wilderness.

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With the retirement of Buzz Caverly as Director of Baxter State Park, Resource Manager Jensen Bissell easily took over as Interim Director and is well qualified to become the full-time Director, a job he would like to have. "I've enjoyed immensely my work at the Park," says the trim fifty-one-year-old.

Bissell came to the Park in 1987, with the task of running the troubled Scientific Forestry program. His Bachelor of Science degree in resource management from the State University of New York in Syracuse and a decade of forestry work for the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Oregon stood him in good stead. Since his arrival, he has developed the Scientific Forest into the model program Governor Baxter had envisioned. He is continuing in that job while Interim Director.

"We have a great staff," he adds, noting that many experienced persons who know and have lived the mission for years make his work much easier. But Bissell sees the Park in transition. "Many of these top-notch people came at about the same time, and it is important that newer ones profit from all that experience before the old-timers leave."

Buzz set high standards. In general, the Park should remain as it is. We must maintain our economic independence. (*Operations are funded by Baxter endowment. BSP receives no*

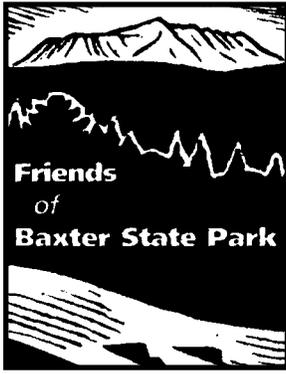


Jensen Bissell - Bill Bentley photo

money from the State. Ed.) He is realistic about the future. "Attendance can go down as well as up, but we have to keep rates at a level Maine people can afford."

When he can work some free time into his busy schedule, Bissell enjoys hiking, camping, kayaking, and his long-time sport of soccer, which he both plays and coaches. He and his wife Sheilah have been married for 30 years and have two sons, Noah and Peter. The family home is in Milo. Although Bissell was born and brought up in Schenectady, NY, he has become a solid citizen of his adopted state, and

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Friends of Baxter State Park is an independent citizens' group working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park, in the spirit of its founder, Governor Percival Baxter.

Search for New Director...

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his love for Maine shows, as does his understanding of the Baxter philosophy. "People are forever seeking changes," he says, "so our main task is to keep us from changing the Park."

— Dave Getchell, Sr.

Editor's note:

Applicants for the Director's position should submit resumes to Paul Stern, Counsel, Baxter State Park Authority, Office of the Attorney General, 6 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 by October 21, 2005.

Looking Back Governor Baxter and the Black Flies

Percival Baxter made his first ascent of Katahdin in 1920 accompanied by journalists, state politicians, and friends. While ascending the old Wassataquoik Tote Road, they stopped at "Halfway Camp." Arthur Staples, the influential editor of the Lewiston Journal, reported that they ate their lunch in the company of 26,434,672,987 black flies. Staples then observed wryly that "Flies do not bite Percy Baxter. I don't know why ... Percival P. sits remote from flies. They come up and look at him and come over and bite me...the distinguished Portland gentleman was as calm and unruffled as a day dream," No wonder Baxter wanted to preserve this land.

— John Neff

Editor's Note: John Neff is author of soon-to-be-published Katahdin: In History and Story. We will share more of the stories he has collected in future issues.

President's Column

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We are also grateful for Buzz's support of our organization since our founding. While we did not always agree on issues, Buzz encouraged regular communication, came to our annual meetings to update the membership on issues, and urged us to take field trips with him to the Park, which we did enthusiastically. I treasure that time in the Park with Buzz because he is an absolute font of knowledge about the Park and loves to share it, and he is an entertaining storyteller as well. I know we will continue to rely on him for information and counsel as we move ahead.

I don't think anyone can *replace* Buzz, but the Baxter Park Authority must now decide who will *succeed* him as Director. This is the most important Authority decision in quite a while. We have written to them with some of our ideas about the ideal qualifications for this position and urged a national search. We know the Authority understands the importance of this decision, and we trust they will find the best person for the job.

