Purchase Your Park Pass!

Even in the winter, your park pass purchase helps make possible vital maintenance projects in Acadia.

The Acadia National Park $20 weekly pass ($10 in the shoulder seasons) and $40 annual pass are available at Acadia National Park Headquarters (on the Eagle Lake Road/Rte.233 in Bar Harbor)

Partners
Friends of Acadia, Island Explorer and L.L. Bean have formed a partnership to preserve and protect Acadia National Park for future generations.

Many species of birds live in the Mount Desert Island area.

Protect
Acadia National Park with approximately 35,000 acres, includes 41 miles of coastline, 16 islands, more than 200 species of birds, and numerous historic buildings and trails.

Join us in protecting our national parks.

Jordan Pond and the twin curves of the Bubbles

Preserve
Island Explorer is propane powered for cleaner air and a healthier environment.

Fragrant water lily found in fresh water ponds throughout Acadia National Park

Participate
Buy a park pass
Your contribution helps:
- rebuild trails and carriage roads
- protect natural and cultural resources
- support the fare-free Island Explorer

Acadia’s coastal landscape provides opportunities for hiking, biking and kayaking.
At this writing, Friends of Acadia and Island Explorer partners are planning to celebrate the ground breaking for the Acadia Gateway Center—a long-envisioned capstone to the Island Explorer bus system. The Maine Department of Transportation, Acadia National Park, Downeast Transportation, L.L.Bean, the local chambers of commerce, and others will join to turn over that first shovelful of dirt, kicking off the on-the-ground accomplishment of the Gateway Center.

In its first phase, the Acadia Gateway Center will provide a maintenance center and storage area for the fare-free, propane-powered Island Explorer buses; offices for Downeast Transportation, the non-profit organization managing the system; and commuter parking. When the Center is completed, it will provide parking for visitors to catch the Island Explorer buses into the park, and provide a first stop opportunity to buy park passes and gather information about Acadia and the region.

Island Explorer partners celebrated two milestones this year—the 10th anniversary and 3-millionth passenger. Over the first decade, the Island Explorer system grew from carrying an average of 1,800 riders daily in 1999 to more than 3,200 daily riders this year—a 78% increase. In July, we celebrated the 3-millionth passenger to ride the buses and by the end of the season more than 3.3 million passengers had ridden the buses, through Acadia and around Mount Desert Island.

The benefit to the region is tangible. Traffic congestion is reduced on the area’s roads—an estimated 1.2 million vehicles left behind by folks preferring to ride on the Explorer. Were we to line up the vehicles not driven from 1999 through 2009 because people rode the buses, we would create a traffic jam extending from Bar Harbor down the Atlantic seaboard, around the tip of Florida, and heading up its west coast to end in Freeport, Florida—more than 2,300 miles.

The environmental benefits related to this reduction in vehicles driven on area roads include the prevention of an estimated 17.9 tons of smog-causing pollutants and 11.5 thousand tons of greenhouse gases.

As an original partner in the planning for the Island Explorer, Friends purchased the land for the Acadia Gateway Center, selling what was needed for the center to the Maine Department of Transportation. Friends retained 217 acres, and is currently working with Trenton residents and trails enthusiasts to connect the Center and various destinations in the town. The National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance program is working with Friends and the new Trenton Village Connector Trails Committee to research and plan community trails that will be easily accessed by residents and those who stop at the welcome center.

Over the years, the Island Explorer buses have proven themselves to be the “little buses that could” and with the advent of the Acadia Gateway Center, these powerful buses will continue to grow and provide tremendous benefits for Acadia National Park and the region.

We end this year with gratitude to our members and donors who have supported innovative programs like the Island Explorer and Acadia Gateway Center, that protect the tranquil character of Acadia and the local communities; to L.L.Bean for its early, generous sponsorship of the Island Explorer; and to the partners who have creatively, and with determination, developed a model transportation system for Acadia and the region. I wish you many great memories in Acadia next year!

—Marla O’Byrne

Friends of Acadia Journal
A Magazine about Acadia National Park and Surrounding Communities

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Many of the people who live near and visit Mount Desert Island do so because of the special qualities of this place: the stunning scenery, year-round recreational opportunities, and, of course, Acadia National Park. Research has shown that properties next to park lands or with scenic vistas are usually worth more—a lot more. In addition, when visitors to Acadia were asked in a survey to rate the importance of park features and qualities, 99 percent of the respondents described scenic views as “extremely” or “very important.” There is little doubt that most of the area’s two million visitors come for the same reasons, and in particular, for the “draw” of Acadia National Park. For many, Acadia is a destination of choice for family travel.

Acadia’s uniqueness comes from the incredible beauty of its rugged pink granite coast, mountains that tower above the sea, surrounding islands, lovely fishing communities at the head of each harbor, and abundant opportunities for recreation—historic hiking trails, miles of scenic carriage roads, and wonderful spots to picnic or quietly contemplate the beauty of nature. In short, people come for the natural, cultural, and scenic resources that contrast with the more developed environments where they live. A recent Michigan State University study estimated that ANP annually generates more than 3,000 jobs and $145 million in expenditures for local economies.

So it seems, for both residents and visitors alike, it is important that together we protect Acadia’s uniqueness—and therefore the vibrant economy of MDI—now and in the future.

Acadia. Over time, mounting impacts could result in fewer people coming to live and visit here. The negative effects of uncontrolled growth are always the sum of many smaller, seemingly insignificant decisions that accumulate over the years. It is similar to a growing teenager—parents may not notice daily growth, but the aunt and uncle who visit only once a year are often surprised by the changes that have occurred.

I hope the towns on and around MDI will make it a priority to work together to address the need for cell phone service, alternative energy sources, and other growth in ways that are sensitive to the scenic assets that bring millions of people to this part of Maine. The town of Bar Harbor should be commended for taking the lead in addressing the potential impacts of cell phone towers and outdoor lighting by adopting measures to protect our quality of life while still providing for reasonable and appropriate growth and new economic activity. It doesn’t have to be one or the other. Locating wind turbines or cell towers in areas that avoid or minimize negative impacts to important scenic vistas or other park values is a “win–win” situation: The community protects resources important to visitors and residents alike, while improving cell phone coverage or energy conservation efforts. If left to their own devices, cell phone companies will find tower locations that meet their needs—not necessarily the needs of the community. Without land use regulations, it would be “anything goes”—and what homeowner would want a cell tower springing up next to their house? Communities must try to balance the “greater good of all” with the needs of individual property owners. Reasonable growth through local regulations not only grows the economy but also attracts even more people to our wonderful island home.

“It is important that together we protect Acadia’s uniqueness—and therefore the vibrant economy of MDI—now and in the future.”

