

Friends of Baxter State Park

President's Column

by Barbara Bentley

Things are looking good for Baxter State Park! And your support of Friends of Baxter State Park is well placed.

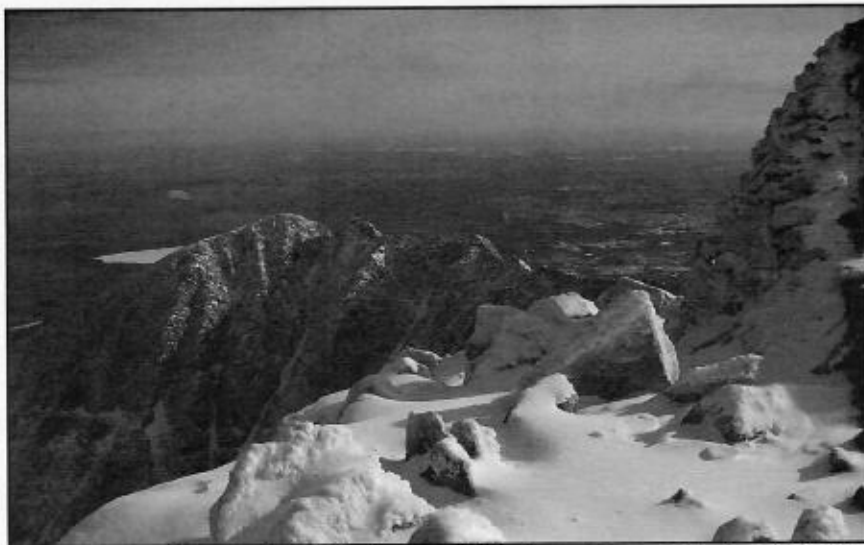
While they may not even be on your reading list, let alone at the top, three things I've read recently support this optimistic view. First is a study by Pergrams and Zaradic published in the *Journal of Environmental Management* in which the authors relate decline in National Park use since 1988 with increase in the hours of television, video games, home movies, theater attendance, and internet use, among other things. Second is *Wildlands Philanthropy*, a book by Tom Butler and Antonio Vizcaíno, which tells the story of a number of philanthropists – Percival Baxter among them – whose private efforts in support of public values have resulted in the preservation of 40 wilderness areas in 8 countries of the world. And finally, I read the many comments (over 60 pages of them!) attached to the BSP economic surveys submitted in 2007, in which the enthusiasm, appreciation, and love for the Baxter State Park experience abound.

If love of nature is becoming love of electronic media for the present generation, who will know the value of wilderness areas in the future and

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Forever Wild

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BAXTER STATE PARK
WINTER 2009 VOL. 8 NO. 1



This January view on Katahdin is one of 30 photos featured in the 2010 BSP calendar, to be available this summer. – Photo by Mike Perry

Friends Doubled Numbers in 2008 Ambitious Plans for 2009 Underway

A very successful membership campaign, coupled with the extraordinary generosity of members, doubled Friends' numbers in 2008 – doubled the number of memberships to 550 (that's over 700 individuals) and doubled the dollars in the budget! Memberships continued to be the largest source of income for Friends. An award from the Quimby Family Foundation and the generous underwriting by a member of FBSP of the printing of Whitcomb's *Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession* provided a record sum in grants, just under a third of the budget. A great year for Friends!

In addition to publishing *Obsession*, Friends produced and distributes throughout the state a brochure about Baxter State Park entitled *Know Before You Go*. This brochure provides

valuable information to the public about the wilderness nature of the Park and helps Park users prepare for their visit. In collaboration with the Park, Friends produced a 2009 BSP Calendar; an expanded version for the 2010 calendar is currently at the printers; and photographers are invited to submit photos for the 2011 calendar. A second printing in 2008 of the 4-volume set of Whitcomb's *Baxter's Vision*, first published in 2005, is fully subscribed and now available to the public for research purposes in venues throughout Maine and in several other New England states.