Let me tell a short and simple story that speaks volumes about Buzz Caverly and his commitment to the mission of the Park as outlined in the Deeds of Trust. On one of our field trips into the Park with him, we encountered a moose along the tote road. I'll bet most of us have had this experience and become a little frustrated because we were goal-driven at the time to exit the Park, or get to our campsite, or get to another destination. I plead guilty to slightly pushy driving at times to encourage the moose to exit the road stage left or right. Not Buzz. Not a chance. He had the patience of a saint. He let that moose amble along the road, out of sight at times, to its heart's content. The resource (the moose) came first. The visitor experience was secondary. Or was it? Maybe the visitor experience was enjoying the moose as long as possible,

President's Column

Continued

"in the right unspoiled way." The lesson from Buzz was clear to me: moose have the right of way.

I know you share with me best wishes to Buzz and his wife Jan and all their family for a most happy, healthy, and well-earned retirement.



At Friends' Annual Meeting in 2006, time will be set aside for members to discuss Park-related issues. What would YOU like to see on this agenda? Tell us!

Membership Matters

Do we have your correct e-mail address? We have close to 400 members, but only about 150 current e-mail addresses. Some of you may have changed addresses since you joined. Earlier this month, we e-mailed an Action Alert related to the Wassataquoik Bridge issue asking for your input. We would like to be able to reach our entire membership by e-mail when important and time-sensitive issues arise.

Of course, any member can easily opt out of receiving e-mails from us. FOB will have its own e-mail address very soon at www.friendsofbaxter.org. Until then, you can send me a short message to be sure we have your correct e-mail address.

Thank you,

Mary Cooke, Admin. Manager
macooke01@yahoo.com

www.friendsofbaxter.org

Website Redesign Nears Completion

The best laid plans go awry sometimes, especially when they involve technology.

The Publicity Committee of the Board of Directors reports that plans for updating FOB's website stalled over the summer because of delays in receiving contributions, the need for revisions of old documents, and scheduling difficulties at the design firm.

"But we're back on target now, and, hopefully, it won't be much longer—the end of October most likely," said Linda McKee, Board Member who chairs the committee of Sally Daggett, Rex Turner, and Jon Tierney.

One important resource planned for the site is the four-volume set of the Baxter materials project, *Percival P. Baxter's Vision for Baxter State Park...*, recently published by FOB. But breaking the hefty file into smaller, more manageable and useful divisions still needs to be done.

"Our committee definitely could use a couple volunteers from membership with some technical computer skills for help now and then," McKee said. Anyone wishing to work with the committee should contact her at plumgoodfarm@aol.com or 207-685-4385.

Al Howlett Joins the Board

When Kali Lightfoot recently resigned from the FOB Board of Directors, Albert Howlett was appointed to serve the remainder of the three-year term. Al was originally from Boston, and since childhood, has been coming to Maine in the summer, including trips to Katahdin. He has just retired from a career in international development that started with the Peace Corps in Chile working in forestry, then with the United Nations and more recently at the World Bank. While living in northern Virginia, he was active in the Nature Conservancy in West Virginia. His wife, Lois, is a naturalist and yoga instructor. They both love Maine and have recently moved to Yarmouth year round.

In the Mail...

Readers write to us

Editor's note: Send mail to barbarabentley@tidewater.net or 546 Hatchet Mt. Rd., Hope, ME 04847

Forests, not Parks

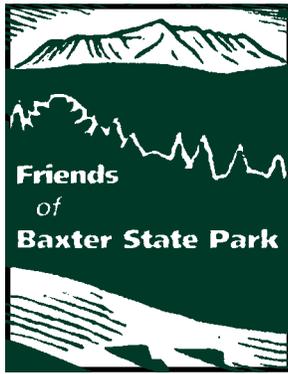
...For the record, I am solidly in support of establishing a large public forest that spans across northern New England. Here in the northeastern USA, we desperately need an expansive tract of public land to provide "backwoods" recreational opportunities to the millions (...) of people who live within a day or two drive. Unfortunately for us, the large national forests and parks are all out West. Furthermore, we need this public land to be a national forest and not a national or state park. The reason is twofold. National Forests managed by the Dept. of Agriculture allow both timber harvest and hunting in their multiple use strategy...