—Sheridan Steele
A Striking Cover

Although the opportunities for photography in Acadia are endless, Tom Blagden’s cover picture of “Pink granite in fog near summit of Penobscot Mountain” still managed to provide me a rich surprise. So often, published images of the park depend for their punch on bright blue water, inky green spruce, and the vivid reds and oranges of setting suns. These familiar elements do have impact, but I am so pleased to see a really powerful photograph that is built on some of the more subtle—and pictorially under-represented—hues of Acadia. Pink granite on a foggy day, a familiar and peaceful scene to hikers, has an aesthetic just as strong, just as representative of the park, as the glory of any sunset. Thanks for featuring this fine, uncommon photograph so prominently.

Farnham (Mike) Blair
Blue Hill

Hiking in the Clouds

This weekend we did a “team’s choice park activity.” We hiked around the top of Cadillac Mountain. It was very fun, and yet somewhat challenging for my husband and I with a two- and three-and-a-half year old who just wanted to run, climb and jump. We liked seeing the boats, the islands, and the fog that covered the islands from the high up view. We learned that being up at the top was like being in the clouds.

Team Swett (Steph, Kaden, Kobe, and Gordon Swett)

Thanks from...

We would like to thank Travis, Theresa, Cliff, and everyone else for giving us a chance to make an impact on Acadia National Park. We are also very grateful for the time you put into making our trip a wonderful one. It was nice of Theresa to accompany us on our boat trip to Cranberry Island, and then to show us a historical museum that was very interesting.

I know that everyone enjoyed the presents and food that Friends gave us, especially the homemade cookies. We also appreciate the certificates and water bottles that we all received. Because of the beautiful posters, we will always be able to remember Acadia National Park.

Students of Columbia Secondary School for Math, Science & Engineering
New York, NY
Mike Alley: Dedicated Volunteer Leader

In his 46 years of work with the National Park Service, Mike Alley has worn many hats: general laborer, fire control worker, law enforcement ranger, leader of the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps (AYCC), and, finally, field crew leader—a position he held for the last eleven years. A native of Bar Harbor, Mike was a school teacher for 33 years. In October, 2009, he celebrated his well-deserved retirement with Acadia National Park and Friends of Acadia.

An invaluable member of the FOA team, Mike will be sorely missed. Look for him at Sand Beach during the summer months—complete with chair and books; and on the Jordan Pond and South Bubble trails—his favorite in Acadia.

Mike takes a break from constructing a bog walk. As a field crew leader, he worked alongside his volunteers, performing vital repair and maintenance to Acadia's trails and carriage roads.

Mike Alley reading from the book The World's Most Truthful Man—a much-loved volunteer crew tradition.

Mike (left) with a group of enthusiastic young volunteers. Before he became a field crew leader, he was in charge of the AYCC from 1982–1997.

Mike working on a trail with Cliff Olson, fellow Friends of Acadia field crew leader.
My Monet

Finally paid off the logger I buy wood from
The last $50 on four cords for this winter.
The greenbacks, two $20s and a $10, I carried
a week in my wallet, hoping they didn’t turn
into milk or bread, coffee or cheese.
If I need another cord or two

I don’t want to be beholden.
I want to pick up the phone,
Dial and order the loads come December.

After I paid the dough
I felt enough at ease to take the dog
down the sewage treatment plant road

where milkweed pods just opened. Down
stuck out of scallop-shaped shells
like ideas for cumulous clouds.

The sky held a few of those
high, small smoke signals
I think of as flak-for-peace

at six o’clock. They were
also reflected in the cattail swamp
at the side of the road where run-off lingers.

Milkweed, clouds, reflections,
all in such succession
I can still see them

while sitting in front of a fire
letting them go like smoke
up the chimney toward tomorrow.

—Gerry Stork
20TH ANNUAL BENEFIT CELEBRATION

Lisa Horsch Clark

On Saturday, August 8, 2009, Friends of Acadia hosted its 20th Annual Benefit under the big tents at the A��ou Inn in Northeast Harbor. Consistently the largest annual fundraising event for FOA, this year’s benefit raised $370,000 to help preserve and protect Acadia National Park.

More than four hundred guests bid on a wide selection of silent and live auction items. This year’s auction featured auctioneer Michael Grogan of Grogan & Company behind the microphone. He inspired spirit- ed bidding on an assortment of trips, a Honda Metropolitan Scooter, vintage trail and carriage road signs, a day sail on the Rebecca, and a cocktail party hosted by media mogul and Seal Harbor resident Martha Stewart—among many other wonderful items.

This popular annual celebration depends on generous volunteers, auction item donors, local businesses, and event sponsors. Dollars raised through auction sales, sponsorships, ticket sales, and advertising fund an array of conservation and advocacy projects. Each year, Friends grants more than a million dollars in conservation grants to the park and community.

A continued theme for the event was environmental sustainability. Building on the success of last year’s auction, the Green Team committee elected to reduce the amount of paper entering the waste stream by using a digital format of the Benefit Guide, which was projected onto screens and televisions throughout the dining and silent auction tents. Each guest, sponsor, and advertiser received a keepsake of the guide on a reusable USB flash drive. Centerpieces featured mosses, rocks, pinecones, and reusable trail signs identifying tables for seating. LED lighting was used throughout the tents, food scraps were composted, and generators were powered by biodiesel—all efforts to make the auction not only the most exciting fundraising event on the island, but also the most sustainable.

We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to everyone who helped make the 20th Annual Benefit a success. To view items sold at this year’s auction, or to view the photo album, please visit www.friendsofacadia.org/gala. To learn more about the 2010 Benefit, scheduled for August 14, contact Lisa Horsch Clark at lisahorsch@friendsofacadia.org.

The 20th Annual Benefit Auction saw spirited bidding both in the silent auction tent (top) and during the evening’s live auction (bottom).
Volunteering

TAKING PRIDE IN ACADIA

More than 400 enthusiastic people turned out for the 19th Annual Take Pride in Acadia Day, sponsored by Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park, on Saturday, November 7th. Under a brilliant sun, volunteers new and seasoned spent the morning raking leaves out of drainage ditches and culverts, preparing Acadia’s carriage road system to weather the coming winter. Clogged drainage ways can allow standing water and ice to build up on the surface of the roads, resulting in erosion, washouts, and other costly damage. “Saturday’s work is truly an invaluable service to our park,” noted Terry Begley, projects and events coordinator for Friends of Acadia. “Not only does it save the park service untold dollars in repair and maintenance costs, but it allows the roads to dry more quickly in the spring, permitting bike and foot traffic earlier in the season than would otherwise be possible.”

