

Friends of ACADIA Journal

Spring 2020
Volume 25 No. 1



A Magazine about Acadia National Park and Surrounding Communities

PURCHASE YOUR PARK PASS!

Whether driving, walking, bicycling, or riding the Island Explorer through the park, we all must pay the entrance fee. Eighty percent of all fees paid in Acadia stay in Acadia, to be used for projects that directly benefit park visitors and resources.

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AN ANCHOR IN TIMES OF TURBULENCE

A few weeks ago, before COVID-19 turned our lives upside-down, I began to draft this column full of my usual appreciation for winter and anticipation for the spring and summer ahead. It began:

The long, cold months of winter have a way of making Acadia National Park feel more intimate and familiar. One can walk down the middle of Ocean Drive on a Saturday afternoon with the occasional cars and passersby usually offering a big wave or slowing down to chat.

How much has changed since then! As a global health crisis has brought uncertainty to our everyday lives, it is extremely difficult to predict how Acadia's operations, visitation, programming, and funding will be affected in the coming weeks. This crisis has also brought economic hardship to many of our members, neighbors, and business partners. While coronavirus contributed to parking lots and trailheads being full to overflowing in March, it may also lead to them being empty in May. We just don't know.

“One of the hardest parts about what we are experiencing now is not knowing when things might return to some semblance of normal.”

What we do know, however, is that in times of turbulence like this, Acadia serves as an anchor for so many of us: a place of inspiration, renewal, comfort, beauty, learning, recreation, fresh air, stress relief, and much, much more. We also know that Acadia will continue to offer these healing and grounding benefits well beyond the current crisis and will again serve as a “rock” during whatever future challenges



FOA/AMIEE BEAL CHURCH

our children and grandchildren might face. This permanence and continuity holds solace at a time when other aspects of the world are changing at breakneck speed.

Just as Acadia is always there for us in times of need, Friends of Acadia in turn prides itself on being ready and prepared to support the park in good times and in bad. While all charitable institutions including ours will feel the economic shock waves wrought by this pandemic, FOA is determined to maintain our mission-critical efforts, whether they take the form of financial grants to the park, volunteer-powered programs, community partnerships or advocating with elected officials on issues vital to Acadia. We aspire to offer as much certainty as we can to our partners at the park when so much is unknown.

One of the hardest parts about what we are experiencing now is not knowing when things might return to some semblance of normal. When will it be safe for 16 teenagers to work together on a daily basis as a tight-knit seasonal crew on Acadia's trails? When will we be able to again enjoy that spectacular drive up the Cadillac Mountain summit road? When will school

field trips to Acadia be able to resume? When will visitors be ready to step on board an Island Explorer shuttle bus?

Whatever the answer turns out to be – with the health and safety of all involved the top consideration – FOA pledges to be at the ready, with the firm conviction that Acadia National Park will likely feel even more important to our community and broader society than it did just a few weeks ago.

In the meantime, the difficult reality is that for many FOA members, their Acadia experience in the coming weeks is likely to be limited to a virtual visit. With the park closing all roads, facilities, restrooms, and visitor services until further notice, folks everywhere are being encouraged to hunker down and avoid travel. Rather than making your annual spring pilgrimage Down East, try keeping in touch with your park by following FOA's website, Facebook, and Instagram pages for photos, videos, and updates on all things Acadia. And please share your own stories as you pore over trail maps and plan future adventures.

I still feel anticipation about the arrival of spring, and I hope that you too can find comfort in the rhythms of nature. The pink rhodora will bloom in the Great Meadow; the warblers will fill the black spruce forests along Bass Harbor Marsh with their song; the mountain streams will roar with the last of the snowmelt; the birch, poplar, and beech stands in the valleys will turn from dull grey to lime green; the loons will move in from the ocean to Acadia's lakes and ponds to nest.

Be careful, stay well, and look forward to joining us for future projects and adventures in our beloved park when the clouds of the current storm pass. Many thanks,

—David MacDonald

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SPEEDY LAVA MONSTERS

Acadia Quest team “Speedy Lava Monsters” pauses for a photo while on the Seaside Path in Acadia National Park near Seal Harbor.

TREASURE KEEPERS IS LATEST ‘QUEST’

By Paige Steele

Friends of Acadia’s experiential scavenger hunt, Acadia Quest, is back for its 12th season, inspiring youth to explore, learn, and protect Acadia National Park with their family and friends. The program is a complement to Acadia’s Junior Ranger program; if young visitors become a Junior Ranger and are looking for more fun in the park, then Acadia Quest is the perfect fit.

To begin questing, teams form with at least one youth under 18 years of age and one adult over 18. They then pick an exceptional name such as Speedy Lava Monsters, Ninja Puffins, or Tres Caballeros. Teams may

register and document their experiences to be eligible for prizes like a patch and park pass. The program is free for all, but teams will need a park pass to participate.

Last year, the program experienced big changes with the exciting launch of the Acadia Quest mobile app, giving teams a choice between the original paper version or the new digital version. On the app, Quest teams can watch videos of staff interviews, view portraits, and discover where to collect digital badges in the park.

Last season, the series began featuring the people of the park with the Pathmakers Edition. The Quest included trail activities,

with hikes – such as Flying Mountain, Precipice Trail, Little Hunters Beach, and Bald Peak – chosen by Acadia National Park trail crew and Acadia Youth Conservation Corps members.

The Acadia Pathmakers Quest saw 169 teams participate, with the new app accumulating over 20,000 page views.

Some of the participant comments appear below:

- We so enjoyed the quest this year! The app was awesome. – ThackShackFam
- Hello! Acadia is our 15th National Park

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BEAR BROOKS



TEAM VIZLA

Left: The team named “Bear Brooks” enjoys its Acadia Quest accomplishment while on top of Connors Nubble in Acadia National Park. Right: Members of Acadia Quest “Team Vizla” prepare to head out on the Valley Trail near Beech Mountain in Acadia National Park.

Where in Acadia?

FOVASHLEY L. CONTI



How well do you know the faces of Acadia's mountains? This imposing edifice is among the first to receive the rays of the rising sun each morning. Its distinctive cliffs are readily visible from roads traveled by park visitors in every season. While a fear of sheer drop-offs may cause some to hesitate to tackle the popular nearby trail, its beauty can still be well admired with both feet on terra firma.

If you think you can identify this scene email us at editor@friendsofacadia.org and feel free to include a personal story or memory with your answer. We'll print our favorite responses in the next issue of the Friends of Acadia Journal, and we'll send a Friends of Acadia cap to the writers.

The "Where in Acadia?" photo in the winter issue drew a big response. See below for the answer.



Winter 2019 Where in Acadia?

This is the notch between Cadillac and Dorr mountains. In the winter we frequently walk on the closed loop road from the Fabbri picnic area towards Seal Harbor. There's a wonderful view of the notch from the Otter Creek causeway. I never pause to look at that view without thinking with gratitude of my high school geography teacher, Mr. Webber,

who taught me to recognize and appreciate a glacially sculpted landscape. Thank you for a wonderful magazine. We look forward to every issue. — Donna Reed, Ellsworth, ME

It is a view of the Gorge, between Cadillac and Dorr. In the summer of 2018, we hiked the Gorge Path on a 95-degree day, with humidity to match. We marveled over the tangle of boulders as we made our way to the intersection. We went up and over Dorr and were relieved for the coolness of the birch trees along the Jesup Path on our way back to our car. We all love this feature! Best for 2020 and continued thanks for your work for the park we love! — Pete Vermilyea, Litchfield, CT

I believe this picture is taken from the park loop road. It looks up to the notch where several trails intersect. The Dorr and Gorge Path are among them. My wife and I have been visiting Acadia for 20 years and first came to this intersection on our very first hike on the Gorge Path. The name led us to believe it would be a leisurely walk. We were new at hiking and had on only sneakers. You can imagine our surprise when the path kept going up and up. We are proud we made it to the top of Cadillac but did ask for a ride down which another visitor agreed to do. We have since become accomplished hikers and have done many of the trails on the island that we love. — Lenny Contaxes and Carla Ockert, Attleboro, MA

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A Magazine about Acadia National Park
and Surrounding Communities

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.

The *Journal* is published three times a year. Submissions and letters are welcome. See <http://friendsofacadia.org/news-publications/friends-of-acadia-journal/submissions/>

Opinions expressed are the authors'.

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Earl D. Brechlin

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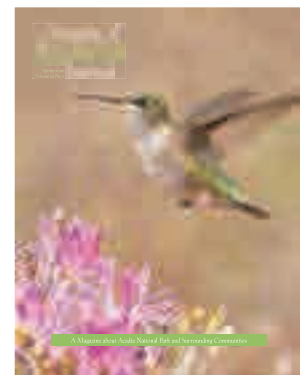
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A hummingbird focuses on the blooming rhodora in Acadia National Park. Ralph Waldo Emerson praised rhodora as a "rival of the rose."

Cover photo by Thomas Blagden



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REHAB SET ON LAST CARRIAGE ROAD SEGMENT

Project Will Require Closures, Suspension Of Bike Shuttle

By Earl Brechlin

A total rebuild of the final seven miles of Acadia National Park's Carriage Road network is slated to be done this summer. Completion of the work on the roads that surround Eagle Lake will cap an effort that began nearly 30 years ago when Friends of Acadia instituted its first major capital campaign and raised more than \$3.4 million to help leverage federal dollars for the project.