—**Bob Richardson**

Editor's note: The above is part of a letter in which the writer solidly stated his support for "Forever Wild" within Baxter State Park.



Al Howlett at Annual Meeting
—Bill Bentley photo



Members Remember Buzz's Forty-six Year Career

I had the honor and pleasure of interviewing Buzz Caverly in his office several years ago for my program "A Wildlife Journal" on WERU. I was immediately taken with his great passion for the Park. He pulled out correspondence and photos with Gov. Baxter and described their many talks about the future of the Park. He was unhurried and unpretentious. As I left his office with my new Baxter State Park cap, he squeezed my hand and said, "Thanks for helping the Park." I would have followed the man into the cannons.

— *Cherie Mason*

As Director, Buzz was a tireless defender of the concept of a wilderness park. He understood that Percival Baxter's intention was to preserve a wilderness experience, in this matchless location with its unique and stunning mountain, lake and stream environments, for those willing to make the effort and sacrifice necessary to enjoy it. As a frequent, all-season visitor to the park and other areas in the region focused on outdoor uses, and a Maine citizen concerned about the future direction of our state, I am saddened by Buzz's departure from the position of Park Director because, despite different perspectives on some particulars, he did not hesitate to remind everyone, on all sides of the issues that are always going to arise in park management, that his overarching priority was to remain true to that intention and he would not consent to actions or policies that were inconsistent with it. The problems involved with specific decisions on whether this hiking trail or that was open or closed, or this building or that was taken down or expanded, while not to be minimized, pale beside the consistency and determination with which he executed the wishes of the Park's founder. I only hope that we in the Park community can carry on in his spirit and ensure that, under subsequent directors, Baxter State Park remains the country's premier wilderness park east of the Mississippi.

— *Jonathan Huntington*

I want to give high tribute to Buzz Caverly for his dedication to the preservation of the wilderness values of Gov. Baxter's remarkable and treasured gift to the people of Maine. Through the years he has been a man of dogged determination who knew what his calling was and carried it out with a deep love of every inch of Baxter State Park. He has been a good friend ever since I first met with him in the early 1970's to talk about the partnership between the Maine Appalachian Trail Club and the Park to care for the A.T. between the West Branch and the summit of Katahdin. Thanks, Buzz, for all you've done to preserve this great resource for future generations.

— *John Neff*



Buzz at Daicey Pond Advisory Mtg.,
Oct. 2004 —*Bill Bentley photo*

*Some trails are happy ones,
Others are blue.
It's the way you ride the trail that
counts,
Here's a happy one for you.*

*Happy trails to you, 'til we meet
again.*

Song sung at Buzz's Retirement Party

Irvin C. “Buzz” Caverly, Jr.

Irvin C. Caverly, Jr., frequently referred to as Buzz, was born and raised in Cornville, Maine. When Buzz was in his junior year at Skowhegan High School, his father became employed by the Maine Forest Service and the family moved to Enfield. Buzz graduated from Lee Academy in 1959.

He was appointed a BSP Ranger in April 1960 commencing work on May 1st of that year. He served ten years as a Ranger, two years as Assistant Supervisor, ten years as a Supervisor. In 1981, he became Acting Director; in 1982, Director. He served 24 years as BSP Director.

Buzz married Janice Thompson in 1963. They have two daughters, Cathy and Tammy, both of whom were raised in Baxter State Park in the early years. They also have two granddaughters, Ashley and Jessica Lee Tate.