Over the morning more than 13 miles of carriage roads were cared for. Volunteers returned to park headquarters for a hearty lunch of chili, cornbread, cider, and the annual “carriage road cakes” baked and donated by Janet Anker.

“At our first Take Pride in Acadia Day, back in 1990, we had 40 volunteers,” said Jonathan Gormley, volunteer coordinator for Acadia National Park, to the crowd assembled at park headquarters. “As I remember, we were quite pleased by the turnout. Now, we’ve grown by leaps and bounds, but our mission—caring for Acadia National Park—has not changed since day one.”

The grand prize drawings for the 2009 Acadia Quest followed lunch. This year, 116 teams from ten states registered for the Quest—double the number from 2008, the first year of the program. “The Quest succeeds because of the enthusiasm it inspires in the teams,” said Begley. “It shows them that national parks—and nature generally—are places where you can have a good time, playing and learning and lending a helping hand.” The 2009 grand prize packages were donated by L.L. Bean and awarded to Team Lewis of Marlboro, NJ; Team Burmeister of Ellsworth, ME; and Team Judice of Dayton, ME.

Financial sponsors of Take Pride in Acadia Day included Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, The First, and The Knowles Company. Transportation and other support were donated by in-kind gifts from Acadia Bike & Coastal Kayaking, Janet Anker, Downeast Transportation, Mount Desert Island YMCA, National Park Sea Kayak Tours, National Park Tours, and Quietside Café.

—Ian Marquis

Heart of the Matter

“The lack of power to take joy in outdoor nature is as real a misfortune as the lack of power to take joy in books.”

—Theodore Roosevelt

More than 400 people attended this year’s Take Pride in Acadia Day.
The Thrill of the Quest

2009 marked the second year of Acadia Quest. This year, 116 teams from ten states took part in the Quest—twice the number that participated in 2008, the inaugural year. Sponsor L.L. Bean again provided a generous collection of prizes that inspired teams as they took part in ranger-led programs, cleaned roadides on Earth Day, explored Acadia’s offshore islands, and rode the propane-powered Island Explorer. This year’s grand prize winners were Team Lewis of Marlboro, NJ, Team Burmeister of Ellsworth, ME, and Team Judice of Dayton, ME.
Just over three years ago, Friends of Acadia embarked upon a partnership with the Island Astronomy Institute and Acadia National Park to measure, promote, and protect the outstanding night skies of Mount Desert Island. Given that the park is within a day’s drive of approximately a quarter of the U.S. population, it is a natural destination for people looking to connect with infinite darkness and the wonders of the Milky Way. With so much of the night sky along the East Coast lost to light pollution, the pristine night skies found on MDI are a treasure indeed.

Concurrently, the Bar Harbor Town Council and the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce initiated an effort to strengthen the town’s year-round economy. One of the ideas that emerged was to plan shoulder season events that might draw visitors to the area. Voilà! The Acadia Night Sky Festival—held September 17–21, 2009—was born.

The inaugural Acadia Night Sky Festival’s theme was “a community celebration to promote the protection and enjoyment of the Acadia region’s stellar night sky as a valuable natural resource through education, science, and the arts.” Festival planning was led by the Island Astronomy Institute in conjunction with Acadia National Park, Friends of Acadia, local chambers of commerce, College of the Atlantic, the Town of Bar Harbor, and other private partners. Down East Acadia Regional Tourism (DART) contributed the first grant to allow the initiation of festival planning, with additional support coming from the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Acadia, the Quimby Foundation, and numerous individual donors.

Almost 2,000 residents and visitors attended events held across MDI throughout the festival weekend. The Town of Bar Harbor allowed use of the Municipal Auditorium as festival headquarters. On Saturday and Sunday afternoon, visitors could attend planetarium shows at the headquarters, view a silent auction of night sky photographs, consult with experts about telescopes, and learn more about night sky quality measurements taken by the Island Astronomy Institute in the Acadia region.

Each evening, night sky viewing opportunities were held in Acadia National Park and/or local towns. Sonya Berger, supervisory park ranger for Acadia, reported that these events were extremely popular, attracting between 200 and 525 visitors a night. She added that the festival was planned to coincide with a new moon so that the skies would be darkest. Peter Lord, executive director of the Island Astronomy Institute, thanked the Penobscot Valley Stargazers and the University of Maine Jordan Planetarium, who assisted park rangers and volunteers each night with guiding visitors and interpreting interesting stellar features.

Two photographic workshops were held by Dr. Tyler Nordgren—an associate professor of physics at University of Redlands—who spent a year on sabbatical exploring national parks and the relationship to astronomy and light pollution. Dr. Nordgren sold fourteen of his photographs of national park night skies to the festival silent auction, and his image of the Milky Way rising over the Park Loop Road at Otter Point became the inaugural festivals poster. Peter Lord recognized Dr. Nordgren’s work as one of the most significant ways that the festival raised funds. He added that the festival poster is still available for purchase online at www.nightskyfestival.org, and that Dr. Nordgren will be publishing a book of his works—due out in January 2010.

Chris Fogg, executive director of the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce, credited the festival committee with planning indoor and outdoor activities to allow for variation in the weather.

“We were fortunate that rain threatened
only one evening, causing the cancelation of a boat cruise planned on Frenchman Bay,” Fogg said. He also stated that the success of the festival was due in part to the wide range of activities offered.

“The mission of the Night Sky Festival was broad enough to accommodate the interests of many different visitors. We had family activities, musical events, a tour of green buildings in Bar Harbor, and scientific interpretive programs. It was a very grassroots approach whereby the festival committee welcomed groups to plan their own night sky–themed activities and incorporate them into the festival.”

Pianist Paul Sullivan (www.rivermusic.com) was kind to donate his talents to a FOA benefit concert held at The Claremont Hotel during the festival. Mr. Sullivan presented several of his night sky–themed original works during the concert, which was a sold–out event.

“We were honored that Mr. Sullivan chose to support Friends of Acadia and to encourage others to do so as well,” said Marla O’Byrne, president. “Protecting Acadia’s dark night skies is a natural fit for Friends’ mission, and we were delighted that this wonderful event was part of the first Acadia Night Sky Festival.”

By all accounts the first year of the Acadia Night Sky Festival was a success. The committee was pleased to see the range of programming during this first year, the strong attendance, and the enthusiastic support of volunteers, sponsors, and committee members. Planning is already underway for 2010, with goals to top this year’s attendance and outreach. If you are free Thursday Sept 9th - Sunday Sept 12th, plan a trip to Mount Desert Island and join other park enthusiasts in celebrating our extraordinary dark night skies. And don’t forget—every outdoor light fixture that you change at home to direct light downward rather than into space will help improve your own night skies. Happy viewing!