FOA's endowment is aimed at providing funds for continued maintenance of the carriage roads, while the government agreed to pay for the major rehab work. Over the years, Friends of Acadia has also provided other support in the form of volunteers and fund raising for specific carriage road projects and preservation work on the system's architecturally significant bridges.

Because the carriage roads around Eagle Lake were in the best shape when the rehabilitation began, they were dropped out of the initial project and were slated to be done last. The relatively short construction window (between the end of mud season and first frost), as well as engineering, project management, and contractor availability, have all played a part in how the process has unfolded. To date, some 38 miles of roads have been redone.



A major rehabilitation of the carriage road around Eagle Lake will require the closure of most of that loop during the summer of 2020.

"We're now looking at the last seven miles," says Keith Johnston, Acadia's chief of facilities maintenance. The design work has been in progress for the last three years. "And, it has taken this long to get it funded," Johnston continues. Federal funds will pay for the work.

Along with rebuilding the roadbed and resurfacing to exact historic standards, work will include replacing multiple culverts and water guides. The bridge on the east side carriage road, which crosses the outlet of Bubble Pond, is slated to be replaced. Work crews will also stabilize a rockslide area along the west side carriage

road near Connors Nubble. As of the Journal's press time, a contract for the project had not been completed.

Visitors to Acadia will notice some major changes in their ability to access the Eagle Lake area this season. The park will close some or all of the Eagle Lake carriage road loop from time to time during construction. "We do hope to get connecting sections reopened as they are finished," Johnston explains. Because of the closures, the usual Island Explorer Bicycle Express, which shuttled vans and bike transport trailers between Eagle Lake and the Village Green in Bar Harbor at 15-minute intervals, will not operate during 2020.

Along with restoring the carriage roads to their former glory, work will also include some preparation for the future. Construction crews will be using a staging area on the east side of the lake known as "Liscomb's Pit" and create a temporary road from the pit to the carriage road. Because the park's long-range transportation plan calls for converting that area to a parking lot (to facilitate a ban on parking along the roadside at the north end of Eagle Lake), that access road will eventually become the main entrance to the carriage roads in that vicinity. ✱

EARL BRECHLIN is Friends of Acadia's Director of Communications.



Because of major carriage road restoration work in the Eagle Lake area, the popular bicycle shuttle running between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Eagle Lake will not be in operation this season.

ACADIA AWAKENS, READIES FOR SUMMER

By Earl Brechlin

We've all seen that last line in a set of instructions on how to take something apart. "To assemble, reverse order of disassembly." That's fine if you're talking a children's bike or bookcase from Ikea. Getting Acadia National Park open for summer, however, is much more complicated than just reversing what was done in fall to get it ready for winter. And despite the uncertainty surrounding scheduling disruptions and possible changes in traditional opening dates due to the coronavirus, progress is being made.

In early April in Acadia, job one is preparing seasonal housing units for the scores of part-time workers who will soon be arriving to get the park opened.

"We bring people and our facilities online in a very systematic way," explains Acadia's Chief of Facilities Maintenance, Keith Johnston. The walls and nearly every flat surface of his compact office are covered with calendars, schedules, and rolls of plans. "At the end of March, beginning of April we start cleaning and turning housing units back on."

The park has 21 buildings containing living quarters that have 80 beds. Each one must be checked out by plumbers, electricians, and heating technicians.

While in the past, getting those housing units back up and running involved merely turning on the utilities, the discovery of

hantavirus — a potentially deadly virus often associated with mouse droppings — in park buildings in New York a few years ago prompted a change of policy for all units in the National Park Service's Northeast Region.

"The west side roads really took a pounding."

— KEITH JOHNSTON

As housing units are prepared for opening, the park service now requires an additional step as a precaution. According to Johnston, first entry into mothballed units requires crews to wear full hazmat suits and respirators to inspect for rodent nests or waste and to remove any that are found. "Each unit then gets a good cleaning and things are turned back on," he adds.

After a lengthy hiring process that begins in December, park officials bring seasonal staff back in waves beginning in April. First tapped are those classified as career seasonals. These are regular park service workers who are laid off over the winter. The second wave involves temporary workers who begin in May. In both instances, Acadia is competing

for experienced workers with all the other parks in the nation with seasonal work forces.

During late winter, park crews are on the move out in the park, assessing storm damage such as downed trees, road and culvert washouts, and rockfalls along the Park Loop Road. One of the areas most prone to rockfalls is the Park Loop Road between Jordan Pond House and Bubble Rock. While in most years the rocks range in size from grapefruit to basketballs, occasionally a piece of heavy equipment is needed to move large boulders.

One of the first roads to be opened, once mud season closures end, is the Seal Cove Road between Southwest Harbor and Tremont. It is often used by area residents.

The park appreciates reports from visitors, from both trails and carriage roads, about obstacles or damage. "Luckily, there are a lot of eyes out there," Johnston notes.

Fallen tree removal is a top priority until the danger of frost passes and water supply systems can be brought back online. Particularly challenging is the seven-mile pipe that runs through mostly forested areas from a well near Jordan Pond to the public facilities at Sand Beach. Much of it is plastic and it is frequently chewed by porcupines over the winter. The holes are discovered on startup. "When it's pressurized, we often see rainbows of mist along the base of Gorham



FOAMASHLEY L. CONTI



FOAMASHLEY L. CONTI

Left: Acadia National Park ranger Alison Richardson uses a chainsaw to clear trees and brush at Blackwoods Campground in Acadia National Park, to prepare the park for the summer. Right: Acadia National Park truck driver/equipment operator Joe Qualey uses a backhoe to move downed trees at Blackwoods Campground in Acadia National Park, to get the facility ready for summer.

OLD NOW NEW AGAIN, ON TRAILS

With spring arriving early this year, Acadia National Park's trail crews are already fanning out to check for winter damage, remove blowdowns, and take an inventory of missing or damaged signs. The names on many of those trails, however, have changed multiple times over the years as administrations and expectations have shifted.

In fact, the newest trail names out there are actually some of the oldest. They were restored over a decade-long improvement process that was supported by Friends of Acadia's Acadia Trails Forever campaign.

Most trails on Mount Desert Island were originally laid out and built by Village Improvement Associations. According to Acadia Trail Foreman Gary Stellpflug, some were changed by park co-founder George B. Dorr, some by the park service, and others during a major reorganization in the 1950s.

Beginning in 2008, after a historic trails study was done, and based on the park's trails management plan, many of the trails were renamed. "We decided to go back to the originals," Stellpflug says. He adds that although many trails in the Champlain, Beehive, and Gorham mountains area once had names based on color combinations, only one of those was retained. "We kept the Orange and Black name as kind of an homage," he says.

When the trails were renamed, small laminated notices were attached to traditional wood direction signs explaining the old and new names. Now that enough time has expired, those are no longer needed. "We're not putting little notes out anymore," Stellpflug explains. "People are used to it by now."

— Earl Brechlin



A 1911 edition of a Path Map for the eastern side of Mount Desert Island shows some of the original trail names. Many early trails were abandoned after the Great Fire of 1947. The map was produced by trail designers Waldron Bates, Herbert Jaques, and Edward Rand. Go online to www.friendsofacadia.org/bates to explore the map's secrets in detail.

Mountain," Johnston explains. "It helps us find the leaks."

As crews are out and about opening buildings and checking roads, those responsible for the hiking trails are also gearing up. Park crews will inspect every foot of the park's 125-mile trail network, clear blowdowns, and make major repairs. Late-season snowfalls or extended rainy periods only complicate the process.

Comfort stations and rest room facilities need to be opened as does the Sieur de Monts Nature Center and the campgrounds at Blackwoods, Seawall, and Schoodic.

Major construction projects also ramp up in the spring. One of them this year is a total replacement of the nearly three-mile electric

and communications lines supplying the Schoodic Education and Research Center. Workers cleared vegetation this past winter to minimize environmental damage and impacts on wildlife.

As far as the outlook for summer 2020 goes, Johnston, in an interview before mandated closures and social distancing rules, said he was cautiously optimistic. Unlike 2019, when the partial government shutdown in January threw a monkey wrench into the seasonal hiring process, work this year to "import" the part-time staff is running on schedule. One hitch is the extraordinary amount of damage the carriage road system and dirt roads on the west side of Mount Desert Island sustained in a series of heavy rainstorms in

late November. Culverts were washed out and in some cases, the uncontrolled runoff of several inches of rain created ruts as deep as six feet. "The west side roads really took a pounding," Johnston says.

Although the Park Loop Road usually opens on April 15, there is no set date this year due to coronavirus closures. "Memorial Day is the first big spike in visitation, so we like to have everything up and running by then," Johnston says. Nothing is certain this year.

"Getting everyone onboard and getting everything done by the time we start seeing increases in visitation is always a challenge," Johnston says. "Sometimes it's quite an adventure." ✱

LAURA AND VASSAR PIERCE ARE ACADIA'S CHAMPIONS

By Shawn Keeley

As you get to know Laura and Vassar Pierce it is hard not to default to clichés — “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” “dynamic duo,” “dream team.”

As Friends of Acadia gears up for our 31st Annual Benefit in August, we are so fortunate Laura and Vassar have stepped up to co-chair the Benefit Committee. They are our first husband and wife co-chairs and one of the youngest leadership teams we have had for the Benefit.