Buzz at “Happy Trails” retirement party, Sept. 2005

— *Bill Bentley photo*

I followed Buzz Caverly’s career since I first climbed Katahdin in 1959, the year Buzz became a Ranger. Buzz became an outstanding Director. He remained true to Governor Baxter’s vision — wilderness first, access second. While not all of his recent proposals were implemented, such as closing the Roaring Brook Road beyond Windy Pitch, they were a countervailing force to advocates of greater access. In his typically modest fashion, Buzz says he is not worried about big changes to the Park. I am worried. Even assuming his successor is a wilderness advocate, hard working, and an excellent manager, the new Director will not have the rich experience and personal connection to Governor Baxter that Buzz enjoyed. Given that reality and the increasing pressures on the Park, Friends will have an increasingly important role to play. Let’s seize this opportunity to make an important contribution during the transition and in the future.

— *Al Howlett*

While Buzz has most recently been known as the proponent for the “wilder within” concept, I recall him in the early 1960’s as the Russell Pond Ranger. His project one summer was to build a 15’ watch tower for the Russell Pond water front, modeled as a junior version of a fire tower, such as the one that used to be on South Pogy Mountain. It was great fun for teenage campers to help out on peeling and moving spruce logs — and we got to use the fresh spruce tips for bough beds, a very welcome benefit in the days before ThermoRest mattresses.

— *John Mirick*

Buzz was definitely a friend of Baxter Park from the bottom of his heart. We meet him and Bill Irwin at Wassataquoik Lake and Russell Pond one summer years ago. We shared thoughts about the Park and its future. But most interesting, we each had a honeymoon story of interest. We can all be thankful for his devotion to the Deed of Trust, his foresight, his love for the wilderness and his fairness to Mother Nature and the people of the World. He has kept this unique park as intended by Gov. Baxter. We wish him a wonderful retirement.

— *Joanne & Paul Woodward*



Whitcomb Reflects on Baxter Materials Project

By Linda McKee

Dr. Howard Whitcomb, 66, Friends Board member, didn't get a chance to settle into a quiet retirement in Georgetown after his distinguished college teaching career. Instead, he accepted a challenge that would make him one of the few persons alive today who know the most about the long legacy of Baxter State Park.

Since Friends organized in 1999, it had been the dream of those charter members that the new organization complete a project that no one else had done before: the assembly in one place of the most important documents surrounding the creation and preservation of the park. Holly Dominie, the first Friends president, along with John Neff, Don Hudson, and several others wanted the resource to contain deeds, letters, speeches and correspondence, laws, judicial opinions, Attorney General opinions, that would illuminate Baxter's original vision for this extraordinary state park. It would become Friends of Baxter State Park's first major project and would be a gift to the people of the State of Maine.

They decided that Whitcomb, who first climbed Katahdin at thirteen, was the person for the job. His credentials as a political scientist, administrative law textbook author, and longtime user of the Park had prepared him well for the daunting task of objectively sifting through thousands of pages of documents and ultimately choosing the most valuable materials, which now consist of 1400 pages.

The four-volume *Percival P. Baxter's Vision for Baxter State Park: An Annotated Compilation of Original Sources* took Whitcomb three years to complete, and he says he has been indelibly affected by the work, his accumulated knowledge now coloring every place he goes in Baxter State Park. "I can't go anywhere in the Park without thinking of Baxter. I can't help



Barbara Bentley, Charlie Jacobi, and Howard Whitcomb examine the first copy of the four volume *Percival P. Baxter's Vision for Baxter State Park*. —Bill Bentley Photo

but be struck by the fact that when Baxter was about to leave public office in 1924, he lamented that he hadn't done all that he would have liked for the State and her People. Little did we know that his principal legacy would be as a private benefactor, not as a public servant."