STEPHANIE CLEMENT is conservation director for Friends of Acadia.
Our small plane had landed and released seven passengers (along with the mail) at the cinder block “airport” of Ofu. We had walked a couple of hundred yards to drop our bags at the Va’oto Lodge, got some fresh water, and then headed down a road lined with palms, banana trees, and dense tropical bushes. The sparkling South Pacific looked inviting through the undergrowth, especially given the heat and humidity, but we hiked on. A half an hour later, I saw what I had traveled 7,500 miles to behold.

“Pako o Amerika Samoa,” the brown and white sign said, next to a more familiar arrowhead insignia.

“This is it, Dad,” my son, Will, said. “The big Five–Eight.” We held up our fingers for a celebratory photograph. In my mind, the last item on a to–do list could finally be checked off. Crossing the boundary into the National Park of American Samoa meant I had not only reached the most remote and least visited national park in the system; it meant I had now visited all 58 of them.

In truth, the long journey had started nearly 50 years earlier, in the summer of 1959, during the only extended family vacation my family ever took when I was growing up. We had borrowed my grandmother’s Oldsmobile and friends’ camping equipment and left our hometown of Indianola, Iowa, for two weeks in the West. Half a century later, I can still remember that trip, day by day, because the winter before, my mother had handed me a pile of state tourism brochures and asked me to map out the itinerary—a seemingly awesome responsibility for a nine–year–old boy. I’ve been a map freak ever since.

First stop, Badlands National Park. The way its eerie denuded landscape suddenly, miraculously appeared out of the rolling prairie served as my introduction to a notion I’ve never lost: entering a national park means entering another world. We scrambled around on the red pinnacles, learned a little about the animals that had roamed there millions of years ago before becoming extinct, and moved on, pulled westward in the company of Burma Shave signs. We toured Devils Tower, then Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, where I discovered an arrowhead I felt certain must have been Crazy Horse’s. (Years later, my dad revealed that he had purchased it in the gift shop and dropped it at my feet when I wasn’t looking.)

We reached Yellowstone two days behind schedule because our aged car had broken down along the way. It was a lucky delay. Two days earlier, the forces that created Yellowstone’s wonders had sprung to life with an earthquake measuring nearly 7.5 on the Richter scale. Among the 28 people who had died were those buried in a landslide at the campground I had originally selected for our itinerary. Much of the park was now closed, but we saw our share of it. Old Faithful was still going off on schedule (unlike many of the other thermal features); the falls still thundered, creating rainbows with their mist. I saw my first bison, my first elk, my first black bear and grizzly. Several mornings, aftershocks shook and rattled us awake.

At Grand Teton National Park we camped at Jenny Lake, framed by towering spires of granite, which forever afterward my mother would call the prettiest place she ever saw. At Dinosaur National Monument we slept under a brilliant canopy of stars on a sand bar next to the Green River – fitfully, in my father’s case, because of the vivid way the park ranger had described the local rattlesnakes at that evening’s campfire program.

We turned east toward Iowa. The car problem that had saved our lives meant we had to keep moving if we wanted to get home on time, so we experienced Rocky Mountain National Park through our windshield. No
matter, when we pulled back into our drive-
way, we had a lifetime of memories and sto-
ries among our most treasured souvenirs.
And I had tasted the freedom of the open
road, the exhilarating sense of discovery wait-
ing just over the next horizon that has
informed most of the rest of my life.

By 1998, I had a family of my own, and it
was time for us to embark on a similar jour-
ey of discovery. In the intervening years, in
the pursuit of magazine stories, books, films,
and my insatiable appetite for ingesting the
endless varieties of American landscapes, I
had criss–crossed the country innumerable
times, usually on my own. I had visited more
than 20 national parks, although I wasn’t
keeping a running tally, and too many his-
toric sites and monuments (and roadside
cales promising the elusive perfect chick-
en–fried steak and homemade pie) to count.

But now the entire family was hitting the
road—Dianne, Emme (age 11), Will (age 8),
and me. We loaded up our Suburban and
set off. No national park between Mexico and
Canada along the spine of the Rocky
Mountains escaped us. Each one was entire-
ly unchanged from my past, yet entirely new
as I saw it through my children’s eyes. At
Yellowstone, I watched my children see their
first bison, elk, coyote, moose, and bear – and
in those electric moments, dormant memo-
ries rumbled back to life. The view at Jenny
Lake was as breathtaking as ever, but it was
now layered in time for me: the time I had
seen it with my mother; the times she had
re told the story of our visit, her eyes grow-
ing misty in reverie; and now this time, with
my own young family, including a daughter
named for her grandmother. At Dinosaur, we
got to the same spot I had camped almost
40 years earlier, and the magic of that dis-
tant night was waiting for us, fresh and undi-
minished.

It struck me that national parks do more
than preserve increasingly rare remnants of
a landscape and natural world our nation
once seemed to possess without limit. That
would be valuable enough. But the additional
genius of the national park idea is that these
sacred places are not only to be preserved
“unimpaired,” but are to be accessible to the
people. They are to be shared. Shared now, but also shared with the future, just as people from our past shared them with us.

Somewhere during the trip, the notion came to me to propose to my colleague Ken Burns that we make a documentary film on the history of the national parks. Like baseball and jazz, topics of previous films we’ve done for PBS, national parks are a uniquely American invention, and in exploring them and the historical characters who made them possible, perhaps we could learn more about ourselves as a people. A previous film we had done together, Horatio’s Drive, about the first transcontinental automobile trip, had taken me 10 years to persuade Ken to do. In the case of The National Parks: America’s Best Idea, I was about 30 seconds into my pitch when he said, “When can we get started?”

One consequence of the film project, of course, was that it required me to visit a lot of national parks—doing research, returning with a film crew, and returning again if we weren’t satisfied with the first shoot. A tough assignment, but I accepted.

It took me to Denali, home of the highest point on the continent, and to Death Valley, home of the lowest. To Hawai’i Volcanoes, where I watched molten lava touching the sea, creating the newest land on earth, and to Great Basin, where I stood next to gnarled bristlecone pines, the world’s oldest living things. At Kenai Fjords, we lived in a boat sleeping nine people for three days, using a smaller Zodiac to get close to the calving glaciers; in the Everglades, I paddled a small canoe through a cypress swamp with a cinematographer filming in the bow. At Kings Canyon, the only way to get the shots we wanted meant hiring a pack train that hauled our tents and food and extra equipment from campsite to campsite, while we hiked nine miles a day with our cameras; at Channel Islands, following a short ridge trail, we kept clambering periodically from side to side to find just the right vantage point, which we finally discovered—at the end of the trail, next to a park bench, at a place already named Inspiration Point. We filmed in thigh–deep snow at Sequoia, icy waters at Glacier Bay, and a drifting sand dune north of the Arctic Circle at Kobuk Valley.