Vassar's roots run deep in Acadia. His great-great-grandfather was Charles W. Eliot, one of Acadia's founders and one of the most important advocates for the establishment of the park. Vassar has spent every summer of his life on MDI, hiking, sailing, biking, and enjoying this beautiful place with family and friends. He also brings a wonderful understanding of FOA — our mission and programs — that were informed by two summers working for FOA as a Ridge Runner and one as the No Child Left Inside intern, a program that helped pave the way for programs like Acadia Quest.

Following his time at FOA Vassar pursued a career in philanthropy and is currently the Interim Director of Advancement at Pomfret School. His knowledge of FOA, experience in philanthropy, and deep connection to the park make him a perfect leader for FOA's Annual Benefit.

Laura's introduction to MDI came through Vassar about 10 years ago. While she does not have quite as much history here, she more than makes up for it with her enthusiastic embrace of Maine, FOA, and Acadia. Laura joined the Benefit Committee three years ago and got right to work on the décor committee. She brings to the committee an incredible eye as an interior designer and a wealth of experience as a former event planner.

If you attended the Benefit the past several years you may have noticed some of the wonderful décor that has made the event more beautiful and helped bring our themes to life. Whether it was the spinnakers in the dinner tent and navigational chart table runners the year we raised funds for the Bass Harbor Lighthouse, or the carriage wheels,

pink granite cobbles, and carriage road bridge placemats from last year, each décor element benefited from Laura's thoughtful approach.

Together, Laura and Vassar bring to the event a wonderful array of skills and experience, as well as a fresh perspective. They will rely on some of our long-time Benefit volunteers while also recruiting new friends and supporters to join the Benefit Committee. With their leadership, this promises to be a successful and memorable year.

As the summer unfolds you may see Laura and Vassar around the island, particularly in Seal Harbor where Laura is opening an interior design shop and studio. If you do see them this summer, please thank them for their service to FOA.

For questions about the Annual Benefit or to donate an auction item to the silent or live auctions, contact Shawn Keeley, shawn@friendsofacadia.org ✨

SHAWN KEELEY is Friends of Acadia's Senior Development Officer



Devoted lovers of Acadia, Laura and Vassar Pierce, shown here atop Acadia Mountain with their dog Henry, are the co-chairs of this year's Friends of Acadia Benefit.

ACADIA AS CANARY IN A COAL MINE

Spring is always an exciting – albeit busy – time for us as we begin preparing Acadia National Park for the upcoming visitor season. That excitement, of course, is tempered this year by the steps we've had to take to address our top priority, the safety of the public, staff, volunteers, and our park partners in response to the Coronavirus.

We moved quickly in March to close all facilities and roads, and to educate folks about the need to follow CDC avoidance guidelines and to practice social distancing while visiting Acadia. We continue to work with federal, state, and local authorities to closely monitor COVID-19 and will notify the public when park facilities reopen by providing updates on our website and social media channels. As this goes to press, so much remains up in the air because of the uncertainties this challenge represents.

In a normal year, opening the park for the summer involves a lot more than unlocking the padlocks and swinging open the gates. There is always a lot of work to be done, ranging from clearing downed trees that have fallen across the park's trails and carriage roads to clearing rocks that consistently fall onto roadways from the freeze-thaw cycle of winter.

Unfortunately, the work of opening the park in the spring is getting harder as time passes. Acadia is seeing an increasing intensity of storms. This past fall a rainstorm dumped approximately three inches of rain in less than 24 hours. It ravaged the carriage roads, causing severe washouts. Trails were also damaged. We will still be cleaning up from this storm well into June – nearly nine months later. And many will remember the great ice skating at Sieur de Monts a couple of years ago as the entire Great Meadow flooded during the winter and froze.

These types of storms are a bellwether of our future – and are less severe relative to what will come 20-50 years from now. A report recently published by the University of Maine, with collaboration from the Schoodic Institute, shows that average



FOA/ASHLEY L. CONTI

annual precipitation has increased 15 percent (about 6 inches) since 1895. More of this precipitation is falling in the form of rain – not snow – and it is coming more intensely. Rain events of 4 inches or more are now three times more common. You can find the Maine's Climate Future report at climatechange.umaine.edu.

Like dealing with coronavirus, climate change poses problems and challenges that we have never faced before. Park managers like me have no schema, or mental frame of reference, to be able to evaluate complex ecological dilemmas, as the rate and intensity of change is greater than anything seen prior. This means that as managers of protected areas, we will unintentionally make mistakes while we are learning. So how can we shorten this mistake cycle, and decrease the severity of it?

One of the most important ways is through high quality science. Fortunately, Acadia is among the most studied places in Maine. There are approximately 80 research projects each year occurring in the park. They are conducted by universities, non-profit organizations, park staff, and others. Some 80 percent of these have a climate connection.

Innovative approaches such as FOA's Wild Acadia initiatives are helping us understand the implications of climate change and build resiliency watershed by watershed. With Schoodic Institute's Second Century Stewardship program we are funding research fellows doing meaningful work, while also training them and other NPS staff in science communication so that they can better convey their work to a broader, non-technical audience.

With 3.5 million visits each year, we have an extraordinary opportunity to communicate with our visitors about the research occurring here and climate impacts on the park. Americans love their national parks and so are keenly interested in how they are affected or not affected by a changing climate. Many parks, including Acadia, are located in highly unique and sensitive places. For us, at the transition of the Mid-Atlantic and northern boreal forest ecosystems, a change in temperature will have a long-term effect on our ability to sustain boreal tree species like red spruce or Jack pine. We are a proverbial canary in the coal mine.

As we re-open Acadia this season, clearing away a winter's worth of debris and rocks, and more, I cannot help but reflect on how this is an expression of change. Acadia is changing, more rapidly than we might like. Yet I am grateful for the work of our partners — Friends of Acadia, Schoodic Institute, and the many research institutions that do work here — in helping us better understand this change so we can be more prepared for it.

—Kevin Schneider

INVASIVE PLANT TEAM EFFECTIVENESS GROWS

By Lynn Fantom

Imagine an Acadia where the view from the Champlain Overlook on the Park Loop Road is so obscured by bushes that that you can't see the lighthouse on Egg Rock. Or picture a screen of shrubs seeming to choke off the historic spring pool at Sieur de Monts. What if an impenetrable mass of vines entangled the trees bordering Jordan Pond House?

You don't have to worry about these scenarios for Acadia National Park because during the last three decades someone else has. Since 1987, the Exotic Plant Management Program — which is about to change its name — has been hard at work heading off those very issues and generally restoring the naturally functioning ecosystems of the park.

However, as climate change presents foreboding quandaries for the future, the fight has taken on a new urgency.

"I've worked in other national parks and for a traveling forest health crew throughout the Northeast. In some areas, you'll see large stands of invasive plants and it's hard to even move through," says Jesse Wheeler, the park biologist who heads the program. "We're fortunate in this park where we don't have many of those examples because we have been managing these areas for quite a while."

"I like where we are, but that doesn't mean that we don't have a challenge ahead of us."

Acadia's history is intertwined with the fortunes of early homesteaders, rusticators, and estate dwellers. The same

affinity for beauty that propelled them to create a national park from private lands inspired them to import exotic plants for their own properties, many with berries or glossy leaves. Most were from Asia.

So, it's no wonder these plants became part of the landscape. But the current-day threat to both cultural and natural resources is real. Although about a quarter of the plants in Acadia are non-native, a couple dozen species are considered invasive and present a range of risks.

Take Japanese barberry, for example. With its orange-red fall foliage and red fruit, it is appealing to gardeners. But research has shown that black-legged ticks are twice as numerous in Japanese barberry infestations as in non-invaded areas.

Asiatic bittersweet also has red berries, which have been used for festive decorations. But this vine rapidly encircles a tree, robbing it of sunlight and choking its trunk.

Other invasive species negatively affect native pollinators and produce less nutritious fruits than natives. For instance, carbohydrate-heavy bush honeysuckle denies birds the high-fat content food they need to migrate. One National Park Service specialist called them the "potato chips of the natural world."

Climate Effects

Natural or human disturbances, such as fires, road building, or tree uprooting after windstorms, open territory for non-

Buckthorn Thicket Is Fall Target

Birders scan its skies, paddlers explore its waters, and professional biologists monitor its long-term health. What they all have in common, though, is admiration of the precious ecosystem of Bass Harbor Marsh.

Acadia National Park's Invasive Plant Management Team (IPMT) will be joining them all next summer for a new project to manage a 14-acre area on both sides of the Bass Harbor Marsh Creek that has been invaded by glossy buckthorn and some other non-native plants.

That's a "big one" in terms of upcoming goals, says team leader

Jesse Wheeler, who described the intrusion as "growing almost right up to the edge of the salt marsh." The location is upstream of the Tremont School.

The initial attack will involve cutting and hauling, making it both time- and labor-intensive. Volunteers may be needed. After that, the team, which is licensed by the State of Maine Board of Pesticides Control, applies herbicide to the freshly cut stumps. Sometimes areas infested with glossy buckthorn are treated with herbicides sprayed on their foliage.



A member of Acadia National Park's Exotic Plant Management Team checks out a patch of invasive glossy buckthorn near Canon Brook.

“I like where we are, but that doesn’t mean that we don’t have a challenge ahead of us.”

— Jesse Wheeler

native plants to invade. Despite their differences, the characteristic of all invasive species is that they out-compete native vegetation for sunlight, soil, and water and decrease diversity.