Friends published its quarterly newsletters, *Forever Wild*, and distributed each of the four issues to over 800 people; members of Friends received email alerts about activities and volunteer opportunities available

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PO Box 1442
 Bangor, ME 04402-1442
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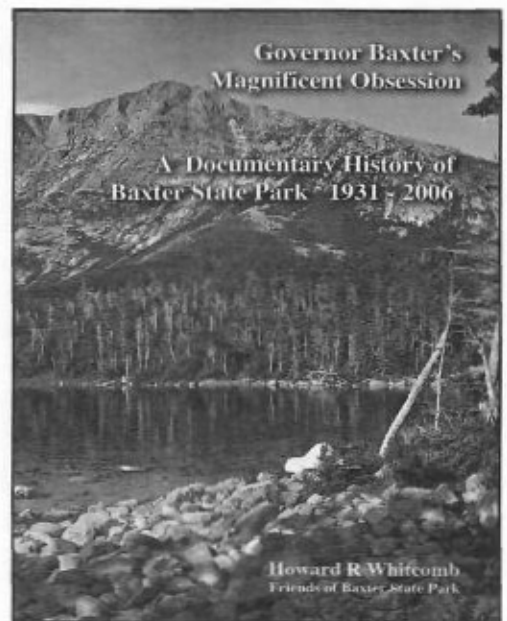
Friends of Baxter State Park is an independent citizen group working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park, in the spirit of its founder, Governor Percival Baxter.

President's Column *Continued from p. 1*

to preserve them? The largest group of BSP Park users is age 50-60, and many of those learned to enjoy the Park as young campers at established camps. Research tells us that you defend only what you know. Friends aims to help get younger folks to know the Park and increase their appreciation of wilderness values as we launch our first year of the Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program. In the BSP economic survey, the preponderance of extraordinarily positive comments about the Park, its staff, and the experience there should encourage new visitors to explore the Park and reading the FBSP brochure *Know Before You Go* will tell them what to expect in a wilderness area.

Tom Butler in *Wildlands Philanthropy* tells us that Abe Lincoln got the ball rolling with the preservation of Yosemite. "Laws change. People die. The land remains the same," Lincoln said. We've got our own Yosemite right here in Maine, thanks to the vision of Percival Baxter. When the economy is weak and times are tough, it falls to us to support and protect the places we love that are near to us. Friends will gladly help you find ways to volunteer your time, energy, and financial support. Laurie Rich has volunteered to serve as Volunteer and Event Coordinator for Friends, and I am sure she can find a job for you!

We urge you to visit Baxter State Park in 2009, and take children with you if you can. Pack only the essentials, travel light, leave the electronic media behind. Take sturdy footwear, good friends and family. That's a sure recipe for good living when the budget is tight. The Park is an unadorned, starkly beautiful, simple, and restorative vacation place. Hope to see you there!



Available for Purchase Notecards

Assorted BSP Scenes - pkg of 8 - \$10
 Assorted Wildflowers - pkg of 8 - \$10

Bill Bentley Photos

Color \$15, \$30, \$50 sizes
 Black & white \$10, \$25, \$45 sizes

Hats w/ FBSP Logo - \$20

Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession: A Documentary History of Baxter State Park, 1931-2006

by Howard R. Whitcomb - \$19.95

How to Contact Us

Rosemary Hastings, Admin. Manager
 28 Serenity Lane, Hope, ME 04847
 207-785-2641

rosehast@tidewater.net

Barbara Bentley, President
 546 Hatchet Mt. Rd, Hope, ME 04847
 207-763-3014

barbarabentley@tidewater.net

Please get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you.

Membership Matters

Membership renewal notices will go out at the beginning of March. An updated schedule of FBSP events and volunteer opportunities, as well as a sign-up form, will be included in the mailing. We are eager to match volunteers with jobs and projects in the Park so a prompt return of the sign-up form would help us set up a database of interested volunteers.

Please SAVE THE DATE for the FBSP Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 25th. Meeting is from 9 AM - 12:30 PM; lunch provided by FBSP and a short hike in the afternoon follow. Meet other Friends and learn more about the Park.

Printed by Lakeside Printing, Rockland, ME

to them. A pilot FBSP chainsaw crew went to clear blowdowns on trails in the Park. FBSP volunteers participated in BSP Trail Steward program, Leave No Trace training, and BSP Clean-up Day. Friends funded a Youth Corps trail crew in the Park. The FBSP Annual Meeting featured Maria Girouard, Director of Cultural and Historic Preservation for the Penobscot Indian Nation, and honored Chris Drew, retiring BSP Chief Ranger. Members of Friends got together for several successful Walks in the Park, and 20 people participated in the first annual "Warm Winter Outing" in March. In September, Friends was one of the sponsors of Trail's End Festival in Millinocket.

In 2009, Friends has added a new position, that of Volunteer and Event Coordinator, and welcomes Laurie Rich to the team! She will facilitate sign-ups for people to volunteer in the Park and to participate in Friends' activities and plans to expand the range of volunteer opportunities available. We have doubled our funding for Youth Corps trail crews in the Park and will offer scholarships for chainsaw training and certification for those willing to participate in clearing blowdowns in the Park. Our Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program is launched this year and will bring 10 Maine high school students to the Park for a week in August. We will apply for grant support to continue this program in 2010.