Whitcomb, who worked without pay, credits three major sources for his material. He spoke highly of the staff at the State Library, who gave him carte blanche to research its holdings. The AG's office was also helpful in sharing documents in its possession. The third source was the Park staff, including then Park Director Buzz Caverly, Jr., all of whom were "enormously helpful." Limiting his work to these three important sources helped to define his work, he readily admits, "for finding other sources could have gone on forever."

He acknowledges three sources for general information for the project: John Hakola's *Legacy of a Lifetime* and Neil Rolde's *The Baxters of Maine: Downeast Visionaries*, and Trudy Irene Scee's *In the Deed We Trust: Baxter State Park 1970-1990*. But he strived hard to avoid interpretive judgments in his annotations, instead leaving these judgments to those using the compilation.

Steve Rowe, Maine Attorney General, who serves on the three-person Park Authority, wrote in his Foreword to the book that the documents "are critical because they reveal Governor Baxter's original thinking and trace its

evolution over time. "He continued, The collection will also increase the public's understanding and appreciation for the detailed information gathering and analysis that have accompanied Park management decision over the years."

A modest man in light of his noble contribution to the State of Maine, Whitcomb says that one of his most rewarding moments occurred just recently. Visiting the office of acting Park Director Jensen Bissell, he immediately spied the four volumes of his book lying on a table with several dozen pages marked with "stickies." Bissell, acknowledging Whitcomb's huge effort, told him, "I know you didn't write this for us. But we use it every day."

Mission accomplished. Percival P. Baxter's dream has brought 204,733 acres of wilderness to the people of the State of Maine. Howard Whitcomb's efforts are already helping to sustain and protect that wilderness.

Editor's note:

Readers are referred to photo of Howard Whitcomb and the bust of Governor Baxter on page 2 of Summer 2005 issue of the newsletter.

Members may check out *Percival P. Baxter's Vision for Baxter State Park* at the following library locations:

Maine State Library
Maine State Law Library
Bangor Public Library
Cleaves Law Library (Cumberland County)
Portland Public Library
Turner Memorial Library in Presque Isle
Maine Historical Society



East Branch Lands Update

Many of you probably want to know what is going on with negotiations for acquiring land around Katahdin Lake, just east of Baxter Park. So are we! This spring, the news media reported that negotiations were underway with William Gardner, who owns land around Katahdin Lake. The position of Friends is that land located between the Park and the East Branch of the Penobscot River should be protected, preferably under public ownership, and that the land around Katahdin Lake should become part of the Park and be managed like most of the rest of the Park, as wilderness and sanctuary. The area around Katahdin Lake was part of Governor Baxter's original vision of a wilderness area and wildlife sanctuary.

We hear negotiations are continuing, and we are hoping for good results. But we also met recently with Attorney General Steve Rowe about this matter. We spoke to him about our position, shared information from the Baxter Materials compiled by Howard Whitcomb, and told him of our willingness to be involved and help in any way possible. We plan to meet with other Authority members about this issue soon, and we will keep you informed.

Park Issues: How We Decide Where We Stand

Some of you may be wondering how Friends arrives at decisions about where we stand on Park issues. Our Board has approved a set of principles and procedures to guide us. First, the most important issues are those that are directly connected to the terms in the Deeds of Trust establishing the Park, and to our primary mission to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness values of the Park. Immediate and irreversible threats are the highest priority. We address issues raised by Park staff and the Park Advisory Committee, but will also evaluate other issues and bring them before the Authority when needed.

Our Policy Committee prioritizes issues, attends Authority and Advisory Committee meetings, consults with Park staff and other interested parties, and researches original sources such as the Deeds of Trust and other materials to gather information and gain a full perspective. We are fortunate to now have Howard Whitcomb, compiler of the Baxter Materials, on our Board and serving on this committee.

