



Friends of Baxter State Park

President's Column

by Charlie Jacobi

Fourth Generation and Beyond

To say this past year was an exciting and busy one for the Friends of Baxter Park would be an understatement. In January, Governor Baldacci announced the beginning of the Katahdin lake Campaign, and in December, the successful completion of the \$14 million campaign. Lots happened between those two bookend months.

For the Friends, it quickly became *All Katahdin Lake All the Time*. Any other work plans we had were scattered to the four winds as we plunged into the campaign and contributed in every way we could. (*See article on this page.*)

I offer our heartfelt thanks to those who worked so hard to complete this deal: Governor John Baldacci, Department of Conservation Commissioner Patrick McGowan and his staff, the Baxter State Park Authority, Jensen Bissell and Baxter State Park staff, Sam Hodder and the Trust for Public Land staff, the Gardner family, former Park Director and Katahdin Lake tour leader Buzz Caverly, John Piotti and the other legislators who supported the land bill, and the more than one thousand private donors, especially YOU, who contributed to the campaign. It was an

Continued on p. 2

Forever Wild

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BAXTER STATE PARK
WINTER 2007 VOL. 6 No. 1



Katahdin Lake from the Dudley Trail on Mt. Katahdin — Photo by Bill Bentley

Katahdin Lake Parcel In! Friends of Baxter Celebrate Addition to the Park

The mood was festive at BSP Headquarters, the conference room decorated with paintings of Katahdin supplied by Millinocket's North Light Gallery, during the announcement of the Katahdin Lake Campaign's success on December 15, 2006. DOC Commissioner Pat McGowan began the ceremony giving credit to what he called a "State Championship Team" that had worked on the deal. He said that the Trust for Public Land's raising \$14 million in 14 months may be the largest sum raised in the shortest time!

Sam Hodder credited the leadership and vision of two governors — Baxter and Baldacci; the generosity of 1,071 donors — 51% from Maine contributing 64% of the money; and the stewardship of BSP Staff, inspiration of Buzz Caverly, Jr., and hard work of many others; for the Campaign's success. The deed changed hands, and the Katahdin Lake parcel became part of the Park, 37 years after Gov. Baxter's death.

Board Members of Friends contributed over \$10,000 and many hours working on the campaign — sending mailings to the public and email action alerts to members, distributing brochures in many venues throughout the state, speaking to a wide variety of organizations, and testifying before the Maine Legislature. Friends also co-hosted artist Evelyn Dunphy's reception at Bowdoin College, served on the special

Continued on p. 2



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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.

Katahdin lake — Continued from p. 1

Committee, provided extensive news-letter coverage, coordinated six hikes to Katahdin Lake with former Park Director Buzz Caverly for over 70 people, and sponsored a work day at Katahdin Lake Camps. Members also wrote op-ed pieces and letters for newspapers around the state in support of the project.

Friends member and generous donor to the campaign H. Frank Trautman cited in a letter to Friends the “incredible amount of effort that so many put into this. ...(He) could not believe the cooperation from everyone needed to accomplish what quite a few thought could not be done in such a short time to meet the Dec. 15 option deadline.” He concluded, “It would have been sad to have looked down from the Peak and seen a beautiful lake rimmed with cottages and a big hotel. So a lot of credit and thanks should go to all who made this possible.”

We truly have good reason to celebrate!
Thanks to all! —Editor

Membership Matters

Friends currently has 395 active members from 26 states and provinces:
Maine: 266 or 67%
Other New England states: 69 or 17%
NY-NJ-PA: 22 or 6%
All other: 38 or 10%

Membership renewal letters will be mailed in March. You may also renew by printing and mailing the renewal form from the website. Check the website to see different premiums available for various levels of membership. Please consider renewing at a higher level!

— Mary Cooke

Correction: We regret an error in the Fall 2006 newsletter. The caption to the photograph that accompanied “Lichens at Work on Blueberry Knoll” should have read: Howard Whitcomb (L) and “Huey”(James Coleman), independent filmmaker who produced *Wilderness and Spirit: A Mountain Called Katahdin*. —Editor

President's Column — Continued from p. 1

amazing effort for an amazing place. Visit Katahdin Lake in 2007 to see for yourself why Governor Baxter had the right idea about it in 1921.

Now that Katahdin Lake is in the Park, Director Bissell and Park staff will have their hands full developing a management plan for integrating the new lands into Park operations. We look forward to participating in that effort on your behalf.