The risk of creating an artificial monoculture is particularly poignant for Acadia because it is naturally so diverse. Situated in the transition zone of two ecoregions, it features both the northern boreal forest and the eastern deciduous forest. “Because of this, Acadia has wonderful plant communities — a great mix that is worthy of supporting,” says Stephanie Clement, director of conservation at Friends of Acadia.

When opportunistic invasives come into a new area, they often do so with advantages. There may not be a competing species to keep them in check or they may have dominant traits. For example, some Japanese barberry has been found to have a root biomass triple that of a native blueberry bush.

When these strengths are exaggerated by climate change, the situation becomes more serious. According to Wheeler, the increasing temperatures associated with climate change are helping non-native plants grow more

Right: Acadia’s Exotic Plant Management Team hikes along the boardwalk on the Jesup Trail at Sieur de Monts.



FOVA/AMEE BEAL CHURCH

Browntail Moth Threat

Although they have existed in Maine for more than 100 years, the first evidence of browntail moths in Acadia was found by a visitor near Great Head in March of 2019. Subsequent surveys have identified infestations of the European natives at several areas on Mount Desert Island and at Schoodic. The caterpillars have poisonous hairs that can inflict a nasty rash when they come into contact with human skin. If inhaled, the microscopic hairs can also cause respiratory difficulties for periods lasting from hours to weeks. The hairs remain toxic for years.

Members of Acadia National Park’s Invasives Management Team, who have

removed hundreds of webbed cocoons in the past year, conducted removal work near Great Head during a major push in February. Branches containing the webs are cut and immersed in soapy water.



MAINE FOREST SERVICE

A browntail moth caterpillar.



FOVA/SHLEY L. CONTI

Acadia National Park biological science technician Nick Stevenson holds a recently clipped browntail moth web that was found in a tree branch along the Ocean Path in Acadia National Park.

Ask the Expert

An Invasives Q&A
With Acadia's
Jesse Wheeler



Jesse Wheeler

FOA

What is the best way to learn more about invasive plants?

Start by checking out the quiz in this issue that will help you recognize the invasive plants you are most likely to encounter locally. The University of Maine's extension service also publishes bulletins on individual species, including descriptions of the plants and their habitats.

Is it enough to cut back an invasive bush at its base?

It depends on the bush, of course, but with a plant like multiflora rose, start by cutting the stems and then applying an herbicide (such as glyphosate at a 10 to 20 percent solution) to the stump. *(Be sure to take all recommended personal safety precautions when using chemicals. – Editor)*

By the way, studies have shown that a single multiflora rose can rapidly take over a site and persist for 30 years or more — so monitor it.

Why do garden centers still sell invasives?

The good news is that the Maine Department of Agriculture adopted rules in January of 2018 that prohibit sale of 33 plant species. These include not only species discussed in this feature, but also winged euonymus, yellow iris, and common privet. Before you plant something like *rosa rugosa* or lupines, chat with some neighbors who have had them in their gardens: *caveat emptor* (Buyer Beware!).

What is the difference between a weed and an invasive plant?

Both certainly grow where we don't want them. Invasives, however, are non-native plants with such advantages that they can spread to become a large-scale problem in natural areas by outcompeting native plants. Homeowners near national parks have an added responsibility to help protect against them.

quickly. Many of them, especially vines, respond positively to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

And because many native plants are less heat tolerant and susceptible to forest insect pests that thrive with increasing temperatures, the situation worsens. Climate change can "increase that imbalance of competition," says Wheeler.

If allowed to outcompete with native species, invasives will eventually change the structure of entire forests, wetlands, woodlands, and even summits.

Seeing Forward

The program to fight exotic plants at Acadia heads into the 2020 season with a new name, the Invasive Plant Management Team (IPMT), putting it in sync with the national program. Acadia's staff will include the program leader plus a full-time field director/data specialist, three seasonal workers, and a summer intern.

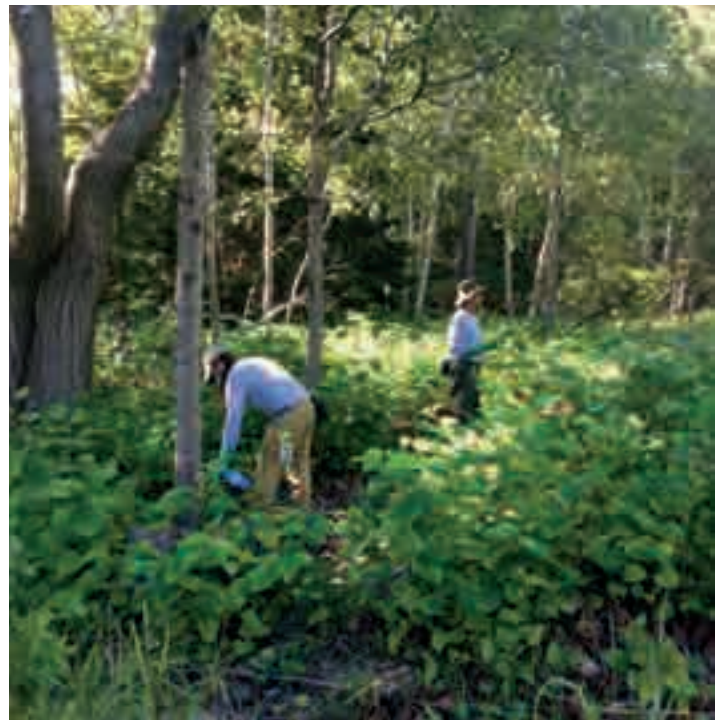
"What is different about Acadia is that we've essentially had our own team for a decade now. Most parks that I know don't have an in-house team that's dedicated to this work. So, we're lucky."

That is thanks, in part, to the support of Friends of Acadia, which Wheeler calls "super critical," and funding from generous corporations like Canon U.S.A., Inc.

The program takes an integrated approach of prevention, early detection and rapid response, and management actions.

Wheeler plans a robust outreach effort, including speaking at meetings of professionals such as the Master Gardeners Association, as well as community gatherings throughout Hancock County. He is popular on the brown bag circuit because, as FOA's Clement says, he is very knowledgeable, helping people address "prevention" as the first step in the process.

The IPMT will continue ramping up the territory it surveys, addressing past sites that might need retreatment and discovering



Exotic Plant Management Team members work to remove Japanese knotweed near Sand Beach in Acadia National Park.

FOA

new populations such as the Japanese Barberry that took over a few acres last year near Cedar Swamp Mountain. “That was a bit of a wake-up call like, wow, you can find these things almost anywhere in the park,” says Wheeler.

Addressing a 14-acre area infested with glossy buckthorn near Bass Harbor Marsh Creek is another major goal (see related story).

Remedial actions in Acadia depend on the species. Some, like garlic mustard and bull thistle, can simply be pulled out by hand. Others, like Japanese barberry and Canada thistle, are managed with foliage herbicides carried in backpack sprayers. The chemical solution is carefully directed so that risk to surrounding plants is limited to only a few fine droplets.

Current plans follow a series of successes, from the early results the program had with purple loosestrife, to the team’s effective management actions last year. In fact, IPMT treated more than 100 project sites in 2019 — so many plants that, if they were all clumped together, would cover 1-1/4 football fields, says Wheeler.

But he is not complacent. “There’s one thing I’d like to tell people,” he adds. “You have to take the long view on this. If you can keep going in season after season, you can usually make an impact. But just know, it’s going to take a while.” ✱

A former NYC marketing executive, LYNN FANTOM writes about the outdoors and aquaculture, especially in Maine, where she now spends half her time.



FOAMASHLEY L. CONTI



FOA

At top right, Acadia National Park biological science technician Nick Stevenson, left, marks on a map where vegetation program manager Jesse Wheeler clipped a browntail moth web from a tree branch along the Ocean Path in February. Above, crews work to remove invasive honeysuckle on The Hop.

Answers on page 26

Can you identify these **INVASIVE SPECIES** found in and around Acadia?



- ___ GLOSSY BUCKTHORN ___ JAPANESE BARBERRY ___ PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE ___ ASIATIC BITTERSWEET ___ CANADA THISTLE
 ___ AUTUMN OLIVE ___ GARLIC MUSTARD ___ MULTIFLORA ROSE ___ JAPANESE KNOTWEED ___ MORROW’S HONEYSUCKLE

GRAPHIC BY LISA WILLIAMS

Field Work Commitment Expands

By Earl Brechlin

Friends of Acadia has added capacity to front-line efforts to help protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Acadia National Park.

Two long-time seasonal field staff, Recreation Technician Becca Stanley, and Summit Steward Coordinator Stephanie Ley began working additional hours as of January. Wild Acadia Project Coordinator Brian Henkel, who has headed up the Cromwell and Marshall brooks watershed studies, has joined them as year-round employees. Henkel's position has been funded by a Friends of Acadia grant for the past five years.

"Brian, Becca, and Stephanie are performing valuable work in the field for FOA and the park," said Stephanie Clement, Conservation Director for Friends of Acadia. "These folks are extending the park's ability to tackle issues such as climate change, traffic congestion, and visitation growth."

Stanley assists park staff in studying recreational use in Acadia National Park. She maintains electronic counters on carriage roads and trails, monitors traffic counters at road entrances and exits, and administers visitor questionnaires annually. Becca is FOA's full-time Recreation Technician Lead after working in the position seasonally for three years. In 2016, she graduated with a



Brian Henkel, FOA Wild Acadia Project Coordinator

Becca Stanley, FOA Lead Recreation Technician

Stephanie Ley, FOA Summit Steward Coordinator

B.S. in Natural Resources from Northland College in Wisconsin. She will be attending the University of Maine for a master's degree.