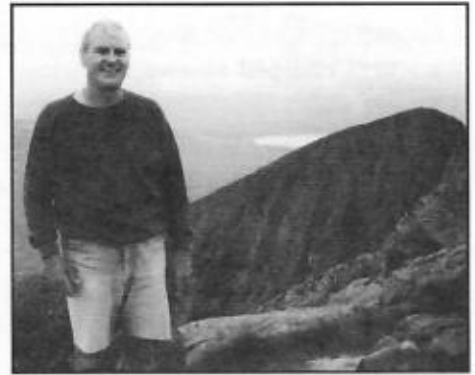
Members of FBSP regularly attend BSP Advisory and Authority meetings, and FBSP Board members maintain an on-going dialogue with the Park Director and senior staff members. All this is to say that the low overhead of FBSP, as well as the many volunteer hours of its members and the energy and talents of its all-volunteer activist Board, make possible the funding of many productive activities in support of the place we aim to preserve. Times may be tough in many sectors, but we look to a bright future for the Park.

Our Readers Write...

re: John W. Neff's *Katahdin*

... In 1960, my wife and I had six young children, could not afford expensive vacations, and decided to make our two-week summer vacation from my job into a camping trip. ... If you can picture this, I constructed a large wooden box the exact dimension of the rooftop on my station wagon In this box, we packed a very large tent with poles, an auxiliary tent to put over the picnic tables when it rained, 8 sleeping bags, food, clothing, a camper's kitchen, a few folding cots, lantern, cook stove, cooler, and catalytic heater. The family, all eight of us, squeezed into the car.

One of our first trips, in 1962, was a week at Roaring Brook. Even though that was almost 47 years ago, I remember the tent alongside the brook, the large rock with the plaque dedicated to Governor Baxter, the trail to Sandy Stream Pond, where we saw Moose eating in the pond several times, and the climb to Chimney Pond. All eight of us made the climb, and I carried the youngest child ... age 2 on my back. It was a long climb with many rest stops, but I will never forget arriving in the Great Basin and looking up from Chimney Pond. I can still see it vividly today. It was well worth the climb and the long descent to Roaring Brook. One year later, we again took a day trip to Roaring Brook from Rockland, along with another family in their car, and made the climb to Chimney Pond. I never was able to go back to Baxter until 1984, when one of my sons, his wife, and two of her brothers ... climbed to Baxter Peak by way of Abol Trail. ... Please look at the enclosed picture and compare the background to the picture on page 11 (of John Neff's book *Katahdin*). I was 54 years old at that time. We made the whole trip leaving Rockland at 3 AM and returning to Rockland at supertime. I never returned to Baxter but often dream of those visits. ...



Leo Dostie climbs Katahdin in 1984.

– Photo provided by Dostie

Thanks a lot and keep doing the good work that Friends of Baxter Park is doing. – Leo Dostie, Rockland, ME

Re: Whitcomb's *Obsession*

I am writing to express my gratitude for the generous gesture made by Barbara Bentley and Friends of Baxter State Park at the October 17th Authority meeting at Kidney Pond. I had emailed Barbara a few days before the meeting to ask if she could bring a copy of *Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession* with her to the meeting so that I could purchase it there. To my surprise and delight, after the business meeting had concluded, Barbara presented each Advisory member with a personal copy of the book.

I'm sure that not only will this book prove to be interesting reading but also a valuable reference for Advisory members as they consider questions relating to the Park.

Thank you very much.

– David Edwards, Pownal, ME

Re: Austin's *Wilderness Partners*

Thank you for sending Whitcomb's book and the Baxter calendar. The book will be a useful reference. I just finished reading Phyllis Austin's book on Buzz, which paints a vivid picture of the many pressures that Buzz had to contend with over the years. I found it amusing that Buzz had difficulty coping with the fact that, in later years, his new rangers didn't know how to use an ax.

– Jon Lund, Hallowell, ME

Looking Back ...

Who first camped at awe-inspiring Russell Pond?

Even as we recognize 60 years of Russell Pond Campground as a part of Baxter State Park, we should not forget that public camping at that site began much earlier – in the early 1920s – AND that access was not from the south but from the east. At that time, Bill Tracy was the proprietor of the Hathorn Pond Camps, a sporting camp on the East Branch of the historic Penobscot River. Realizing the special beauties of the territory inland from the river, he began to run packhorse trips up nearby Little Spring Brook, skirting the Hathorn Ponds and eventually joining the old Wassataquoik Tote Road.