Governor Baxter gave Katahdin to the people of Maine and to posterity in 1931. Seventy-five years later, posterity has given back. The people of Maine and other Park enthusiasts gave Katahdin Lake to *new* future generations. Seventy-five years is three generations worth of enjoyment of Baxter Park, with the fourth generation just beginning. That fourth generation is well represented by my good friend, Sander Parson. Sander is all of seven years old and lives in the big city. Although he has strong Maine connections, he's never been to Baxter Park. I look forward to showing Sander and his family the Park someday soon, especially Katahdin Lake. Thanks to the vision, dogged persistence, and generosity of Governor Baxter then, and of all of us today, I can make that trip.

Amid the Katahdin Lake celebration, another quiet announcement of a gift to the Park was overshadowed somewhat. You will hear more about this gift in a few months. A separate endowment is being set up to benefit the Park, and it is significant and substantial. Unlike the other Trusts set up by Governor Baxter, anyone will be able to add to this fund, which will help finance the general operation of the Park like the other Trusts. The generosity of the donor reminds me of the words of another donor to another park, who, when asked why, said, “It's really quite simple. We love this place.” And that's why we give, too. The new Trust will provide a needed measure of financial security for the long-term future of the Park, well beyond the fourth

Continued on p. 3

generation. We look forward to hearing more about it. With this trust and the addition of Katahdin Lake, we are energized and optimistic like never before about the future of the Park.

Calling All Volunteers

Help out at Park this Summer

BSP will be conducting an Economic Impact Survey in 2007 to determine the expenditures Park visitors make to local communities. The survey will be distributed to all outgoing visitors from 8AM to 8PM on 21 randomly chosen days at each gate, making a total of **42 days for which they need volunteers to hand out survey forms!**

For a minimum commitment of a 6 hour shift — either 8AM - 2 PM or 2PM - 8PM, with some particularly hardy souls working both shifts on a day — volunteers will be able to stay the night prior to and following their shift at either Trapper John (Togue Pond dates) or Trout Brook farm staff facility (Matagamon dates.)

Togue Pond dates: May 20; June 11, 15, 20, 23, 24; July 2, 5, 6, 12, 22; August 4, 7, 13, 14, 31; Sept 8, 13, 17, 26, 30.

Matagamon dates: May 18, 29, 31; June 9, 10, 13, 14, 22; July 3, 11, 15, 20, 27, 29, 30; August 6, 8, 15, 24; September 1; October 2.

Please contact Park Naturalist Jean Hoekwater at 207-723-8537 or jeanhoekwater@maine.gov to sign up. Jean reports that the Park is looking forward to working with its strong base of friends and volunteers to accomplish this special one-time task this summer.

Howard Whitcomb will offer a 4-week course entitled "Katahdin" beginning on April 12th at Midcoast Sr. College in Bath. For info., call 207-442-7349 or www.midcoastseniorcollege.org



Sam Hodder of Trust for Public Land and Park Director Jensen Bissell listen to the announcement of the success of the Katahdin Lake Campaign at Park Headquarters on December 15, 2006. —Photo by Bill Bentley

Update from the Park

by BSP Director Jensen Bissell

As I write this piece, the Park is expecting the second significant snowfall of the season after a very slow, and wet, start. Due to lack of snow, we just opened the Togue Pond Gate to snowmobiling on January 16th. I know that with Maine weather what it is, by the time you read this, we may be buried to the eaves in snow — that would be fine with me.

Our statistics for 2006 are completed, and as we expected, the number of people entering the Park rose slightly over 2005 (~56,000 to ~58,000). That's good news. On the downside, the increase was powered by day use, and camping use fell again slightly in 2006, although much less than in the previous 5 years. We are convinced that the underlying trends and factors driving the drop in the Park's form of outdoor recreation use will not be going away over the short term and we will continue to address this issue in the coming decade.

Looking back in the years ahead, 2006 will be remembered as the year the Park received the Katahdin Lake gift. The 4,119 acre gift was formally accepted by the Baxter State Park Authority at separate ceremonies at Park Headquarters in Millinocket and again in Portland on December 15, 2006. Much has been said about this remarkable project that will forever now remain a part of the history of Baxter State Park.