Before joining FOA, she actively worked with the U.S. Forest Service as a wilderness ranger in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota. Stanley loves hiking Acadia's peaks, swimming at Pond's End, and recreationally hauling lobsters with her husband, Tim.

Ley joined FOA seasonally as a Cadillac Summit Steward in 2016. In 2017, she was promoted to the coordinator position when the Summit Steward and Ridge Runner programs merged. Ley coordinates with

multiple park divisions to assist staff in protecting Acadia and educating visitors on Leave No Trace principles. One of her favorite perks of the job is meeting visitors from all over the world on top of Cadillac Mountain.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation from the University of Florida, Ley began her career at the Florida Forest Service. Before settling in Maine, she lived in Flagstaff, AZ, where she worked at Walnut Canyon National Monument. Ley never tires of hiking and kayaking in Acadia, but in winter she often travels internationally and to visit family.

Friends of Acadia's Wild Acadia initiative is a collaboration with the park that takes a watershed-based approach to improving ecological conditions, increasing resilience, and maintaining the cultural authenticity of the park and surrounding community resources. Within this collaboration, Henkel works with park staff and area partners such as university faculty, students, area towns, and conservation non-profits to collect data, assess resource conditions, plan and initiate projects, and coordinate efforts of the park and stakeholders.

Henkel is a graduate of the University of Texas at San Antonio with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He has worked as a hydrologist in groundwater and surface water for more than 15 years. He and his family reside in Mount Desert. ❁



FOA Summit Steward Coordinator Stephanie Ley chats with young visitors along the Gorham Mountain Trail in Acadia National Park.

PHOEBE GOODHUE MILLIKEN (1919 – 2019)

By W. Kent Olson

To Maine conservationists she was Phoebe, no last name necessary.

She of the whitest hair, most diverting smile, most direct, animated, animating, fiercely blue eyes, and the “Why don’t you and Gerrish talk in the Blue Room?” invitation — which, to lucky grant-seekers at The Haven, their Northeast Harbor home, meant she’d pre-qualified a gift of magnitude for your cause. Her husband would now handle the formalities over cigars and a beverage. Their philanthropy was wide but, because of Phoebe, was honed especially toward Maine’s lands, waters, and creatures.

The Millikens spent temperate months at The Haven, arriving aboard motor yacht *Spindle* (an allusion to the family textile business). Though Phoebe loved Maine’s coast and islands, she only tolerated boating. She far preferred terra firma, especially the lovely spruce-forested, granite-rimmed point they co-inhabited with her treasured avian companions. It bugged her, she’d tell anyone, that birds of prey and house cats were harming passerine populations.

Phoebe invited strays like me to stay in the Milliken off-season cottage, Winter Haven, while house-hunting or settling into jobs. I spent the first two weeks of my Friends of Acadia presidency there and breakfasted up the hill with Phoebe and Gerrish. Some evenings they introduced me to friends and FOA supporters.

Her gifts supported FOA’s Acadia Winter Trails Association, the Wild Gardens, Acadia Trails Forever, conservation easement monitoring, carriage roads restoration, and more. In putting their wealth to civic purposes, the Millikens, humble givers, never sought notice. We planned a formal award for their longtime benefactions, but she told me no. Strongly no. She might as well have added, “Now, please

take your seat and let’s eat” — because she was immensely interested to get on with conversation over wine and victuals with a table of friends. There was something Monticello-like in that, Phoebe playing Jefferson’s part, invariably leading the discourse, which focused on her guests’ work, or on books — she an inveterate reader — or affairs of state, or conservation, or other idea-driven matters.

A visitor once found her in the kitchen at 5:00 a.m. squeezing oranges for a Havenful of overnighters. First up, last to go to bed, he noted.

She daily visited a dying friend with dementia, who joyously accepted the tiara Phoebe and another friend crowned her with — a midsummer night’s triad of sprites, egged on, one suspects, by Puck, Cobweb, and Peaseblossom.

Maestra of the kind note, penned in her distinctive, upright semi-cursive, she kept you up on things, or urged you to check out this or that, or gave a surprise attagirl or attaboy.

Phoebe was no passive onlooker in the charities she supported. Her village circuit walks to post office, market, etc., in cotton skirt and white tennies brought her always to Maine Coast Heritage Trust to do business, interpreting maps and developing conservation easement strategies for MDI’s western shore, for example.

From her cabin there, she watched seals sunning atop their reefy haul-outs. She swam on incoming tides only. The solar-baked rocks warmed the rippling waters just so, she said.

Phoebe was at Gerrish’s side when he died, at 97, in 2015. It was the earthly end of what the family described as a “wonderful love affair which lasted for 24,694 days” — nearly sixty-nine years. Her death came four years later.

From the official obituary:

“Phoebe Milliken, at 100, gathered her family for Thanksgiving, rose, and simply died — peacefully and without pain. The best mother, devoted partner, friend to more people than most ever know and intimately vital supporter to so many. Mount Desert Island was her first love, after her childhood farm home in Lancaster, Mass. Many of you have received a note, a clipping or a word from Phoebe when it mattered. Forever a conservationist, Phoebe cared fiercely for all of Nature’s — to her, God’s — creations, and not at all for the artificial.”

Hosannas, Phoebe. ✱



MILLIKEN FAMILY

Phoebe Milliken

KEN OLSON was president and CEO of Friends of Acadia from 1995 to 2006.



This page clockwise from upper left: Alison Keiffer sent in this shot from Sand Beach; Jim Linnane of Bar Harbor contributed this shot of a group of intrepid hikers near Lower Hadlock Pond; Jeremy Dougherty shared this shot of runner Dylan Brann enjoying the view from the summit of Cadillac Mountain.

Right: Julia Ambrosino captured the quintessential Acadia vista overlooking the Tarn with Huguenot Head to the left.

Opposite page top to bottom: Mariah Reading took a cool photo of art she made from rope cleaned up off a beach on Isle au Haut; Hadley Powell sent along an image of quality family time along a carriage road in Acadia; Marcia Smith got this frosty shot of a pair of walkers and their canine companions along a very icy stretch of carriage road.



WINTER IN THE PARK

While it may be Acadia's "Quiet" season, there's plenty of activity out in the national park during the winter months. From cross-country skiing, to snowshoeing to hiking and snowmobiling on the Park Loop Road, there's no shortage of excuses to get out of the house and into the great outdoors.

Dozens of our members and social media fans answered the call to share photos from their Acadia adventures this past winter.

In this time of coronavirus social distancing, even while out in the park, will probably remain the norm for a while (See related graphic on page 35). Still, no matter where you may be, with proper precautions and mindful of health advisories, there's no substitute for spending time renewing our spirits in nature.

Be sure to follow Friends of Acadia on Facebook and Instagram.





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continued from page 3

and one of our favorites! We loved working on Acadia Quest! Thank you for working so hard to make hiking and finding out about the park so fun. – Team Zoeckler

- As always, it was the highlight of our time in Maine. Please keep the Quest coming! – Weissmann Herd

- We did the Ship Harbor Trail and our daughter saw exactly what the Pathmakers do when she walked those nice beams! We appreciate all that you do for us. We are teaching our daughter how amazing Acadia (including Friends of Acadia) is! – Team Lucy

- I've been coming to the island for decades, and this year I went on trails I've never been on because of this Quest. Thank you for the fun new memories! – Sarah

- Yesterday we completed the Speed Quest of Acadia National Park. We left with tired feet, but full hearts. Best of all, we made memories to last a lifetime. Thank you for providing this Quest for our youngsters. Now they leave with a sense of accomplishment. – Team Avengers

For Acadia Quest 2020, the next chapter of the people of the park series will feature the Treasure Keepers of Acadia. Teams will meet bat biologists, curators, climate scientists, and more who will take them to amazing and little-known locations in the park such as Sargent Mountain Pond and the Baker Island dance floor. Acadia's Chief of Resource Management, Rebecca Cole-Will, says that her staff "are the technical experts who measure the health of the natural and



TEAM ECHO WOODS

A member of Acadia Quest team "Echo Woods" enjoys the calm waters of Long Pond.

cultural resources in the park, and then use that information to figure out ways that we can take care [of the park's treasures]."

Natural resources include Acadia's wildlife, plants, air, and water, while cultural resources consist of bridges, gatehouses, the Wabanaki culture, homesteads, and more.

Cole-Will sends teams to an iconic landmark in the park, the Duck Brook Bridge. "I love this bridge because it is unique and in such a beautiful place," she says. "It's part of the park's early history, built in 1927, and it's the most elaborate of the carriage road bridges. Before you come here, I would tell you to look up the word scupper, find out what that is, and go looking for the scuppers on this bridge."

Because of the COVID-19 closures, the Treasure Keepers of Acadia Quest will not begin until Acadia reopens. The app will be available for both iOS and Android platforms and operates on smartphones, tablets, and desktop computers. The download will be free. To find it, search the app store for "Friends of Acadia," scan the code below, or visit www.friendsofacadia.oncell.com. Teams also will be able to download the paper version by going to the Friends of Acadia website. Enjoy your quest! ✨

PAIGE STEELE is Friends of Acadia's Conservation Projects Manager.



MADELINE'S JR. RANGER CREW

A member of Acadia Quest team "Madeline's Jr. Ranger Crew" pauses near the top of Great Head.