After erecting several rough log cabins on Russell Pond, Tracy could offer his guests comfortable accommodations and a vast area where they could fish and hunt to their hearts content. They could also avail themselves of many other wonders of the beautiful Wassataquoik Valley, including an ascent of Katahdin by way of the historic Tracy Trail, first cut in 1885 and later named the North Peaks Trail. What a special and unique history for one of the most beautiful campsites in the park.

I wonder how many of our readers remember the fresh rock face painting of a moose and calf as one entered the campground from the south? Do they know how it got there? There are lots of different explanations. What is yours?

– John Neff, Author of *Katahdin: An Historic Journey*, can be contacted at jhneff@fairpoint.net



Russell Pond Ranger Brendan Curran sent us this historical photo and identifies the view of the old Tracy camps at Russell Pond. The date is uncertain. What served as the first ranger camp, and later a bunkhouse (until 1990), is the building visible to the left. The present campground canoe rack and dock would be located just out of camera range on the right.

FBSP Launches

Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program

FBSP's kickoff effort to ensure that future generations continue to value the earth's wild places is off to great start. The newly named Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program is scheduled for August 9 – 16, 2009, and the application process is in full swing. Ten lucky current high school sophomores and juniors will be notified on March 1st of their selection for the program.

Planning began last fall shortly after the Quimby Family Foundation awarded FBSP \$10,000 to underwrite the Wilderness Preservation for Next Generation program. The funding will provide for the select group of teens an all-expense paid week of camping, hiking, recreating, and learning at the Park under the capable direction of experienced wilderness leaders from the Chewonki Foundation. The FBSP website highlighted the program and provided applications for downloading, state newspapers received press releases about the program, and high school outdoor club leaders across the state received information packets for students. Last minute reminders were also sent just prior to the Feb. 1 deadline.

An application review panel from the FBSP Board will meet in mid-February to make the final selections, and we will introduce these "wilderness leaders for tomorrow" in our next newsletter.

– Linda McKee, Project Coordinator

ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS: 12 Months of Photos Needed

We invite you to submit photos for the 2011 BSP calendar. Please send photos on CDs to FBSP by October 15, 2009. (Yes, that's 2009. The 2010 calendar is at the printer, and we're working on 2011!) Label each photo with photographer's name, title of the photo, and approximate month of the year it represents. For photos of animals, please indicate distance from subject and size (in mm) of lens used. Here are some tips we've learned from this year's effort:

1. Adjust your camera to take photos at the highest resolution possible.
2. Avoid photos of rare/endangered plants or photos of animals that seem to be threatened by human presence.
3. As the captions are designed to be educational, a "teachable moment" is welcome. Focus on wilderness is preferred over human activity, and photos representing less visited parts of the Park are welcome. There is a limit to the number of shots of Katahdin that will appear in the calendar.

Message from FBSP Volunteer and Event Coordinator Laurie Rich

Let me introduce myself. My name is Laurie Rich, a retired Air Traffic Control Specialist residing in Hampden, Maine. I have been an active volunteer at Baxter State Park for some years and helped coordinate the 2007 Baxter State Park Economic Impact Survey. From that experience, I got the idea that I might be good at coordinating volunteer activities for the Friends of Baxter State Park. To that end, I am developing a list of projects and collecting information from those willing to help out. I hope to be able to put the two together and give both the individual and the Park a new type of productive relationship.

This is a new program for the FBSP, and my goal is to ensure a clear line of communication, detailed instructions, tools as needed, and a leader or contact to provide guidance. I will be working closely with the Park Staff to ensure a rewarding experience. To that end, I need to hear from you. I hope you will be willing to work with me and to fill out the **FBSP Event Participation and Volunteer Form**, which will be sent to you with your membership renewal in March. It is also available on the FBSP website. This form serves three purposes. First, it identifies those who wish to participate. Second, it indicates the person's field of interest. Finally, it gives an idea of the person's abilities, availability, and any restrictions. From information gained here, I hope to be able to match individuals to activities they will enjoy.