Although we have been quietly working for some time, now our work as a staff begins in earnest. At a scheduled meeting on January 12, 2007, the Baxter State Park Authority directed me to commence with the process of completing an assimilation plan for the Katahdin

Continued on p. 4

Update from the Park

Continued from p. 3

Lake parcel. The plan will detail the process of fully including the 4,119 acres into the normal operation and administration of the Park “in the right, unspoiled way”. Over the coming months, I will work with Park staff to discuss the issues and options for management of the area with a broad spectrum of interested and knowledgeable groups and individuals in order to fully discover and consider the perspectives and concerns for the management of the area. We will then construct a draft plan and again seek review from many sources before turning to the final review phase with the Authority.



KL Announcement at Park Headquarters on December 15, 2006 (l to r) Danny Martin, Alec Giffen, Jensen Bissell, Governor Baldacci, Tom Gardner (hidden), Patrick McGowan, Buzz Caverly, Jr., and Sam Hodder —Photo by Bill Bentley

In the meantime, we have number of actions that we intend to complete as soon as possible in order to provide adequate near-term public safety and recreational use of the area:

1. Update and re-issue relevant Park maps to include the additional land and Katahdin Lake and the Katahdin Lake Trail. Update the Park’s website to include Katahdin Lake information.
2. Begin work on establishment of boundary lines around the parcel.
3. Include KL as a day use destination of Park gate passes and designate parking at Avalanche Field to accommodate 6 day users. Designate additional parking at Avalanche Field to provide for Katahdin Lake Camps use with a capacity of 12 vehicles (includes caretakers).
4. Establish a canoe landing and two rental canoes on Katahdin Lake accessible from the Katahdin Lake Trail for BSP day-use. Keys for the canoes will be available at Togue Pond Gate and Roaring Brook.
5. Remove the fuel tank located a short distance east of Avalanche Field.
6. Remove the narrow hiking bridge across Sandy Stream and retain the existing service bridge as a permanent crossing structure in this location. Begin initial repair and upgrade work (blazing, blue paint, signage, drainage establishment, and bog bridge installation) on the Katahdin Lake trail.
7. Initiate and implement restoration and site protection measures on the Katahdin Lake parcel.
8. Request a fisheries survey of Katahdin Lake and Twin Ponds by IF&W in 2007.

We are currently actively working on the monumentation of boundary lines, and we will continue to work on the remaining items as weather allows. Also at the Authority’s recent meeting, an increase in Park camping and entrance fees was approved for January 2008 (about \$1.00 more per person per night for a tentsite or leanto and \$2 more per person per night for a cabin). The Authority also approved a policy guiding the public and staff’s use of electronic devices in the Park. We are continuing to work on an “Artist in Residence” program proposal as well as a number of other issues. As usual, 2007 will include lots of work and plenty of discussion, and maybe a chance for a hike or two. Hope to see you on the trail.

Katahdin: The Art of Maine’s Greatest Mountain

Artist David Little, turned curator, is putting together an exhibition of paintings, historic and contemporary, depicting Katahdin, to be accompanied by historical and geographical materials, lectures, videos, and written documentation. To contribute, contact David at 142 Brentwood St, Portland, ME 04103 or dlittle75@earthlink.net

Look for more information in next newsletter on the **Northeastern Alpine Stewardship Gathering**, June 8 & 9, 2007. Co-hosts are Acadia National Park and Acadia Partners for Science and Learning. Contact Charlie Jacobi at 207-288-8727 Charlie_Jacobi@nps.gov

Potential Large-scale Development BSP Neighbor by Rex Turner

A significant resort development may soon emerge in the immediate shadows of Katahdin. Millinocket area tourism professional/potential developer Matthew Polstein owns and operates New England Outdoor Center, an outdoor recreation and lodging provider with whitewater rafting, float trips, wildlife tours, kayak instruction, hiking, fishing, and snowmobiling. Polstein currently has a development plan before the Land Use Regulation Commission (L.U.R.C.) in which he is seeking approval to build a resort complex including a new 80-room Adventure Lodge with restaurant and meeting space, an expansion of the existing Twin Pines Camps, as well as a mixed-use, 38-lot subdivision with townhouses and “live/work” space (targeted at members of the creative economy, such as artists and skilled craftsmen.) This resort complex is to be located on Hammond Ridge, which is situated along the southeast shore of Millinocket Lake.