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Friends of Acadia's Trailblazer Monthly Giving program spreads your membership gifts throughout the year, using a credit card. Trailblazer gifts go farther, saving paper and postage costs by avoiding renewal requests. Gifts are processed on the first business day of each month, beginning the month after you sign up. Each January we'll mail you a letter acknowledging your total gift for the past year, with our thanks for your help in protecting Acadia—all year long.

To be a Trailblazer, just go to friendsofacadia.org/giving-membership/monthly-giving and click on the "Give Now" button. After designating the amount you would like to donate each month, select "Make this a monthly gift." You can change the amount of your gift or opt out of the program at any time.

For information, contact Development Officer Lee McWilliams at 207-288-3340 or lee@friendsofacadia.org



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PHILANTHROPIC LEGACY MEETS SUSTAINABILITY

By Laura Coy

William Blair & Company has enjoyed a long and proud relationship with Friends of Acadia. Like many longstanding relationships, we started small and flourished together. Today, William Blair is a premier global boutique in our industry with expertise in investment banking, investment management, and private wealth management. When our company was founded by William McCormick Blair in 1935, it was a start-up firm, based in Chicago, and with strong roots in Maine. Mr. Blair enjoyed visiting his mother-in-law Louise de Koven Bowen's enchanting estate Baymeath in Hulls Cove, with his daughter Helen and sons Ed, Bowen, and William, Jr. The children played tirelessly outdoors—sailing, fishing, and riding horses with their cousins.



Edward Blair

“William Blair is inspired by the Blair family’s rich history of preserving cherished places like Acadia...”

Even into his eighties, William Blair enjoyed the drive from Chicago to Mount Desert to stay with his son Ed Blair, who had bought his own house on Somes Sound. Ed met his wife Betty at the Bar Harbor Yacht Club. They both loved the island. Ed went on to take a particular interest in Mount Desert Island (MDI) and Acadia. He loved to spend the summer on MDI, and he took a strong interest in the institutions that make it so great. He played a critical role not only at FOA but also at the College of the Atlantic, where he was chairman of the board, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. At FOA, Ed was one of the organization’s earliest and most loyal donors, supporting the restoration

of Acadia’s carriage roads, which were originally financed and designed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Ed also helped to fund maintenance of Acadia’s hiking trails and to preserve iconic places like Acadia Mountain, which Ed helped protect just a year before he passed away in 2010 at the age of 95.

William Blair is inspired by the Blair family’s rich history of preserving cherished places like Acadia and is dedicated to philanthropy and community engagement. This dedication is why our firm has embarked on two new initiatives to support nonprofits and preserve our environment. In 2019, William Blair launched a philanthropy strategy aimed at helping nonprofits grow their fundraising capacity through planned giving, endowments, and strategic campaigns. It was through this initiative that William Blair became the inaugural corporate sponsor of the George B. Dorr Society, promoting planned giving and helping Friends of Acadia fulfill its mission. Around the same time, William Blair began to amplify its advisory work with clients and communities around Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives in an effort to help clients invest their assets with a responsible or environmental lens.

This type of investing is called “impact investing,” and over the past three years, assets under management using Socially Responsible Strategies grew 38% in the U.S. to \$12 trillion.

As wealth managers, William Blair’s mission is to enable all capital to have impact. We achieve this by guiding clients through the process of articulating their priorities and then exploring the possibilities for deploying their capital in ways that align with those core values. For some clients, this means incorporating sustainable and impact principles across all aspects of their portfolio. For others, it means creating a philanthropic foundation or dedicating a portion of their portfolio to making a social impact. Historically, many investors took a “do well first, then do good” approach to investing and philanthropy. Today, many investors are seeking to make an impact at all stages of their lives and careers. We call this “catalytic capital” — whether a client wants to invest their capital with ESG or impact strategies, invest their capital with mission-aligned investments, or create strategic partnerships with environmentalists, entrepreneurs, and venture backers who are pursuing more than financial returns.

We know that all capital has impact. As we reflect on the beauty of our natural landscapes and the memories of them that we hold dear, we are proud to offer meaningful ways for nonprofits to enhance and protect our environmental treasures. We remain proud partners of Friends of Acadia and commend all nonprofits on MDI that are making the world a better place.

For more information on William Blair’s history and capabilities and how we can help advance capacity building and sustainability for our clients or communities, please visit: www.williamblair.com. ✱

William Blair

LAURA COY is responsible for Philanthropy Strategy and Community Engagement at William Blair & Company.

RESERVATION DRY RUN CONSIDERED FOR FALL

By Earl Brechlin

One of the key components of Acadia's Transportation Plan, a vehicle reservation system for access to congested areas, may undergo a dry run in late October of this year.

Scheduled for implementation in 2021, the full system would allow only visitors with a reservation to bring private vehicles into areas such as Ocean Drive or the summit of Cadillac Mountain during peak times. Visitors would still be able to access those areas by bicycle, on foot, or in the case of Ocean Drive, via Island Explorer buses.

A reservation would not guarantee a parking spot, only allow entry during a set time window. Visitors with reservations could remain as long as they want.

The dry run will include Ocean Drive and Cadillac, which are two areas slated to be covered by the permanent reservation system. Plans call for the Jordan Pond House area to be included at some point after the full rollout.

"The transportation plan is really all about people having a better experience in the park," explains Christie Anastasia, park spokeswoman. Increasing numbers

of visitors are frustrated when they try to visit Sand Beach, Thunder Hole, or Cadillac and can't find a place to park. "Getting a reservation will help people have certainty they will be able to visit those popular areas."

According to Anastasia, increasing crowds — as the park's popularity has grown to more than 3.5 million visits a year — have prompted closures throughout Acadia, especially on busy holiday weekends. The summit of Cadillac Mountain, which only has 150 legal parking spots, can be clogged with as many as 450 cars at sunrise and sunset. Traffic grinds to a standstill and it can be very difficult for emergency vehicles to get through.

There were 100 closures throughout Acadia in 2019. Along with Ocean Drive and Cadillac, closures were also required at the Bass Harbor Head Lighthouse and at Sieur de Monts.

Conducting a dry run in October, when visitation tends to slow down, will provide an opportunity to work out any glitches before full implementation. "We really want to get a sense of how it might go, ahead of time," Anastasia says.

Tentative plans call for some percentage of reservations to become available several months prior to their effective date with others held back until just a day or two before. Park officials hope to have details available on www.recreation.gov by early summer, although that could change due to COVID-19. There would be a charge for a reservation and some limits on how many reservations someone can make at once. The fee has not yet been set.

It would still be necessary to purchase a park pass.

Plans for full implementation in 2021 include a major expansion of the Island Explorer system and schedules to ease access for visitors without reservations. Those details are also being worked out.

Other transportation plan goals include limiting the size of buses accessing the park and changes to parking arrangements at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, near Eagle Lake in Bar Harbor, and near Echo Lake in Mount Desert.

"It's all about the future," Anastasia said. ✱

EARL BRECHLIN is Friends of Acadia's Communications Director.



Congestion in many areas of Acadia National Park has prompted officials to adopt a transportation plan. Although a reservation system portion of the plan is not slated for implementation until 2021, a dry run may be held in late October of this year.

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Acadia Closes Facilities In Response To COVID-19

Officials in Acadia National Park on March 26 closed Ocean Drive along with all restrooms and winter visitor centers, and suspended off-season visitor services. The Park Loop Road, which was closed as usual for the winter, and the Carriage Roads, which were closed earlier this month due to mud season, will remain closed until further notice. Campgrounds will remain closed.

The adjustments in operations were made in support of federal, state, and local efforts to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), and with guidance from the State of Maine CDC and other health authorities.

The park had been urged by officials in area towns and Governor Janet Mills to address

visitation at a time when Maine citizens were being advised to minimize travel and maintain social distancing. Few visitor-oriented businesses remain open on Mount Desert Island and the hospital and local emergency medical services have limited capacities.

“The National Park Service (NPS) is working service wide with federal, state, and local authorities to closely monitor the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Acadia Public Affairs Specialist Christie Anastasia. “We will notify the public when we resume full operations and provide updates on our website nps.gov/acad and social media channels.

“As have many Maine individuals, businesses, and institutions, Acadia is taking prudent action in response to the coronavirus threat,” said David MacDonald, President of

Friends of Acadia. “The announced closures show that the park’s top priority is protecting the safety of the public, its staff, volunteers, partners, and neighbors. We stand ready to assist our partners at the park as needed in the days and weeks ahead.”

Although the FOA office in Bar Harbor is closed, staff continues to work remotely to advance organizational programs and initiatives.

Updates and other information also will be available on Friends of Acadia’s Facebook page and on the FOA website.

The National Park Service encourages people during this pandemic to adhere to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local public health authorities.

Island Explorer Hits Milestone

The year 2019 was a milestone for the Island Explorer. In June, partners in the bus system gathered at the Jordan Pond House to celebrate the system’s 20th anniversary and the addition of 21 new propane-powered buses to the fleet.

In July, the Island Explorer carried its 8 millionth cumulative passenger.

By the end of the season the bus system achieved another record with a 3.7 percent increase over 2018 ridership figures. In 2019, passengers reduced traffic in the park and surrounding communities by an estimated 294,135 vehicle trips. They also prevented the emission of an estimated 3.4 tons of smog-causing pollutants and 2,265 tons of greenhouse gases.