It doesn't matter if you have only a few hours, a day, or more to volunteer; there is a way for you to donate your time and talent to the Park. I look forward to working with you. – Laurie Rich, FBSP Volunteer and Event Coordinator



We are delighted to welcome Laurie Rich as the new FBSP Volunteer and Event Coordinator! Contact her, and she'll find an opportunity for you! – Photo by Rich

Volunteer Opportunities & Walks in the Park - 2009

The events and opportunities listed here include both those sponsored by Friends of Baxter State Park as well as some sponsored by Baxter State Park itself. If you'd like to participate, please send in a **Friends of Baxter State Park Event Participation and Volunteer Form**, available on the FBSP website. Reservations for lodging and camping go quickly so you might want to act now. As new opportunities arise, this list is updated frequently. Keep an eye on the FBSP website, email alerts, and future newsletters. See *How to Contact Us* on p. 2 of this newsletter.

WALKS in the PARK with FBSP

- **March 19, 20, & 21 (3 nights) - Warm Winter Outing at Twin Pines Camps on Millinocket Lake – 20 people**
Experience winter wonderland in full view of Katahdin. The lodging package for all three nights is \$105 plus 7% lodging tax. We'd plan to dine at River Drivers one night, maybe have Orvieto cater a meal for us another night, and do some cooking ourselves, of course. Go to the NEOC website for information about the facility and about equipment rentals or bring your own. March 1st is the deadline for sending payment for lodging to FBSP.
- **May 16 – Walk in the Park at BSP Harpswell Property**
Join other Friends and members of the public for a guided tour of the BSP property in Harpswell. We'll meet our guide, Forester Barrie Brusila, at 9 AM and finish up by noon. Invite your friends and family to get to know another of Baxter's bequests to the people of Maine.
- **July 16, 17, & 18 (3 nights) – Walk in the Park at South Branch Pond – 12 people**
Members of FBSP are invited to gather in the Park for a weekend of activities. There is room for 12 in lean-tos at South Branch Pond, but others can make reservations at this or other sites on their own and join Friends for hikes, walks, volunteer work, and/or the Loon Count.
- **July 19 & 20 (2 nights) – Walk in the Park at Chimney Pond – 4 people**
Pack in your gear for a couple of nights at Chimney Pond. It's a great point of departure for a number of day hikes, depending on interest and ability, not to mention the weather.
- **August 9 – 16 (7 nights) FBSP Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program**
Volunteers are needed for support services and special activities at specific times during the week.

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Volunteer Opportunities & Walks in the Park - 2009 *Continued from p. 5*

• September 17, 18, & 19 (3 nights) – Walk in the Park at Chimney Pond – 8 people

Days are shorter but the weather can be fabulous. Pack in your gear for three nights at Chimney Pond. It's a great point of departure for a number of day hikes, depending on interest and ability. You'll have many options.

TRAILS

Friends of Baxter State Park Trail Projects:

FBSP has 4-person chainsaw teams that clear blowdowns from trails. The sawyer on each team needs to be a certified chainsaw operator; the other three need strong backs and work gloves. FBSP will pay the fee for training a sawyer willing to volunteer on a FBSP team. A sawyer must provide his/her own chainsaw and safety equipment. For specific information about the training, contact Craig Dickstein at craig.donna@wildblue.net

- April 18 – 19 - Chainsaw Training and Certification in Bradford
- May 23 & 24 (tentative dates) FBSP Chainsaw Crew - clear blowdowns on trails
- May 30 & 31 (tentative dates)) FBSP Chainsaw Crew - clear blowdowns on trails
- October 3 & 4 - Chainsaw Training & Certification in Windham (tentative date)

Baxter State Park Projects:

BSP Trail Supervisor Paul Sannicandro's detailed description of the nature of these projects is available on FBSP website.

- June 6 (rain date June 7) – BSP Trail Project #1 National Trails Day – Martin Ponds Trail/Trail Stewards Training Challenge level = moderate, hike 7 miles with daypack.
- June 14 – 18 – BSP Trail Team #2 – South Branch Mt. Trail – Bog Bridge Construction Challenge level = moderate to difficult.
- July 5 – 9 – BSP Trail Team #3 Martin Pond Trail (1st date) – Bog Bridge Construction (Native Materials) Challenge level = moderate to difficult
- July 12 – 16 – BSP Trail Team #3 Martin Pond Trail (2nd date) – Bog Bridge Construction (Native Materials) Challenge level = moderate to difficult
- July 12 – 16 – BSP Trail Team #4 (1st date) – Saddle Trail Erosion Control Challenge level = most difficult.
- July 19 – 23 – BSP Trail Team #4 (2nd date) – Saddle Trail Erosion Control Challenge level = most difficult.
- September 13 – 17 – BSP Trail Team #4 (3rd date) – Saddle Trail Erosion Control Challenge level = most difficult.
- September 20 – 24 – BSP Trail Team #4 (4th date) – Saddle Trail Erosion Control Challenge level = most difficult.