This is no small development. Still, comparisons to Plum Creek’s plan for the Moosehead region may be off the mark. For one, Polstein stated that he intended to submit a concept plan, as Plum Creek did. L.U.R.C. officials, however, informed him that his project, which involves rezoning 195 acres on a 1375 acre parcel, is too small for a concept plan and instead was suited for a smaller “development plan.” There appear to be other differences as well. In the L.U.R.C. proposal, the project is outlined in the following statement:

Our goal in the design, development and operation of KTAADN RESORTS is to build and operate a signature resort for Maine and New England on and around Hammond Ridge and Millinocket Lake. We will build and operate this resort in a fashion that is as sustainable as possible, environmentally and economically. We will build and operate KTAADN RESORTS in a way that honors the spectacular natural beauty of Mount Katahdin, the West Branch Region, and Millinocket Lake at the same time that it honors the people that live in and visit the area.

In conversations with Mr. Polstein, I was informed that concerns about impacts to various views were anticipated and considered. In an attempt to proactively address these aesthetic concerns, Polstein hired consultants to use sophisticated computer modeling procedures to represent what the view of the site will look like from specific locations. While the proposed resort complex will, based on application materials (including the computer models), change the existing look of Hammond Ridge, the changes do not appear to be as severe as would be the case if the design called for sprawling lawns and stripped hillsides. Instead, the impacts to viewpoints, including ones within the Park, seem limited. Polstein credited Baxter State Park as well as the Katahdin Forest Project lands for giving him the guarantee that his

future customers will have continued access to inspiring landscapes. In this sense, his desire to establish a green-minded high-end resort and to be a good neighbor to the Park weaves into his overall business plan.

Although Polstein sees his project bringing more visitors to the region, he doesn’t necessarily see the Park being overrun. For one, he currently uses a lot of locations outside the Park for his guided excursions (such as moose-watching, fishing, etc.). Part of his customer service would be directing guests to appropriate activities and destinations. Climbing Katahdin, for example, may not be a suggestion for many guests. Additionally, he inferred that he would be a willing partner helping to share information about the Park, including ways to support and protect the Park.



Matt Polstein and Barbara Bentley at Park Headquarters on December 15th.
— Photo by Bill Bentley

Continued on p. 6

Potential Large-scale Development – Continued from p. 5

When asked about snowmobile issues, Polstein did mention that a reliable route to the Shin Pond region was important to his business and the larger regional snowmobile interests. Recent ownership patterns in the East Branch area may cause problems leading to increased calls for grooming on the Park tote road. However, Polstein did not advocate that position, and instead seemed more interested in directing efforts towards securing access through other avenues (possibly including the somewhat challenging task of routing a trail around the western and northern edges of the Park.)

Make Plans for a Trip to the Park

On **Opening Day**, Tuesday, January 16, 2007, walk-in customers could make up to two reservations for any campground for any date during the summer camping season. When 20% of each campground had been reserved for any one day, no other reservations were allowed for that campground for that day, the other 80% being reserved for the Rolling Reservation system, which began the next day.

With the **Rolling Reservations System**, a reservation may be made by mail or in person at Park Headquarters four months in advance of the day of the desired reservation. The BSP website has a foolproof chart that details the earliest date you can make a reservation for a specific date this summer. Reservations are accepted for up to seven (7) days for any one (1) site and any one (1) campground and up to two weeks (14 days) total duration.

Phone-in reservations are accepted no earlier than ten (10) days prior to the first date of the desired reservation. There is a limit of one (1) phone-in reservation per call per day. Phone-in reservations must be paid by credit card.

To obtain a printable reservation form, to view the Rolling Reservations System chart, and to obtain more information on fees, campground opening and closing dates, and reservation policies and procedures, please go to Baxter State Park's website:

<http://www.baxterstateparkauthority.com/camping/index.html>

– Sally Daggett



Three generations of Mannings from S. Portland gathered to make reservations on Opening Day, but only Alex, age 9, had such splendid headgear.