At each park, I continued the practice our family had begun in 1998 of getting my park passport stamped at the visitor center. And at some point, I’m not sure exactly where or when, I noticed that the number of park stamps missing in my passport was becoming a tantalizingly small number. My wife would mark this as the moment when my passion for the parks started making erratic lurches into something closer to an unhealthy obsession.

**Dayton and Will Duncan, Kings Canyon National Park, 2008**
I found myself planning a logistically complicated production trip to Isle Royale National Park, in a remote corner of Lake Superior, even though we were no longer telling an extended story in our film about it. “We still might need some footage,” I assured her.

“I see Gates of the Arctic on your schedule,” she said, looking at my calendar one morning. “Couldn’t you just send the cameraman and an associate producer? That’s what you did at Joshua Tree.”

“No,” I answered. “I think I should be there. You never know what might happen. And by the way, I’ve decided to make my own side trip to Joshua Tree, just to make sure the footage the crew got adequately reflects the real place.”

Eventually, all that was left was American Samoa: the only park south of the Equator, a six-hour flight from Honolulu and impossibly far from our home in New Hampshire. By November of 2008, our film was essentially finished, so there was no absolute necessity—or even a half-baked alibi—for me to go there. But Dianne knew, even before I did, that I had to go. She had known from the moment I started the list.

Something interesting happened the moment I reached the sign saying “Pako o Amerika Samoa.” I thought of John Muir, the park idea’s most eloquent spokesman, and a quote of his we use in our film just before the frenetic Theodore Roosevelt shows up for a three-day camping trip in Yosemite. “Nothing can be done well at a speed of forty miles a day. Far more time should be taken,” Muir had written. “Walk away quietly in any direction and taste the freedom of the mountainer. Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. . . . Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.”

Getting to know Muir in the course of our project had been nearly as meaningful to me as having an excuse (it was my “job”) to witness countless sunsets at the array of priceless treasures we have preserved as national parks. Our film crew had gotten tired of me quoting Muir when the sun broke:

“This is still the morning of creation!” But in those tender first moments of the day, at those exquisite places, I had always believed I was somehow experiencing at least a slice of the transcendence that came so easily to Muir in his “unconditional surrender” to Nature. The combination of Muir and the parks had taught me the joy of slowing down and opening myself to the world unfolding before me. Not bad for a man who makes lists.

With Number 58 now checked off, Nature’s peace had an easier time flowing in. Will and I ambled along the two-mile, pristine beach on the south shore of Ofu, then went snorkeling in its turquoise lagoon, marveling at the diversity of the coral and the riotous colors of the fish. I realized this was only the second time either of us had been snorkeling; the first had been at Dry Tortugas National Park years earlier, during one of my research trips. And that realization brought me back to the origins of the project in the first place, and all that had transpired since.

During the course of the project, Will had grown from a boy as tall as my waist to a young man looking me in the eye. I had deliberately scheduled a number of shoots during his school breaks so he could come along as a production assistant. We had shared the trek through Kings Canyon, adventures among the mountain goats in the majestic peaks of Glacier, a Father’s Day at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, a birthday of mine canoeing on Wonder Lake in Denali.

Those kind of shared moments, safely preserved in an unimpaired location so they can be passed from one generation to the next, are part of what make the national parks America’s best idea. And, I told myself, they had meant much more to me than checking off items on a list. I hoped my son understood it as well.

“What are you thinking?” I asked him as our plane lifted off and banked for one last look at Ofu.

“I was thinking that American Samoa was my thirtieth national park,” he answered. “I’m now more than halfway there.”

DAYTON DUNCAN, the author of ten books, has been making films with Ken Burns for nearly twenty years. Their latest collaboration, is The National Parks: America’s Best Idea.
We are pleased to welcome our newest friends:

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To give a gift membership, simply mail the above form, along with a check made payable to Friends of Acadia, in the envelope provided or visit www.friendsofacadia.org

All contributions to Friends of Acadia are used to preserve, protect, and promote stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and the surrounding communities. All gifts are tax deductible.

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Park Users Show Support for Climate Action

Despite heavy rains and high winds, a group of park visitors and local residents gathered on Sand Beach at high tide at 3:50 p.m. on Saturday October 24 for a photograph to mark the International Day of Climate Action. Events across the globe were planned to highlight 350 parts per million as the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Friends of Acadia and partners encouraged visitors to enjoy the park on Saturday in lower carbon-emitting ways, such as walking, biking, carpooling, or riding the special Island Explorer bus service. Despite small numbers for the photo, 131 citizens registered their support for climate action.

Hundreds Turn Out for Ken Burns Documentary

Every evening from September 27 to October 2, the Criterion Theatre in Bar Harbor held free simulcast showings of Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan’s new documentary *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*. The high-definition showings, which ran from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. each night, were attended by hundreds of visitors and locals alike. Friends would like to thank the Criterion for generously opening its doors for this inspiring event, as well as the many volunteers and attendees who helped make the showings a resounding success.

New National Park Service Director Named

On September 24, 2009, John Jarvis was named director of the National Park Service. Employed by NPS for 33 years—beginning with a temporary job passing out maps to tourists at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.—Jarvis has an intimate familiarity and deep respect for our nation’s conserved lands, born of years of hands-on service in the Western United States. Now, he is charged with supervising 22,000 employees and a budget of $2.5 billion.

“This is a great day for the National Park Service and for the American public,” secretary of the interior Ken Salazar said. “Jon Jarvis is a career professional who has consistently stood up for protection of national parks. He brings great wisdom and three decades of experience to the job.”

Jarvis, a trained biologist, has expressed a commitment to increasing the amount of scientific research performed in national parks, bringing more rangers into classrooms, and strengthening the appeal of parks to citizens nationwide.

“America’s National Park System is a gift from past generations to this and succeeding generations,” Jarvis said. “I look forward to working with Secretary Salazar, the Congress, our partners, and the extraordinary employees of the National Park Service as we prepare for the next century.”

Three Millionth Passenger on Island Explorer

On Monday, July 27, Jordan and Sydney Casey (ages 11 and 13) and their grandparents, Al and Jackie Pulsifer, were named the 3 millionth passengers of the Island Explorer bus system. As they disembarked from the Sand Beach bus, they were greeted by representatives of Acadia National Park, L.L.Bean, and Friends of Acadia, who awarded them with a gift basket and gift card from L.L.Bean and a gift membership to FOA. The Caseys and Pulsifers were visiting from Virginia and Maryland and had left their recreational vehicle (RV) at Blackwoods Campground. They planned on using the bus system during their
Estate Planning—Supporting the Mission of Friends of Acadia

Preserving and protecting the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and cultural distinctiveness of Acadia National Park and the surrounding communities is a wise investment.