EVENTS and VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

• May 2 (rain or shine)- Celebrate Earth Day with Baxter State Park

In honor of Earth Day 2008, Baxter State Park is asking for volunteers for a roadside litter patrol. Members of FBSP and of NRCM will join others in this spring ritual. The Park provides a free BBQ for participants.

• July 18 – Annual Loon Count

Centerpiece of the Maine Loon Project, the annual count brings together a diverse group of “citizen scientists” young and old, and it includes many of the Park's ponds as well as those around the state.

FBSP BOOTHS

Volunteers are needed to staff the FBSP booths at various events throughout the state during the year.

September 12 – 13 – Trail's End Festival in Millinocket

September 25, 26, & 27 – MOFGA's Common Ground Fair in Unity



Friends Board Meets in Paradise

A real perk for FBSP Board members was a retreat on magical Clark Island in October, 2008. While not all Board meetings are in such dramatic venues, another such retreat is planned for this year. Pictured here in the morning sunlight are Anne Huntington, Ken Spalding, Chaitanya York, Peg Mills, Howard Whitcomb, and Henry Beeuwkes. Not pictured are John Neff and Barbara Bentley.

– Photo by Barbara Bentley

Cooks' Corner

Backpacking Recipes for the Trail

Jane Macoualy's recipe for using that sweet potato in her pack will appear in the Spring issue of the newsletter. Got a good recipe to share? Please send it in, and we'll give it a try.
— Editor

Friends to Manage BPWF Website

Here's something for your bookmarks - baxterparkwildernessfund.org The Baxter Park Wilderness Fund's new website is up and running. When you visit the site, you'll find information about the Fund and its purpose, directions on how to give contributions to the Fund, contact information for the Fund's commissioners, and several Bill Bentley photos of the Park. Friends will manage the site for the Fund. Established through the generosity of a longtime supporter of the Park, the Fund contributes income it generates annually to the Park's budget income the Fund generates. Contributions to the Fund become part of the Fund's investment capital. Visit the website to learn more about it.



Retired BSP Chief Ranger Chris Drew shows off his latest catch, a trophy presented to him at his retirement celebration in October 2008, when over 200 people toasted his long career with BSP.

— Photo by Laurie Rich

BOOK REVIEW:

Wilderness Partners: Buzz Caverly and Baxter State Park

By Phyllis Austin

Published by Tilbury House Publishers, 2008

The story of Buzz Caverly, long serving Director of Baxter State Park, dates back almost 50 years to 1960 when Buzz signed on as a seasonal ranger right out of high school. Combining this fascinating character in a remarkable wilderness park with the talents of an accomplished writer makes for a real page turner. After countless interviews, research, writing and editing – seven years after Phyllis Austin started, we have a great book that serves as a broader history of the Park and Buzz's role in it.

While Katahdin often looks peaceful, the storms that at other times swirl around the summit are indicative of the history of the Park as well as of Buzz's own career. This is the story of many Park issues and human interaction between Buzz and his superiors, especially the Baxter State Park Authority that oversees the Park, and with his staff—the good times and the bad, harmony and conflict. Much of the drama involved differences of interpretation of the deeds of trust by which Percival P. Baxter donated to the State the land that has become Baxter State Park and how to interpret “forever wild.” The situation was often complicated by the fact that Baxter's own views on issues were not always consistent with a strict “forever wild” policy, and then Baxter sometimes changed his views over time.

Buzz dealt with all these almost endless issues over the years. Take trail design for example. Buzz preferred to have trails as natural looking as possible, but this conflicted with modern trail building techniques such as stone steps and lining the trail with stones to help keep hikers on the trail and thereby reduce erosion. On harvesting blowdowns, Buzz took the opposite position, favoring intervention in the form of salvage operations, rather than allowing nature to take its course. However, his position was consistent with Baxter, who came to support salvage operations after some convincing by the Baxter State Park



Leading one of his numerous walks during the Katahdin Lake Campaign in 2006, Buzz regales hikers with his many tales of Park history.
— Photo by Bill Bentley

Authority. Campgrounds, roads, scientific research, snowmobiles, hunting, park access (closing gates), search and rescue, budget, personnel, management, cultural issues including native American interactions, record keeping, cell phones, marketing the Park – the list goes on and on. Phyllis covers them all.

The stories are fascinating; many are very human and moving, such as the romantic story of how Buzz met his wife Jan or his role in helping the first blind hiker to complete the Appalachian Trail. And how at the end, when disagreements with his superiors led to his resignation, Buzz still came back and helped with the acquisition of the Katahdin Lake parcel.