One of the Island Explorer’s 21 new buses.



PHOTO COURTESY JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA

WHAT A MAREVELOUS CHECK FOR A MOONDANCE... *Photographer and Acadia Artist in Residence Howie Motenko of Seal Harbor, center, presents a donation of \$1,700 to, at left, Lisa Horsch Clark, development director, and at right, David MacDonald, president and CEO of Friends of Acadia to help protect Acadia National Park’s dark skies. The money represents proceeds from Motenko’s fall exhibition entitled “Acadia Moon Dance” at the Northeast Harbor Library. All the images in the gallery featured time exposures taken in the park by moonlight. Motenko’s exhibit at the Gallery at Somes Sound in Somesville will run for the entire month of June with the gallery reception on June 17. A portion of the proceeds from that event will benefit FOA.*

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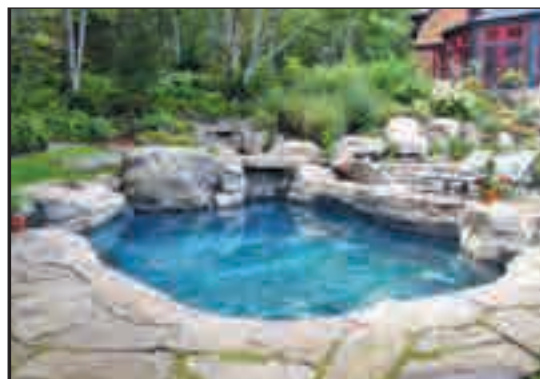


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Quiz on page 13

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Updates

Transportation planner Tom Crikelair conducted his annual survey of Island Explorer passengers in the fall. There were notable differences from previous years when the survey was conducted the first week of August. Passengers from cruise ships accounted for 35 percent of respondents. The fall survey also showed a higher percentage of first-time visitors (82 percent vs. 74 percent in summer), a higher percentage of passengers holding National Park Service senior passes (48 percent vs. 25 percent in summer), and a broader geographical distribution with more respondents from the Midwest, Southeast, West, and international destinations.

Fall riders, some 99 percent, said it was very important to keep the Island Explorer going, and 85 percent said it was very important to keep it free. Survey respondents were very complimentary of the service, and occasionally recommended greater frequency of service, especially in late afternoon and evening.

One visitor from Kentucky who rode the Sand Beach bus wrote, "Love the National Parks. Wonderful that this park is served by bus to reduce pollution and congestion."

Riders were also appreciative of L.L.Bean's donation to the bus system through Friends of Acadia. A rider from Indiana on the Park Loop Road bus wrote, "Kudos to them [L.L.Bean]. Hope more companies will follow suit. Protection for Acadia is so important."

Due to closures related to the COVID-19 crisis, Island Explorer service may not begin on the usual dates. For more information and up-to-date schedules, visit www.exploreacadia.com.

Pass Winner Named

The National Park Service (NPS) has selected a photograph by Mark Walker of Smyrna, GA, as the winner of Acadia National Park's 2020 annual entrance pass contest.

The photograph portrays the Bass Harbor Head Light Station. Although this light station is not currently a part of Acadia National Park, there are plans for the United States Coast Guard property to



be transferred to the NPS sometime later this spring. Friends of Acadia is providing funds to help facilitate the transfer and reuse of the lighthouse.

The photograph will appear on thousands of annual entrance passes purchased by visitors from all over the country.

Walker will receive a 2020 Acadia annual pass displaying his winning photo. The park received more than 200 entries from 26 countries. "We want to thank everyone who shared their amazing images of Acadia National Park," says Acadia Superintendent Kevin Schneider. The NPS retains 80 percent of the fees collected from entrance pass sales to invest in critical improvements that directly benefit visitors at Acadia National Park, including maintaining and enhancing visitor facilities. The entrance pass revenues are also essential for funding the operation of the Island Explorer bus system, which serves Acadia and its surrounding communities. The NPS uses the remaining 20 percent of fees collected from entrance passes to benefit other sites in the National Park System.

The Acadia National Park annual entrance pass is available for purchase after May 1. For more information, visit www.friendsofacadia.org.

Fisichelli Will Lead Schoodic

Dr. Nicholas Fisichelli earlier this spring was named as President and CEO of the Schoodic Institute. Fisichelli had been serving as interim president and CEO since August 2019. Prior to that, Fisichelli previously served as Director of Science and Education for the Institute.

He joined Schoodic in 2016 and established its Forest Ecology Program.

continued on page 29

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FOA/JULIA WALKER THOMAS

CLEARLY ON A MISSION... The good folks at Fogtown Brewing Company in Ellsworth, along with those from Eat At Joe's, joined forces for a "Pints for Purpose" event to raise money for Friends of Acadia in early March. One dollar from the sale of every glass of the brewery's "Fancy Francine" beer went to FOA. About 40 people attended the lively gathering.

NEW CHIEF RANGER

Earlier this spring, Acadia National Park Superintendent Kevin Schneider announced the selection of Thérèse Picard as chief ranger. Picard is currently the deputy chief ranger for Acadia.

"Thérèse has done an excellent job as deputy chief ranger and her leadership, experience, and strong collaboration skills will carry forward into her new role," says Schneider.

The chief ranger works with staff and partners to protect and preserve the park. At Acadia that includes overseeing and leading the law enforcement rangers, the rangers who assist with entrance passes, fire management, life guards, emergency medical services, and search and rescue.

"I am honored to be selected for this important position at Acadia National Park," says Picard. "After serving as a volunteer on Mount Desert Island Search and Rescue for a number of years, I started my seasonal career in law enforcement at Acadia and I am still inspired by the work here, 17 years later. I have a deep commitment to this park and this island, and I look forward to working with the surrounding communities to protect this special place and keep visitors safe."

Picard has held numerous leadership positions since she started her career at Acadia. In 2005, Picard jointly



FOA/WILL NEWTON

Chief Ranger Thérèse Picard.

managed an NPS-National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) project focusing on impaired driving and occupational safety on federal lands throughout the country. She continued on this project through her transfer to Zion National Park, Utah in 2008. She served as a supervisory district ranger and then as the law enforcement specialist at Zion until her return to Acadia in 2017.

Picard graduated from Carleton College with a degree in American Studies and a concentration in Educational Studies. Picard also holds a Masters in Park and Resource Management from Slippery Rock University. An avid hiker and baker, she lives on Mount Desert Island. ✱

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SCHOODIC INSTITUTE

Schoodic CEO Nick Fisichelli

continued from page 27

"We are absolutely delighted," says Schoodic Board Chair David Ellwood.

Kevin Schneider, Acadia National Park superintendent, says, "We look forward to continuing our invaluable partnership with Schoodic Institute that is making significant advancements in science and education at Acadia and other parks around the nation under Nick's leadership and vision."

Fisichelli says he looks forward to continuing the great work already done

with the Institute collaborating with the park. "Parks protect our natural and cultural heritage and yet these places are changing rapidly due to a warming climate and other stressors," he says.

"Our work is to understand these changes and engage people in the responses to foster a better future." Previously, Fisichelli worked for the National Park Service Climate Change Response Program developing and applying management-relevant science, including global change impacts to forests, plant and wildlife species, protected area operations, and visitor experience. He was a Fulbright Fellow in Germany and earned his Ph.D. in forest ecology from the University of Minnesota in 2012. He also previously worked at Shenandoah and Lassen Volcanic National Parks.

Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park strives to advance the understanding of the consequences of environmental change and engage people in the science and solutions.

Lee McWilliams Joins Friends of Acadia

Lee McWilliams of Mariaville has joined the Friends of Acadia staff as a Development Officer, filling a vacancy created by the retirement of long-time

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Updates, *continued from page 29*

staffer Sharon Broom. McWilliams, who has deep experience helping Hancock County businesses and non-profit organizations with marketing, fund raising, and development, began work in February.

“Her abilities complement the skills we already have in-house, leading to a stronger, more efficient fundraising team,” said FOA Director of Development Lisa Horsch Clark. She noted that McWilliams is a familiar face, having been involved with FOA as a volunteer at the annual benefit. “She already knows so many of our members and volunteers,” Horsch Clark said.

McWilliams will be responsible for managing the membership and annual fund campaigns including direct mailings, e-mails, and social media postings. She will also be coordinating business support including business memberships along with *FOA Journal* and event sponsorships. Managing the FOA membership table program is also a major responsibility.



FOA/JULIA WALKER THOMAS

Lee McWilliams has joined Friends of Acadia as a Development Officer.

McWilliams holds a BA from Trinity College and an MA from Georgetown University. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, birding, and traveling to see her two grown children. ✱

THE GEORGE B. DORR SOCIETY FOR PLANNED GIVING

We did it! For the last fifteen years, Friends of Acadia has been working hard to inspire and assist members and volunteers who are interested in leaving a legacy with a bequest or other planned gift to FOA. Earlier this year we reached a milestone by welcoming our 100th members — Lynne and Mike Staggs! In addition to the Staggses, we welcome the following other individuals and families who have recently documented a planned gift to benefit Friends of Acadia:

Emily Beck and Geoff Young
Bruce E. Berry
Eddie Coggeshall
T.A. Cox*
Janice Enzinger*
Dr. Robinson and Frances Fry
David C. Hardy
Priscilla Lane*
Diana McDowell
Barry Pollard*
Laura and Michael Rubin
Ann Marie and John Weston
Donald F. Wilson*

*Deceased

The George B. Dorr Society for Planned Giving was established in 2005 to recognize those members and friends who have made future provisions for Friends of Acadia in their estate plans, regardless of value. Such provisions may be made in the form of bequests, trusts, annuities, life insurance, retirement accounts, or other means. The society honors George Bucknam Dorr, a gentleman, scholar, and lover of nature, whose dedication to preserving Mount Desert Island helped create Acadia National Park.

