



Friends of Baxter State Park

President's Column

by Barbara Bentley

There is something everyone should know about Friends of Baxter State Park – we are a *volunteer* organization. That means several things. First, all our work is accomplished by individuals on the Board and from the membership at large who come forward and share with us their time and talents – and financial support. I hope the fact that we are a “working board” is no surprise to new Board Member Henry Beeuwkes, but returning Board Members Al Howlett, Anne Huntington, Lester Kenway, and Howard Whitcomb re-upped for another 3-year term with eyes wide open. Each of these Board Members has unique talents and expertise related to the Park, and I feel very fortunate to be able to welcome them as they join the ten others on the Board. And for their willingness to serve, I say THANK YOU to all of them – on a daily basis.

That Friends is a *volunteer* organization is good news for its members, as well, because your membership dollars are going entirely to Park-related projects. We employ part time administrative help, but that is our only overhead expense. This year alone, we have contributed \$4000 for professional trail work in the Park, published a brochure

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Forever Wild

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Snow is still visible on Katahdin from the Cribwork on the West Branch of the Penobscot in June.
– Photo by Bill Bentley

Friends to Focus on Next Generation's Wilderness Ethic

We cannot take for granted that the next generation will care as much about wilderness preservation as members of Friends of Baxter State Park do. We must ensure that today's young people understand the importance and values of wilderness and the term *forever wild*. Not only is Maine's greatest resource dependent on that understanding, the survival of our planet demands it also.

That's the basic premise behind an exciting new venture Friends has proposed for the summer of 2009. Entitled *Wilderness Preservation for the Next Generation*, this proposed pilot project will involve ten Maine high school students and two experienced wilderness education leaders for a week in Baxter State Park. These students will learn through hiking and recreating in the Park's trails, lakes,

and campsites, as well as working with several experts in wilderness resources.

A geologist will introduce the group to the Park's unique geological features, and a naturalist and a wildlife biologist will teach students about the flora, fauna, animals, and birds that appear in a wilderness setting. Park personnel will familiarize the group with wilderness management, balancing the needs of the public with the needs of wilderness, as well as career opportunities within natural resources. Stories of the Park's past will both excite and entertain the youth.

Additionally, students will learn how art, photography, and Native American culture can deepen one's experience with nature. At Katahdin Lake, students will participate in painting *en plein air* with a re

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