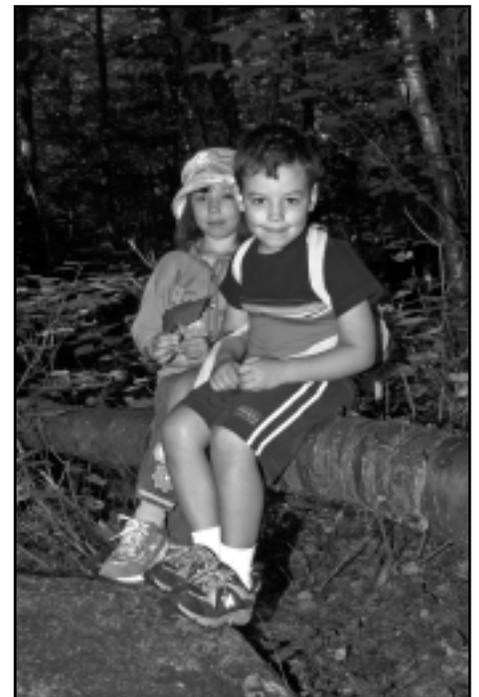
The Policy Committee presents draft policy statements to the Board. The Board may adopt the policy, amend and adopt it, or send it back to the committee for more work. The Board also ensures that approved actions are carried out and that Friends positions are communicated to the Authority, Advisory Committee, Park staff, the membership, and others. Through the use of email, telephone calls, and emergency meetings, we try to be prepared to respond quickly to fast-breaking issues.

We also welcome comments from members at any time on anything. Please let us know which issues are most important to you and how you feel about them. Write us at our Bangor address or email the Administrative Manager at macooke01@yahoo.com. Come to Friends' Annual Meeting in April, where time is allotted for member concerns.

Friends' position on a number of issues appeared in the Summer '05 newsletter. We hope to have positions posted in their complete form on our new website soon. We want you to know where we stand when it comes to the Park's wilderness values.

FOB Walk in the Park

Over Labor Day weekend, members of Friends gathered at Abol Campground for a "Walk in the Park." We enjoyed the energy and enthusiasm of some of our youngest participants yet. Jim and Claire Andrews from Farmington, and their children Ben and Grace, ages 5 and 6, warmed up with a hike to Abol Falls one day and then went on to greater things. Jim writes, "We had a great trip up Sentinel Mountain. Both kids did fine, even though the round trip from Kidney Pond Camps was almost six miles. The views from the peak were tremendous. We spent part of Monday at the Abol Pond day use area and had the beach and picnic area almost completely to ourselves. It was a great trip." A senior contingent went up OJI via the North Slide trail and then down the South Slide. The half-mile trail along the ridge at the top with views in all directions is well worth the trip although we might explore alternate routes up the mountain next time.



Grace and Ben Andrews at Abol Campground —*Bill Bentley photo*



Three panoramic views of the wild Wassataquoik Stream -*Bill Bentley photos*

Friends of Baxter State Park
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www.friendsofbaxter.org
 Courtesy of gwi.net

We're looking for New Friends

_____	\$ 1,000	Governor Baxter Society
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_____	\$ 100	Hamlin Peaker
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_____	\$ 30	Family
_____	\$ 25	Individual

Please make checks payable to Friends of Baxter State Park. Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. Send to Friends of Baxter State Park, P.O. Box 1442, Bangor, ME 04402-1442. Thank you!

Friends Say “NO” to Bridge over Wild Stream

Wassataquoik Stream, its headwaters and much of its length protected by the Park, is a pristine river system deserving of the highest protection for its entire length. In a letter to LURC, FOB expressed concern with the potential adverse impact a bridge in this area would have on the wilderness character of Baxter State Park. Increased vehicular traffic, including ATV use, threatens the wilderness values of the Park and increases the likelihood of trespass onto Park lands. The creation of new motorized access across this extraordinary stream in the shadow of Mt. Katahdin is contrary to the statutory requirements governing LURC’s decision regarding this application.
 (See photos of stream above.)