If you have already included Friends of Acadia in your estate plans, please complete a confidential statement of intent and return it to Friends of Acadia at PO Box 45, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. For more information contact Lisa Horsch Clark, director of development, at 207-288-3340.



ANP

The Islesford Historical Museum will be closed for renovations this summer.

MUSEUM GETS MAJOR UPGRADE

The Islesford Historical Museum is currently undergoing a major rehabilitation that began in November 2019. The work will increase the lifespan of the historic building and better protect its exhibition of historical objects. As the upgrades continue, the museum will be closed to the public for the 2020 season. The museum is expected to reopen next season showcasing both the upgrades and community-curated exhibit helping to tell the stories of the Cranberry Isles. The rehabilitation of the museum includes work on both the exterior and interior. The Islesford Historical Museum, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was founded by William Otis Sawtelle (1874-1939), a physics professor and summer resident of Islesford. The museum first opened to the public in the summer of 1928 and was donated to Acadia National Park. With assistance from Friends of Acadia, the Friends of the Islesford Historical Museum formed in 2014 to work with Acadia National Park to rehabilitate and maintain the museum.

Funding for the project comes directly from entrance passes purchased at Acadia National Park as well as NPS Repair and Rehabilitation Funds.

PROTECTING SUSTAINABLE AND DYNAMIC LANDSCAPES

This year more than ever, we anticipate the manifestations of spring now unfolding in the garden. The arrival of the season of new life adds a lift to my step during these challenging times. Witch hazel and hellebores are blooming. The sun is setting later each day, and notices of summer events begin to trickle in.

With so much uncertainty surrounding future plans for the coming weeks, I have been thinking back to some of the formative experiences that enriched my role as board chair at FOA during 2019.

I represented Friends of Acadia as a panelist at a meeting of the Beatrix Farrand Alliance at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic site in Hyde Park, New York. Formed by the Beatrix Farrand Garden Association, the Alliance is a partner group with the National Park Service. The Alliance acts as a community resource, sharing ideas on horticulture, historic practices, and education curriculum. Its work is an inspiration for future generations of garden lovers and professionals.

The group invited speakers representing landscape architects, horticulturists, and educators from national parks, and their partner friend groups, to discuss the "Future of Beatrix Farrand's Public Landscapes." Discussion revolved around a provocative question: How do we preserve and maintain the iconic yet ephemeral landscapes created by one of America's leading designers, while simultaneously keeping them dynamic, sustainable, and relevant to contemporary expectations?

Some of the few remaining landscapes designed by Farrand are now part of the national parks. The panelists addressed a range of issues facing these treasures. Acadia National Park continues to honor Beatrix Farrand's legacy with an introductory page on its website and takes the lead on educating the visitor about her designs, styles, and fondness for using native plants.

A nationally-known landscape architect (although she preferred the term "landscape gardener"), Farrand consulted on planting plans designed to frame vistas and bridges



FOA

and to heal construction scars left behind on carriage roads. Acadia mentions Farrand on the Carriage Road User's map and credits Friends of Acadia in helping convey the story of the carriage roads.

In preparation for the conference, I worked closely with FOA Conservation Director Stephanie Clement and Gail Gladstone, the cultural resource program manager from Acadia, on crafting our joint presentation. Gail focused on preservation and stewardship elements and what the National Park Service does to maintain the carriage roads and traditional landscapes in the park. She highlighted the work with the vista documentation project and how usage patterns on the carriage roads have evolved.

Thanks to Stephanie for her efforts in preparing a terrific presentation that touched upon the FOA mission. Attendees learned about the role FOA plays in education and outreach for the carriage roads. The audience learned how FOA complements what the NPS does through fundraising, employing seasonal youth interns, supporting volunteers on the carriage roads, and vigilant advocacy.

FOA's first capital campaign was to restore and endow the carriage roads. Years later, FOA supplemented that with additional funds raised during the Second Century Campaign. FOA also replicated that success with the Acadia Trails Forever campaign that raised a \$13 million endowment to maintain the hiking trail system.

Volunteerism is also at the heart of FOA's work to help preserve the carriage roads and trails. Take Pride in Acadia Day each fall features 400 volunteers removing leaves and cleaning out culverts to reduce storm damage in winter.

FOA seasonal summer positions for youth offer many opportunities. We fund the Acadia Youth Conservation Corps — 16 high school-aged students working with park personnel on carriage and trail maintenance.

Advocacy is another way Friends of Acadia protects the park and is critical to our mission. We told symposium attendees how vital lobbying efforts are in educating our congressional representatives in Washington.

There were a lot of highlights from the weekend, including a film featuring Lynden Miller. She is a well-known public garden designer and was the master of ceremonies at the symposium. It was delightful to meet her and discover she had a summer home on Mount Desert Island, and that Acadia's landscape was equally near and dear to her.

After learning more, folks come to realize that the "natural" landscape at Acadia is not merely an accident of nature, rather it contains many features that are the result of careful planning, planting, and maintenance by Farrand and Frederick Law Olmstead in consultation with George B. Dorr and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Most park visitors probably don't realize the scenery and panoramic views were beautifully curated for their enjoyment.

Thanks to critical contributions, such as FOA's ongoing support of trail and carriage road maintenance, vista clearing initiatives funded by a paddle raise at the Benefit, and efforts via Wild Acadia to fight off invasive plants, Acadia's landscape remains sustainable and dynamic.

I wish all our members, staff, volunteers, partners and friends good health and safety in the coming weeks, and thank you all for your continued commitment to Acadia.

In Gratitude,

—Anne B. Green

RANDI AND DON WILSON

By Lisa Horsch Clark

As I look at the picture of Randi and Don Wilson on my desk, I try to imagine their early adventures in Acadia and all the joys they found while sharing the park and the island. It was those shared memories and their love of the park and the natural world that drew them back, year after year, to Mount Desert Island, and ultimately inspired their decision to leave a magnificent gift to Friends of Acadia to protect the park.

I must imagine it all because I never met Randi and Don before they died, and few people know about their Acadia times.

It was almost a year ago when I received a call from Massachusetts estate attorney Tim Borchers who shared the news that Randi and Don had left Friends of Acadia a sizeable gift as a part of their estate. Since then, I have worked with Tim and his paralegal Paula Nolan, a friend to the Wilsons during their years as clients, to finalize their gift. During the year, I called friends, family members, neighbors, even the Bar Harbor Inn, where they had stayed annually for a week or two since the '80s,

to learn more about the Wilsons.

For much of their adult life, Randi and Don lived outside of Boston, most recently in Norfolk, MA. She was a dedicated teacher known for being strict yet loyal, inspiring her students to aim high and work hard. He was a successful commercial banker. They had no children of their own but had strong ties with nieces, nephews, students, and neighborhood children. They enjoyed traveling the blue highways of New England, often with Bar Harbor and Acadia as their destination. Norfolk neighbor Tricia Cochran told me they may have even spent their honeymoon in Bar Harbor many years ago.

When they died within eight months of each other, it was the future, their love of nature and animals, a dedication to young people, and a desire to leave the planet in a better state that inspired Randi and Don to give part of their estate to Friends of Acadia.

Through the sale of assets and the use of their remaining retirement funds, the Wilsons were able to make a gift that dramatically strengthens Friends of Acadia.

Paula Nolan told me that Don, as a retired banker, would appreciate the good work FOA has done to set up endowments that provide reliable and perpetual funding, both for FOA's operations and the many conservation programs we support in the park and surrounding communities. Their gift enables us to continue our work in and for the park in the areas of transportation, natural resource protection, and, likely most importantly to the Wilsons, our work with future generations of park lovers who will pick up the mantle as protectors of Acadia and our natural lands.

If you knew the Wilsons, we would love for you to share more stories with us. Please stop by the FOA offices while you are in Bar Harbor, or perhaps we could visit at their favorite locale — the Bar Harbor Inn — for lunch or a cup of coffee. I know there is more to their story and I want to ensure the Wilsons' generosity and commitment to the park and conservation are fully told. ✨

LISA HORSCH CLARK is Friends of Acadia's Director of Development and Donor Relations.



Randi and Don Wilson



This is the view of Bar Island in Acadia National Park from one of the Wilsons' favorite spots, The Bar Harbor Inn.

SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE OUTDOORS



Observe the CDC's minimum recommended physical distancing of 6 feet from other persons at all times.



Do not use the park or the trails if you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

Share the trail and warn other trail users of your presence as you pass.



Wash hands frequently. Cover when you cough. Use hand sanitizer.



Be prepared for limited access to public restrooms and water fountains.



Growing beautiful outdoor spaces in Coastal Maine



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Bar Harbor, ME 04609



FO/ASHLEY L. CONTI

SURF'S UP! ... A surfer braves the frigid waters of the Atlantic Ocean in January to catch a wave off Sand Beach in Acadia National Park. Although surfing is prohibited during most of the year when the beach is open to swimming, those who are hardy enough, and properly equipped, can enjoy some good runs during the winter. Water temperatures during January and February vary between 38 and 40 degrees.

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.