And, it’s simple.
Add only one of the following sentences to your will, or a codicil:

I hereby give _____% of my residuary estate to Friends of Acadia, Inc., a Maine charitable corporation, PO Box 45, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609, for its charitable purposes.

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For more information, call the office at 207-288-3340 or 800-625-0321, email the director of development at lisahorsch@friendsofacadia.org, or visit our website at www.friendsofacadia.org.
stay to explore the shoreline, attend ranger programs, and bicycle on the carriage roads. The Pulsifers had ridden the bus system on an earlier sailing trip to Acadia.

Since its inception in 1999, the Island Explorer bus system has eliminated over 1.2 million private vehicle trips and prevented emissions of more than 11,550 tons of greenhouse gases and almost 18 tons of smog-causing pollutants. This year, 367,595 passengers rode the Island Explorer. While total ridership was down about 9% for the year, it still was the second highest year of ridership.

Mark Fenton Leads Discussion and Walking Tour
Renowned pedestrian advocate and recognized authority on public health issues Mark Fenton spoke in Bar Harbor on September 1. Mr. Fenton is host of the PBS television series, America’s Walking, and former editor of Walking Magazine. Friends of Acadia partnered with College of the Atlantic, Healthy Acadia, and the MDI YMCA through the Achieve program to sponsor a community decision-makers breakfast followed by a walking discussion on Route 3 with Mr. Fenton. The breakfast was attended by town officials, state legislators, Maine Department of Transportation representatives, and non-profit leaders. Mr. Fenton delivered an inspiring talk that dealt with the linkages between public health and community design improvements to foster active living. Friends of Acadia and the Achieve partners hope to foster projects, policies, and programs, such as the Village Connector Trails, to make Mount Desert Island safer for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.

FOA Membership Survey
This summer, Friends mailed surveys to each of our members, past supporters, and volunteers, as well as a sampling of those in nearby communities. Though not without a few difficulties (our apologies to anyone who received their packet after the original deadline had passed), the results of this survey have been invaluable: close to 1,000 responses—a 15% response rate. Your answers were thoughtful, insightful, and very valuable indeed.

Although a summary of the results will be printed in the spring, there is one thing that can be announced now. By and large, the comment we received the most was “please do not change the Journal—we love it just the way it is.” So, fear not: the Friends of Acadia Journal will continue to be mailed to all members in print form.

Acadia Quest Draws Team from New York City

Twenty-four 7th grade students from the Columbia Secondary School for Math, Science & Engineering in New York City head out to explore Little Cranberry Isle and the Acadia coastline. The students made a four-day trip to Acadia National Park this summer to complete the Acadia Quest program.
WAYS YOU CAN GIVE

“One of the greatest satisfactions in doing any sound work for an institution, a town, or a city, or for the nation, is that good work done for the public lasts, endures through the generations; and the little bit of work that any individual of the passing generation is enabled to do gains the association with such collective activities an immortality of its own.”

—Charles W. Eliot, Sieur de Monts Celebration, 1916

Please consider these options for providing essential financial support to Friends of Acadia:

Gift of Cash or Marketable Securities.
Mail a check, payable to Friends of Acadia, to PO Box 45, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609, or visit www.friendsofacadia.org/annualfund to make a secure gift using your credit card. Call or visit the website for instructions on giving appreciated securities, which can offer income tax benefits as well as savings on capital gains.

Gift of Retirement Assets
Designate Friends of Acadia as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), or other retirement asset, and pass funds to Friends of Acadia free of taxes.

Gift of Real Property
Give real estate, boats, artwork, or other real property to Friends of Acadia and you may avoid capital gains in addition to providing much needed funds for the park.

Gift Through a Bequest in Your Will
Add Friends of Acadia as a beneficiary in your will.

For more information, contact Lisa Horsch Clark at 207-288-3340 or 800-625-0321, email lisahorsch@friendsofacadia.org, or visit our website at www.friendsofacadia.org/join.
Membership Table Volunteers Recruit 323 New Members

This year, Friends’ membership table met the challenges of an unusually wet June and July, as well as concerns about the economy, to gain 323 new members. This dedicated and enthusiastic group of 28 volunteers contributed more than 275 hours from mid-June to mid-September at the table, located at Jordan Pond house.

If you are interested in volunteering for the membership table next summer, please contact Sharon Broom at 207-288-3340 or sharon@friendsofacadia.org.

Secretary of the Interior & Senator Collins Visit Acadia

Marka O’Byrne, president of Friends of Acadia, greets Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and Senator Susan Collins on their visit to Acadia in July. O’Byrne joined Secretary Salazar and Senator Collins on their travels as they discussed programs and investments at the Schoodic Education and Research Center, heard more about Acadia’s land acquisition needs on a boat trip across Frenchman Bay, held a press conference at the Island Explorer hub on the Bar Harbor Village Green, and enjoyed Acadia’s Ocean Drive.

Schoodic Committee Cleans the Shoreline

Following several big storms and a brush with Hurricane Bill, the Schoodic Committee of FOA organized a shoreline and roadside clean-up of the Schoodic District of Acadia National Park on National Public Lands Day, September 26. Thirty-two participants each filled at least one bag of trash in their travels. The majority of debris consisted of lobster buoys, trap lines, bleach bottles, Styrofoam, wood, cans—as well as 15 abandoned lobster traps. The event was led by rangers Bill Weidner and Alicia Fortier and volunteers Jay Horschak and Tom Mayer. Friends staff supported the effort, providing snacks, water, and gloves.

5th Annual George B. Dorr Society Carriage Ride

Guests at this year’s George B. Dorr Society event, held on September 8, were treated to a very special occasion. The day’s activities began at Wildwood Stables, where more than 30 guests boarded three new carriages—owned by park concessionaire Carriages in Acadia—for a ride to the terrace at the Eyrie, former summer home of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Along the way, guests were regaled with anecdotes from carriage road experts Mrs. Ann Rockefeller Roberts, author of Mr. Rockefeller’s Roads; Mr. Merle Cousins, retired roads foreman of Acadia National Park; and Mr. Bob Thayer, long-time seasonal naturalist and author. Together, they spoke of the history, engineering, and future of Acadia’s carriage road system.