–Photo by Barbara Bentley

Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps Now Open for Business

Located on the shores of Katahdin Lake since the 1880's, Katahdin Lake Camps are now owned by Charles Fitzgerald and managed by Holly and Bryce Hamilton. The camps can be reached only by walking, snowshoeing, or cross country skiing. For more information about staying at the camps and making reservations, visit the website

www.katadinlakewildernesscamps.com

or contact

Holly and Bryce Hamilton

winter: 207-353-9469

summer: 207-749-2267

Friends Meets with Roxanne Quimby

Several members of the Friends Board met with Roxanne Quimby and Bart DeWolf of Elliotsville Plantation recently. As you know, Ms. Quimby has been purchasing lands in northern Maine, particularly east of Baxter State Park, for the purpose of creating a wilderness park. Elliotsville Plantation is the nonprofit organization formed for this purpose. Bart De Wolf is an ecologist working to inventory the resources and develop management strategies for the lands; he spoke about this at our annual meeting two years ago. While some have expressed opposition to loss of unlimited access to Quimby's woodlands, from the perspective of Baxter State Park, it is clearly a benefit to have such compatible land management along the boundary. We met with them to share information and gain a better understanding of each other's goals and priorities, in case an opportunity arises to collaborate that will help fulfill Friends' mission to help preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness values of the Park.

–Charlie Jacobi



Jesse Kimble, age 7, from Otis practices his cursive writing while waiting with his Mom to make reservations on Opening Day.

— Photo by Barbara Bentley

Computerized Reservation System up and running on Opening Day at Park Headquarters!

It was chilly, not much above zero, with gentle snow falling, as we lined up at Park Headquarters on Tuesday, January 16th. There were 14 folks camping out, some for days, to be first in line; “second wavers” like me arrived during the night for a total of 31 waiting to get some of the 20% of reservations made available that day. We entered Headquarters at 6 AM, enjoyed coffee and muffins and lots of chat, and one couple played cribbage. After an explanation by Park Director Jensen Bissell, we began the newly computerized reservation process at 7 AM.

Mike White of Dirigo Spatial Systems in Hampden has worked for 6 months with BSP staff to computerize the reservation system. “Things have gone better than I thought. These people have been great to work with,” he says. He plans to create a public interface where people can see what camping spaces are available by going on line.

Bissell points out that “...opening day provides an opportunity for long-term dedicated campers to make specific reservations of great importance to them. This group tends to include many of the same faces every year (including a few FOB members). and some of the attraction is clearly connected with a chance to get together with old friends.” He reports that by 11 AM, 70 campers had made reservations, reserving less than 3% of total spots available for summer camping. The Rolling Reservation system is now underway.

(See article on page 6.)

— Editor

SAVE THE DATE

**Friends of Baxter State Park
ANNUAL MEETING 2007**

Saturday, April 28

Oakland Grange

on Lake Messalonskee

8:30 AM – Gather

9:00 AM – 12 noon Meeting

**Noon – lunch provided at
Grange**

1:15 PM – group hike

**Program to include State of
the Park Address by BSP Director
Jensen Bissell and a keynote
speaker focusing on the Katahdin
area as a living organism – its
wildlife, wildflowers, forests,
remarkable geology, and its lakes
and flowing waters.**

Friends’ WALK in the PARK 3 nights— Sept. 6, 7, 8, 2007

Fishermen, hikers, canoeists...
there’s room for twelve. Some
plan to hike the Traveler circuit.
Reserve a space NOW with
Barbara Bentley at
207-763-3014 or
<barbarabentley@tidewater.net>



Mike White of Dirigo Spatial Systems at the Reservation Desk on Opening Day.

— Photo by Barbara Bentley



Maine's Mt. Katahdin viewed from the shores of Katahdin Lake, Baxter State Park — Photo by Bill Bentley

Friends is offering for sale some of Bill Bentley's photos of Baxter State Park in a 17" wide format, in black and white or in color. Scenes include the Knife Edge from Pamola Peak, Katahdin from OJI, Wassataquoik Stream in three panoramas, Chimney Pond morning, DoubleTop from OJI, plus other views of Katahdin. Packages of 4 1/2" x 5 1/2" notecards of 8 different scenes in the Park by a variety of photographers are also for sale as well as single 3 1/2" x 8 1/2" " notecards of the above photo of Mt. Katahdin. These items will be available on April 28th at the Friends' Annual Meeting in Oakland.

Friends of Baxter State Park
P.O. Box 1442
Bangor, ME 04402-1442

Visit our website!
www.friendsofbaxter.org

We're looking for New Friends

- _____ \$1,000 Governor Baxter Society
- _____ \$ 500 Katahdin Club
- _____ \$ 250 Knife Edger
- _____ \$ 100 Hamlin Peaker
- _____ \$ 50 Sponsor
- _____ \$ 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!

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e-mail