There's a brief section on Buzz and Friends of Baxter State Park including note of some initial misgivings he had about the organization. Yet, he invariably accepted our invitations to speak at FBSP annual meetings and, as Phyllis notes, Buzz is now an Honorary Director of Friends of Baxter State Park.

For anyone who cares about the Park and wilderness issues more broadly, this book is also a must read. We owe Phyllis Austin a debt of gratitude for her tireless efforts. The result is available in bookstores for all to read for just \$20.

— Al Howlett



At the October BSP Authority meeting, Friends of Baxter State Park presented the original Lou Mucci painting of Katahdin to the Park. This painting was commissioned by FBSP for the 4-volume set of *Baxter's Vision* it published in 2005. Pictured here (L - R) are incoming BSP Authority Chair Dan Martin, FBSP President Barbara Bentley, FBSP Board member and author Howard Whitcomb, Park Director Jensen Bissell, and outgoing BSP Authority Chair Steven Rowe. *- Photo by Laurie Rich*

Update from the Park

A quiet, but very important transition in the Park's administrative team is now complete, forming a very strong, dedicated and experienced administrative staff, which will serve the Park very effectively in the years ahead.

Ben Woodard has assumed his duties as Chief Ranger and has been making very steady progress in settling into his work and building fa-

miliarity with the Park. When Christine Theriault received a call on Christmas Day from BSP Authority Chairman Dan Martin, she enthusiastically accepted his offer of the Business Manager position and began her duties after working a week with outgoing Business Manager Betts Johnston. We moved quickly to fill Christine's vacated position as Accounts Associate I with Mary Ellen Bell, who has extensive experience in the Park's reservation office, including a stint as supervisor. Betts Johnston retired from her Business Manager position, and we all wish the best for Betts as she enters into this next phase of her active and productive life.

The last transition in our team took place as Janet Mills assumed her post as Maine's Attorney General. That Attorney General Mills is keenly aware of her role as a member of the Baxter State Park Authority was evident in her remarks at her swearing in ceremony as she began, "Gov. Baldacci, distinguished guests, family and friends, you have no idea how grateful I am to be here today. My life's path has led me here. I am so happy to be here. And my mother, going on 92 years young, is also very happy to be here. She is particularly excited that I will be serving on the Baxter Park Authority, fulfilling the prophecy she made decades ago, that I would be "forever wild." Along

with Authority Chairman Dan Martin and Authority member Alec Giffen, we are looking forward to working with Attorney General Mills in the management of Baxter State Park.

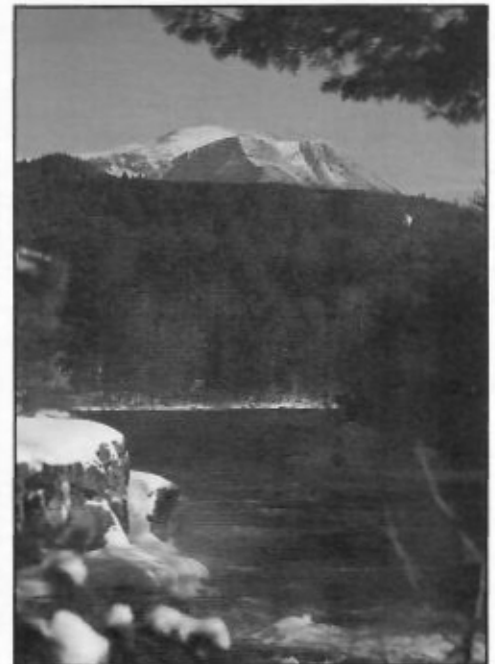
On January 15th, BSP held another very successful opening day of reservations, comparable in numbers to previous years, under the capable direction of Reservation Supervisor Joni Lowell. This event has become an enjoyable reunion with and among devoted Park users including campers like Bill Guenther, Duffy Akerley, Phil Jacobs, Peter Churchill, and FBSP President Barbara Bentley, all longterm stalwarts on opening day.

At this writing, we have about 64 inches of snow at Chimney Pond, plenty enough to work with and not really that far behind our totals of last year. The Ranger staff has a full workload of winter hauling work, including moving bog bridging and lean-to materials for Martin Ponds and Grassy Pond and the usual supplies to Russell and Chimney Ponds. The Roaring Brook bunkhouse is booked by at least one party almost every night for the next six weeks. At this time, spring seems far away, but in reality, in eight short weeks, it will be on our doorstep. Until then, enjoy the winter snow!