The carriage ride ended at the terrace overlooking Seal Harbor, where guests were treated to a lunch of lobster rolls, curried chicken sandwiches, an array of salads, and a sampling of the Jordan Pond House’s famous desserts. The lunch also featured a presentation by Mrs. Roberts about her grandfather’s passion for building the historic carriage roads. Mr. Cousins and Mr. Thayer also joined Mrs. Roberts for remarks with some of their favorite recollections and memories of working in Acadia.

This popular event is a small way for FOA to show its appreciation to George B. Dorr Society members and other special friends. The Dorr Society, which honors George

Ann Rockefeller Roberts, Merle Cousins, and Bob Thayer at this year’s Dorr Society event.

“Buildings, too, are children of Earth and Sun.”
-Frank Lloyd Wright

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Winter 2009 23
Bucknam Dorr, a gentleman, scholar, and lover of nature whose dedication to preserving Mount Desert Island helped create Acadia National Park, was established in 2005 to recognize those who have made provisions for Friends in their estate plans.

To learn more about including Friends of Acadia in your estate plans, or to share your existing estate provisions with FOA, contact Lisa Horsch Clark at 207-288-3340 or lisahorsch@friendsofacadia.org.

Acadia Youth Conservation Corps

Members of the 2009 Acadia Youth Conservation Corps (AYCC), co-funded by Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park, pose with their parents and members of Acadia’s trail crew at the 2009 parent breakfast. After breakfast at the trail shop, the group toured 2009’s work sites, including the newly-incorporated Schooner Head Path, the Jessup Path, and the Bowl Trail. The AYCC program serves both the community and the park, providing high-school-aged students with valuable work experience, while lending a much-needed helping hand to Acadia’s trail crew.

IN MEMORIAM

We gratefully acknowledge gifts received in memory of:

Harvey Aiges
All our canine friends
Anna
Barclay Austin
Roger Bacon
Robin L. Beard
Donald Betts
George Bickford
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June 1 - September 30, 2009
Friends of Acadia achieved a recent advocacy victory when the State of Maine removed the waters offshore of the Isle au Haut unit of Acadia National Park as a potential deep-water wind turbine demonstration site. In June 2009, the Maine legislature mandated that the State Planning Office and the Department of Conservation work together to identify between one and five deep-water locations (greater than 60 meters in depth) within state waters (up to 3 miles offshore) where wind energy technologies could be tested. Seven possible locations were identified, including a site off the southern tip of Isle au Haut.

Friends of Acadia staff and Acadia Advocacy Network volunteers testified and sent comments to the state, encouraging that Isle au Haut be removed from the final list. As seven sites had originally been proposed, but the state was mandated to choose between one and five final locations, it did not seem like an onerous request to protect the dramatic ocean views and remote island solitude treasured by Acadia National Park visitors. Friends pointed out that national parks are identified as scenic resources of state or national significance under state law, and the legislation that mandated the identification of the wind energy test sites required that the state consider this when making their final decisions.

Additionally, Friends argued that defending the Isle au Haut unit of Acadia National Park was not a case of “Not in My Backyard,” but a matter of “Not in the Face of a National Legacy.” The state acknowledged at an Ellsworth public meeting that areas offshore of Mount Desert Island and Schoodic were discarded as potential test sites because of the impact to those scenic resources. Friends made the point that Isle au Haut is a legitimate unit of Acadia National Park, deserving of equal protection as other sections of the park.

In the end, the state identified four potential deepwater wind energy test sites in state waters along the coast that will be used by the University of Maine and companies to research and test new technologies such as floating wind turbine platforms, anchoring systems, and new blade designs. This is a terrific step forward in harnessing the outstanding wind resources of the Gulf of Maine and in positioning Maine as a leader in research and development. We owe great thanks to state officials for the comprehensive outreach process they undertook and for responding to the concerns of Friends of Acadia and others about the Isle au Haut site.

Rich Johnson
Book Review

**Asticou’s Island Domain:**
*Wabanaki Peoples at Mount Desert Island 1500-2000 (2 Volumes)*
by Harald E.L. Prins and Bunny McBride
618 pp., Softcover

One hundred years from now, this extraordinary book will remain an essential resource for all who would understand the full history of Acadia. With historical-ethnographic discipline carried by always-graceful prose, Asticou’s Island Domain integrates decades of devoted research to convey the 500-year saga of the Wabanaki Peoples at Mount Desert Island.

The first volume characterizes Wabanaki lifeways on the cusp of first contact with exploring Europeans, and then, in six chapters, guides us through the conflict-ridden, courageous collision of the tribes with the ever-expanding, often-warring English and French colonials who would disposes and nearly destroy the native peoples. Five more chapters carry the story from the American Revolution to a present enlivened by Wabanaki cultural revitalization. The focus is on MDI and her bounding bays and their watersheds—Chief Asticou’s historic domain now anchored by Acadia—but a wider framework allows analytical dimension when needed.

The second volume provides a detailed and richly illustrated account of the medicinal, culinary, and material culture uses of regional plants and animals by the Wabanaki, a summary of archaeological sites and Wabanaki encampments on MDI, and an annotated reference list of high value to any student of our place.

Many should be thanked for this gift. Micmac Chief William Phillips, who first challenged Acadia National Park to know and tell the story of the Wabanaki at Pemetic; the Acadia National Park and NPS leaders who responded strongly; scores of students of MDI history who contributed expertise; and above all, Harald Prins and Bunny McBride, the authors, who demonstrate in this labor of love why they have earned the warm respect of the Wabanaki People and the enduring gratitude of us all.

—Jack Russell

Winter Reading from the FOA Library

**American Earth:** *Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*
Edited by Bill McKibben; Foreword by Al Gore
2008, Literary Classics of the United States.

A collection of influential writings on the natural world and humanity’s place in it, this volume contains significant and groundbreaking environmental essays by George Catlin, E.B. White, Wendell Berry, and many more.

**Legacy on the Land:** *A Black Couple Discovers Our National Inheritance and Tells Why Every American Should Care*
by Audrey & Frank Peterman
2009, Earthwise Productions, Inc.

Vital members of the green movement since 1995, Audrey and Frank Peterman are experts on public lands in the United States. In this book, they explore issues of race, conservation, and the role that all Americans have in protecting our environment.

**The Wilderness Warrior:** *Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*
by Douglass Brinkley, 2009, HarperCollins

Teddy Roosevelt, 26th president of the United States was invaluable in advancing the cause of conservation—including the fledgling National Park Service. This biography draws on previously unpublished material to craft an engaging and thought-provoking examination of our “naturalist president.”
SCULPTURE AT SCHOODIC

For six weeks this summer, the campus of the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) in the Schoodic District of Acadia National Park was alive with activity and energy. There was clanging and banging, whirring and buzzing, beeping, grinding, roaring, and hissing. There was interaction and communication, sharing and exchange in English, French, German, Egyptian, Turkish and Russian, and through signs, gestures, charades and drawings. The second session of the Schoodic Sculpture Symposium may have been dusty, noisy, wet, and hot, but it was also inspiring, invigorating, stimulating, and involving.