- Jensen Bissell, BSP Director



Chief Ranger Ben Woodard and Interpretive Specialist Marcia Williamson join other Park staff heading up the Saddle for avalanche training. *- Photo by BSP Staff*



A chilly view from the Crib Works. Not a fisherman in sight. *- Photo by Bill Bentley*

Tailoring Baxter Outings to Kids

Naturalists know that programs for children should be geared specifically towards children instead of being watered-down versions of adult programs. It makes sense, then, to think about how the younger members of your family will interact with nature during stays in wonderful places like Baxter State Park. Keep in mind that unstructured time for contemplation and discovery is a big part of bonding with nature. Part of being a kid is filling time with YOUR OWN imagination. That being said, it's good to have some kid-friendly activities in your back pocket.

Scavenger hunts are ideal for trips to the park. If you plan on hiking from South Branch Campground to Upper South Branch Pond, you could include some of the following scavenger "items": a cliff beside a pond, tree roots around a rock, a black and white bird floating in water, etc. Kids can either check off items during breaks or back at camp before supper (perhaps with a little parental help). Scavenger hunts are especially good for canoeing. Consider creating a list with language such as: Can you feel a strong current? a bouncy wave? Can you hear a loon yodel? the dip of a paddle in the water? a frog calling? the wind in the trees? Can you smell campfire smoke? Can you see a fish rise? an old sunken log? a steep mountain slope? white-caps? Any campsite near water is rich in options for a good scavenger hunt list. South Branch, Trout Brook Farm, Daicey, and Kidney are just a few examples of places with tons of potential discoveries to check off and discuss.

Another way to catalog experiences is with a journal. Kids are natural collectors, but Baxter Park is not the place for taking nature back home with you – at least in a direct sense. Journals are an ideal way for kids to process the wonder of the place and internalize it. After writing, painting, drawing, or recording in their journal, youngsters will hopefully absorb

something much more profound than a rock, flower, bones, or what have you, placed on a windowsill back home.

Photography is another artistic outlet kids can explore in the Park. If possible, letting children have their own camera or time with a camera makes for more personalized creativity. It's illuminating to see what captures the eye of a young photographer. Sometimes the big and somewhat obvious visual attractions many adults are drawn to (such as the striking profile of Katahdin) are eschewed by kids for other, less obvious focal points.

If you're planning on camping, books can be a part of the bedtime experience. A good story, perhaps ideally related to the outdoors, can add to the experience. For a list of seasonally organized and periodically updated children's books, check out the Take-It-Outside webpage's reading list at www.take-it-outside.org/readingandrecipes.html

Lastly, if you're taking kids to natural areas anywhere, but especially to Baxter State Park, it is noble to instill outdoor ethics and an understanding of low-impact skills. *Leave No Trace* is an ideal source of information for



Kaytie heads for the trail, her grandmother right behind. – Photo by Rosemary Hastings
adults and for kids. More information on *Leave No Trace* can be found at www.lnt.org

Baxter State Park is a fabulous place for kids to experience nature on her terms. That doesn't mean kids will automatically want to explore the Park the exact same way adults may. With a little planning and some customization to your child's personal style, a trip to Baxter is likely to be a terrific experience for kids and adults alike.

– Rex Turner



Part of being a kid is filling time with YOUR OWN imagination. This photo of a young Park visitor is one of 30 photos featured in the 2010 BSP calendar, available this summer.

– Photo by Bruce Hancock

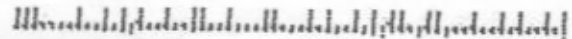
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Friends Website: www.friendsofbaxter.org Thank you!

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Whitcomb to talk about *Obsession*

Have you ever wondered about the creation of Baxter State Park and the preservation of Katahdin as a wilderness area for the people of Maine? Patten Free Library in Bath is hosting a book talk and signing by Georgetown's Howard R. Whitcomb for his new title *Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession* on Saturday afternoon, February 28, at 3 pm in the Reading Room. It was published by the Friends of Baxter State Park as a documentary history of the Park and the man behind it.

Let us hear from you!

Please send in your **FBSP Event Participation and Volunteer Form**. You will receive a copy of the form with your membership renewal or you can find it on the FBSP website.
Questions? See p. 2 for "How to Contact Us"!



Sunrise in the Park at 14 below zero is viewed from Patten while some folks are camped out at Park Headquarters awaiting Opening Day Reservations. No wind, but a little brisk. – Photo by Bill Bentley