From Gouldsboro and Winter Harbor and other villages, cities and towns throughout the state, across the country, and around the world, people young and old, male and female, came to watch, learn, share, volunteer, and contribute. Many came once, others came weekly, and some stalwarts made the trip every day, checking the progress of the six sculptors, who cut, shaped, polished, and worked tons of local granite, basalt, and other stone.

The Schoodic Sculpture Symposium brought a level of activity, participation, inclusion, vitality, energy, and openness to the SERC campus that Rosemary and I found exciting and refreshing. It is an atmosphere that, in our opinion, should be much more prevalent at SERC.

This spring, summer and fall, in addition to the Sculpture Symposium, the SERC campus has hosted a number of public lectures and presentations at the Moore Auditorium. It provided space for Schoodic Arts for All festival workshops. There were both an Insect and a Fungi BioBlitz, events that offered some opportunity for public participation. Private businesses, non-profit organizations, public associations and governmental groups have held camps, workshops, conferences, meetings, events, seminars and training sessions on the campus. Numerous scientists and researchers have operated from the SERC campus, collecting data and conducting field studies—observing, measuring and monitoring the flora, fauna and environment of Schoodic. Several artists were at SERC as part of Acadia’s Artists In Residence program, and a number of local schools sent student groups to the campus for the three-day, two-night residential Schoodic Education Adventure (SEA) program.

Looking at the schedule of activities, one would reasonably anticipate a vital SERC campus beating with a strong pulse of activity, inquiry, study, examination, inquiry and exploration. Regrettably, a sense of energy and vibrancy seems to be the exception and not the rule at SERC.

Perhaps the TARP money being invested on site improvements over the next year will help invigorate SERC. Innovative planning for the renovation and reuse of the Rockefeller building might be a significant step towards revitalizing it as well. Development of a well-conceived marketing plan would be an easy and inexpensive way to raise awareness of, interest in, and enthusiasm for the events and activities at SERC. An expanded slate of participative events, programs and opportunities on the campus could be a made a priority. The creation of a public facility such as a gallery showcasing the work of Artists in Residence, a visitor center focused on the research being conducted at Schoodic, or even an interactive discovery museum, could be a positive stimulus.

However it is accomplished, Rosemary and I believe that the buzz of life that the Schoodic Sculpture Symposium brought to the SERC campus needs to become the norm at this amazing facility, with its potential to offer truly unique opportunities in a special environment.

GARRY LEVIN is a volunteer and member of the Schoodic Committee of Friends of Acadia.
Gratitude and New Beginnings

The fall colors have long since passed their brilliant peak, yet still I find my thoughts turning to this summer—a season fueled by the enthusiasm of each and every friend of Acadia. Hundreds of wheelbarrows full of gravel and rock were moved by our dedicated volunteers, rebuilding and strengthening miles of trails and carriage roads. Over 100 Acadia Quest teams explored the park, finding new meaning in the beauty of Acadia. At our 20th Annual Benefit Auction, hundreds of friends shared a night of fun and festivities, cheering each other on as they gave to support the place that is so dear to us all. Words cannot describe the gratitude that I have for all of you who made this summer the success that it was.

In early August, Friends co-sponsored an evening with Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan, where they previewed their new documentary The National Parks: America's Best Idea. It was an evening filled with the synergy of vision, passion, and collective action—the story of the emergence of our nation's national parks. 1,800 people attended the two showings at the Criterion in Bar Harbor. I asked Ken and Dayton to share their take on our national parks. Their words spoke of a shared sense of legacy and stewardship that each citizen of this nation has— to honor, support through active engagement, and give back. To preserve and protect our greatest national treasure in perpetuity—through organizations like Friends of Acadia. What a challenge that is for each of us to embrace as 2016, the centennial of the National Park Service and Acadia National Park, approaches.

This summer of endless activity also marked a new beginning for me in Acadia: hiking its trails. Years ago, I badly injured one of my knees, and even now it remains a guarded resource with limited use (despite the thousands of miles of cycling I do each year). The uneven ground of Acadia's trails and insistent pull of gravity have long made this old injury an obstacle to my exploration of the quiet, inner core of the park. Two of my friends asked me to join them on a hike up Canon Brook to Eagle's Crag, descending the South ridge trail to Blackwoods. Seeing that my fighting spirit was tempered by the pain in my knee, they told me "Lili, use our hiking poles and your spirit will fly!" They helped me rediscover the heart of Acadia. Seeing the faces of children, families, and friends along the ways of Canon Brook, Sargent Mountain to Bald Peak, Jordan Cliffs, Dorr Mountain Ladder Trail, and finally Cadillac Mountain, were incredible moments that made my spirit soar.

Today, I share a renewed sense of purpose to protect, preserve, and steward what, to me, can only be the greatest national park in the nation. Come—join me, and Friends of Acadia, in making our dream for Acadia a reality. Thank you to all of you—especially Kim and Finn—for this wonderful new beginning.

—Lili Pew

WHY DOES AMERICA NEED NATIONAL PARKS?

Here in these special places that we've resolved together as a people to preserve, we feel a sense of commonality. You come to a national park, and all of a sudden some of the barriers between people, between classes, even between nationalities are broken down, and you share and have the experience of an essential, collective humanity. That's a pretty good thing in a world whose major direction is sort of quisitive and extractive— "What can I get out of things? What do I want? What's in it for me?" At a park we experience something that's collective. It's a common wealth, and my goodness, especially today, we need that reminder of what we share in common. What I say to people is, "You own the grandest canyon on earth. Together, you own some of the most spectacular scenery." That's pretty good news.

—Ken Burns
Friends of Acadia Poetry Prize

NATURE POETRY COMPETITION

Submissions are invited for the 2010 Friends of Acadia Poetry Prize. The three top-ranked poems will be published in the Friends of Acadia Journal (print and online), and awarded cash prizes by category.

GUIDELINES

Nature-based poems of 30 lines or fewer will be accepted. Each submission should include a cover sheet stating the author's name and address and poem title. Do not include the author's name on manuscript(s). Each author may submit up to three poems for consideration. Entries must be original and unpublished. Please, no simultaneous submissions. There is no fee for entry.

Deadline: April 30, 2010

Send to: Editor, Friends of Acadia Journal, P.O. Box 45, Bar Harbor, ME 04609
editor@friendsofacadia.org

Submissions will not be returned.
Mission

Friends of Acadia preserves, protects, and promotes stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations.