Is Wilderness in the Eye of the Beholder? By Scott Olsen

Where is the wilderness? In Baxter State Park, or Maine's 100-Mile Wilderness, at the Maine Wilderness Lodges, along the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, or in Caribou-Speckled Mountain Wilderness Area, or one of the Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge wilderness zones?

A couple of recent personal events have me beginning to wonder.

This past August, I dropped my wife off at the Abol Bridge trailhead so she could hike the 100-Mile Wilderness. After we said our goodbyes, and she tromped off down the trail with gear and food for a week or more, I was a bit discouraged at the nearby convenience store, abundance of traffic and the casually dressed dog-walkers that we met heading into the “wilderness” with one fanny pack for the two of them.

Also, this past summer, the Bryant Pond 4-H Camp, where I work, was chosen as “Maine’s Best Wilderness Training Summer Camp” by DownEast magazine. We were grateful for the recognition and honored to be chosen, but I was a bit taken aback at the “wilderness summer camp” label.

Years ago, as a forestry undergraduate at UMass—Amherst, I read Roderick Nash’s Wilderness and the American Mind, one of the few textbooks I have actually enjoyed reading (and have even re-read!). This book, now in its 4th edition, chronicles the history of our relationship with our wild lands, from fear and conquest to love and preservation. It is a must-read for anyone interested in conservation.

I particularly enjoyed reading about the relationship between Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot and John Muir, which resulted in the formulation of many of the national land management systems still in place today. And while I admired all three men greatly, I found myself most intrigued by John Muir, whose religious connection with wilderness and his zealous determination that it be preserved, left a lasting impression on me through my college years. I went on to earn a MS in Forestry, working on a wilderness area fee & permit system in what is now the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument in southern Utah.

I have always thought of wilderness in the classic sense, a vast expanse of wild forestland, a place “… where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain,” as defined by The Wilderness Act of 1964.

Wikipedia defines wilderness as “a natural environment on Earth that has not been significantly modified by human activity.” Per the WILD Foundation, wilderness areas may also be defined as the most intact, undisturbed wild natural areas left on our planet, those last truly wild places that humans do not control and have not developed with roads, pipelines or other industrial infrastructure.

Lately, however, I have begun to question the meaning of the word wilderness, which is…

- continued on page 5

Explore Baxter State Park with Naturalist Jean Hoekwater

A Meetings and Education Evening Program in Brunswick on February 20

Join Park Naturalist Jean Hoekwater for a visual exploration of recreational opportunities and popular trips in Baxter State Park, including backcountry locations as well as short day hikes. Along the way, Jean will share ideas for experiencing the Park’s beauty with friends and families of all ages and abilities. Jean will introduce some of the wildlife and plants visitors can hope to encounter in the Park’s array of natural communities and will share tips on how visitors can help the Park in their preservation efforts. There will be plenty of time left for questions at the end for those planning their 2014 visits to the Park! Join Jean on Thursday evening, February 20, 2014 at Curtis Memorial Library, 23 Pleasant St. in Brunswick, ME.

Jean has been coordinating Information/ Education efforts at Baxter State Park since 1988. Following an internship in the Park, she guided on Maine rivers, worked for The Atlantic Center for the Environment and the A.M.C. at Pinkham Notch Camp prior to returning to work with the visitors and staff of Baxter in her current position. In the mid 1990’s, Jean established and trained the first alpine steward positions to provide visitor contact and information above treeline on Katahdin. This program continues to yield important benefits today, using interns each summer to protect the wilderness resources and experience on Maine’s highest mountain. Jean oversees the Togue Pond Visitor Center, summer programs and children’s programming in the Park, outreach to schools, community groups, and the AT thru hiker community. Jean also serves as staff liaison for researchers and media projects in the Park.

Join us for this informative program on Thursday February 20, 2014 at the Curtis Memorial Library, 23 Pleasant St. in Brunswick, ME. Optional potluck at 6:00PM (please bring a food item to share and your own plates and utensils); FMI and directions go to www.amcmaine.org/meetingsandeducation or contact M&E co-chair, Fran Leyman at education@amcmaine.org.
A note about the listings: The listings below—presented in date order by category—include only those posted online prior to the submission deadline for this issue of Wilderness Matters. For the most complete and accurate information and up-to-date listings—and so you don’t miss spontaneous outings—please periodically check the calendar online at www.amcmaine.org/calendar. For general questions regarding these listings, contact Peter Roderick, Outings Chair, outings@amcmaine.org or (207) 293-2704.

Note: Please be courteous when contacting trip leaders by doing so before 9:00 PM unless otherwise specified, please and thanks.

Next Deadline for Wilderness Matters (Winter Issue) is March 1, 2014. Wilderness Matters is your chapter newsletter. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to contribute, be it stories, news, opinions, photos, or whatnot. We want to hear from you! Please send submissions to newsletter@amcmaine.org. Thank you!

MEETINGS & EDUCATION

Executive Committee Meeting, Freeport. Maine Chapter Executive Committee meets every odd month (January, March, May, July, September, and November) on the second Thursday to discuss chapter business. Chapter members are welcome to attend. Contact: chair@amcmaine.org or excom@amcmaine.org. Next ExCom meeting is January 9 and March 13.

Tuesday, January 7: August Camp in the Northern Cascades Program and Potluck Dinner, Fields Pond Audubon Center, Holden, ME. Fields Pond Audubon Center, 216 Fields Pond Road, Holden, ME. Pot luck dinner starts at 5:45 PM; program starts at 7 PM. Leader: Peter Roderick, outings@amcmaine.org or (207) 293-2704. Please see full description of this program on page 7 of this newsletter.

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MEETINGS & EDUCATION

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HIKING, SKIING & SNOWSHOEING

Wednesday, January 1: Sawyer Mountain, Limington, 3.6-mile hike on rough woods road. Elevation gain 600 ft. with interesting views. Start the New Year off right. Leader: Lorraine Hussey, 207-619-9444, mlhhussey@maine.rr.com.

Saturday, January 4: Mount Kearsarge North (Young Members). 6.2-mile trip/2600’ of elevation gain at moderate pace. Full winter gear required. Hike to the summit of Mt. Kearsarge North (3268’) via the Mt. Kearsarge North Trail to enjoy one of the finest views in the White Mountains. About 200 feet of exposure at the top to the fire tower. Leader: Kim Sanders, 207-712-0862, kimberlyannsanders@gmail.com

Saturday, January 4: Pleasant Mountain Winter Hike. Start the New Year off with a snowshoe hike up Pleasant Mountain near Bridgton, ME. Enjoy great views of the White Mountains and lake country. Good hike for beginner and intermediate snowshoers with moderate to good conditioning. Approx. distance 6 miles. Elevation change 1,900 feet. Mostly forested with rocky ledges with possibility of ice on trail. Leaders: Jeanne Christie, 207-310-8708, jeanne.christie@aswm.org; Lawrence De Hof, 207-310-8952, ldehof@fairpoint.net.

Saturday, January 4: Cranberry Peak Snowshoe, Stratham. Experienced winter hikers with full winter gear needed for fun day in the Maine woods. With car spot we’ll hike from trailhead near Stratton to Cranberry Peak and on to Cranberry Pond and the junction of AT; then head south on AT to Route 27. Trip length approx. 6 miles. Incredible views of Bigelows. Beautiful woods walk, especially between the peak and the pond. Leader: Peter Roderick, 207-293-2704, roderick1027@fairpoint.net.

Sunday, January 5: Pineland Farms Cross Country Ski Trip (Young Members). Join us on a cross country ski trip at Pineland Farms (www.pinelandfarms.org). Can rent skis if you need them. Great ski area close to Portland with rolling hills and some easier areas for beginners. Will pick trails that work well for the group. Beginners and more advanced skiers are welcome. We can also stop at the cafe to rest, a bite to eat and view of Mount Washington. Leaders: Sarah Keats, 207-756-4226, slkski@gmail.com; Jeanne Christie, 207-310-8708, jeanne.christie@aswm.org.
Tuesday, January 7: Fields Pond Hike/Snowshoe/X-C Ski Outing. Mid- afternoon outing prior to the potluck and program (see Meetings and Education listings). Join us to explore the Fields Pond Audubon Center trails. Type of outing (ski, snowshoe, hike) will depend on snow conditions. Headlamps required, perhaps microspikes. Leaders: Michelle Moody, 207-319-7355, meamc@micstan.us; Stan Moody, 207-319-7355, meamc@micstan.us.

Wednesday, January 8: Hike Chocorua Mountain, NH. Hike Chocorua Mtn. (3,500 ft.) via the Brook Trail, a 1.7-mile round trip at a moderate pace is suitable for anyone 800 ft. above sea level, above a moderately well groomed mountains in the world, and certainly one of the most frequently ascended peaks in the White Mountains. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-9369, treetopschool@comcast.net.

Saturday, January 11: Puzzle Mountain. Hike to the south summit of Puzzle Mountain (3,000') from Grafton Loop Trail parking lot on Route 26. R/T distance 6.4 miles, elevation gain 2170' at moderate pace. Winter gear required, including snow shoes with crampons. Suitable for intermediate winter hikers. Leader: Bill Brooke, 207-549-5100, bill@msfog.org.

Wednesday, January 15: Belknap Woods - Center Harbor, NH. Visit the Belknap Woods (90 acres) and explore this lovely tract of land. Contact leader for more details. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-9369, treetopschool@comcast.net.

Saturday, January 18: Little Bigelow via AT. Experience winter hiking on one of Maine's most revered mountain ranges. We'll ascend Little Bigelow (casually referred to in oxymoron-speak as “Little Big”) via the AT. The 3.5 miles to the summit gains 1750 feet and includes some open ledges. Total hike is 7 miles. Open ledges afford great views without risk of full summit exposure. Come experience moderately steep terrain in winter with a low risk setting for advanced winter hikers and all welcome. Snowshoes with cleats, crampons, or heavy-duty traction system (such as Kahtoola Micro-Spikes) may be required depending on conditions. Leaders: Wayne Newton, 207-897-3072, hiker Way; Laura Flight, 207-215-6306, flyrodflight@systemfolder.com.


Wednesday, January 22: Pawtuckaway North and South Mountains, Nottingham, NH. Visit Pawtuckaway State Park and enjoy snowshoe hike to north and south summits. Good trip for beginner snowshoers looking to get some experience in safe, environment at moderate pace. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-9369, meamc@comcast.net.

Saturday, January 25: Hike Baldpate West and East Peaks. Hike to the West Peak (3,662 ft.) and East Peak (3,780 ft.) of Baldpate via the AT from Old Speck parking lot in Grafton Notch. Elevation gain 2,300 feet, 8 mile round-trip, moderate pace. Suitable for experienced intermediate to advanced winter hikers. Full winter gear required including winter boots with crampons and snowshoes with crampons. Leader: Bill Brooke, 207-549-5100, bill@msfog.org.

Wednesday, January 29: Brunswick Area Cross-Country Ski or Snowshoe. Distance will be based on conditions at the time. There are a couple great golf courses to ski on or at Crystal Spring Farm. We'll head out in the morning for a couple hours and follow it up with lunch out. Join us for good company and some winter fun. Stan prefers to snowshoe so folks can join him for some snowshoe fun instead. Leader: Michelle Moody, 207-319-7355, meamc@micstan.us; Stan Moody, 207-319-7355.

Saturday, February 1: Beginner Winter Hike or Snowshoe at Tanglewood, Lincolnville/Camden Hills Area. Tanglewood trails are beautiful this time of year and this is a perfect place to practice winter hiking skills. Depending on trail conditions, we will use snowshoes and/or traction footwear such as micro-spikes. Along the way, we’ll discover natural features of the winter woods, such as lichen, competing rock and ice formations on the Ducktrap River. Appropriate winter gear and clothing required. Email leader for details and gear needed. This hike is a follow-up to the January Beginner Winter Hiking Workshop. Snow date is Feb 2, Leader: Judy Oneal, judyoneal@fairpoint.net; Michelle Fairpoint: 603-451-3003, jsdiller@roadrunner.com.

Saturday, February 22: Backcountry Skiing. Mt Washington Valley: Gulf of Slides to Hillman’s Highway. Ready for an Advanced Backcountry skiing objective? The Gulf of Slides - Hillman’s Highway traverse takes in two classic NH backcountry routes. Trip will skin up gilt of slides trail ridge and ride off Ridge to Boott Spur, traverse across to Hillman’s and ski down this 40 degree couloir to Hojo’s & then down to Pinkham Notch via the Sherburne. Participants need to be advanced skiers/snowboarders, with current AT/Teleski/olipad equipment, comfortable on unglowed, steep ski trails. Trip will ascend/descend 3000 + vertical feet. Ice axes/ crampons recommended for gully ascent. Limited to 6 skiers due to advanced nature of trip. Leader: Albert Mandell, 603-316-5773, mandell.ah@pg.com.

Saturday, February 22: Baldpate Mtn. 3-4 mile hike/snowshoe to lovely summit of Baldpate Mtn. (1,150 feet) with nice pace. Easy hike. Leaders: Lorraine Hussey, 207-619-9444, NH_hussey@maine.rr.com; Jo Anne Diller, 207-647-2117, ljdiller@roadrunner.com.

Saturday, February 22: Backcountry Skiing. Mt Washington Valley: Gulf of Slides to Hillman’s Highway. Ready for an Advanced Backcountry skiing objective? The Gulf of Slides - Hillman’s Highway traverse takes in two classic NH backcountry routes. Trip will skin up gilt of slides trail ridge and ride off Ridge to Boott Spur, traverse across to Hillman’s and ski down this 40 degree couloir to Hojo’s & then down to Pinkham Notch via the Sherburne. Participants need to be advanced skiers/snowboarders, with current AT/Teleski/olipad equipment, comfortable on unglowed, steep ski trails. Trip will ascend/descend 3000 + vertical feet. Ice axes/ crampons recommended for gully ascent. Limited to 6 skiers due to advanced nature of trip. Leader: Albert Mandell, 603-316-5773, mandell.ah@pg.com.

Wednesday, March 5: Coast and Woods Walk, York, ME. Leaders: choice: woods and coastal walk. Contact leader for details. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-9369, treetopschool@comcast.net.

Wednesday, March 12: Ocean Walk - Seapoint Beach, Kittery Point, ME. Join leader, Carla Dow, for another of her hometown outings. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-9369, treetopschool@comcast.net.

Saturday, March 15: Baldface Circle Shelter. 5-mile R/T hike to shelter. Elevation gain 1,450'. Moderate pace. Leaders: Lorraine Hussey, 207-619-9444, RH_hussey@maine.rr.com; Debby Kanton, 207-854-3431, dikantor@aol.com.

Saturday, March 15: Baldface Circle Shelter. 5-mile R/T hike to shelter. Elevation gain 1,450'. Moderate pace. Leaders: Lorraine Hussey, 207-619-9444, RH_hussey@maine.rr.com; Debby Kanton, 207-854-3431, dikantor@aol.com.

Saturday, March 21: Saddleback and The Horn. Snowshoe hike to the summit of Saddleback Mountain (4,120 ft.). Begin at the Saddleback Ski Area base lodge and ascend the approved ski trails gaining 2,000 vertical ft. in approx. 2 miles. We’ll get complimentary lift tickets for less than a dollar from the ski area before we go up. Group sentiment and weather conditions permitting, we will continue on 1.6 miles above treeline and travel to summit The Horn (4,041 ft.), then retrace our route back to the lodge for a R/T total of about 7.5 miles. Après hike food, beverages & entertainment (Caroline Cotter w/Tricky Britches) possible in the Swig N’ Smelt Pub. This hike is intended for physically fit, experienced winter hikers with full winter gear. Leaders: Jason Toner, 207-649-2448, jandstoner@roadrunner.com; Sarah Toner, 207-649-2449, jandstoner@roadrunner.com.
Wednesday March 19: Mount Shaw Hike, Ossipee Range, NH. Join Carla Dow for a late winter hike to Mount Shaw, the highest point in the NH Lakes Region. Great views of Lake Winnipesaukee from summit. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-3939, treetopschool@comcast.net.

Wednesday March 26: Early spring hike - Oakland Town Forest, Exeter, NH. Kick off the spring hiking season with an easy hiking tour local forest. Leader: Carla Dow, 207-439-3939, treetopschool@comcast.net.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

January 18 – 20: Carter Notch Hut weekend. Learn to backcountry ski in one of the most legendary huts in the Northeast. Enjoy delicious meals prepared by AMC chefs, ski and snowshoe in pristine wilderness backcountry on mostly groomed trails as well as snowshoe to the Appalachian Trail and nearby mountains. Visits to nearby Gulf Hagas, a spectacular river gorge on the Way to the Pleasant River, Hemitage, a stand of 100-year old white pines are possibilities. Comfort with intermediate backcountry skiing and/or intermediate snowshoeing skills required. Contact Roger David for further details and registration information, roderick1972@fairpoint.net. Leader: Roger David, 207-737-9870, roderick1972@fairpoint.net.

January 26 – 31: Lodge to Lodge Ski Trip in Maine Woods Initiative Area. Join Maine Chapter leaders for lodge-to-lodge-to-lodge ski trip. See the MWI in its winter splendor. We will stay in bunkhouses at Gorman Chairback and Little Lyford lodges and cabins, and share cabins at West Branch Pond Camps in the 100-Mile Wilderness. Delicious meals prepared by AMC chefs, ski and snowshoe in pristine wilderness backcountry on mostly groomed trails as well as snowshoe to the Appalachian Trail and nearby mountains. 3840, judyoneal@fairpoint.net. Moody, 207-319-7355, meamc@micstan.us; Judy Oneal, 207-567-3073, ginette4000@yahoo.com.

February 15 – 16: Beginner Winter Backpack Camping. Are you new to backpacking? New to winter camping? Join us for an easy snowshoew to a shelter and spend the night. Enjoy a meal around a campfire and sleep looking over the ocean. Hike out in the morning possibly via a longer route. Contact leader for details and equipment requirements. This trip is part of the Great Maine Outdoors Weekend. Leader: Roger David, 207-737-9870, roderick1972@fairpoint.net.

February 17 – 21: Claybrook Mountain Lodge Ski Week. Join us for a week of great cross-country skiing on the Maine Huts and Trails system of well-maintained trails. We’ll have the opportunity, weather permitting, to visit each of the four huts. Enjoy the luxury of skiing downhill at a small daypack while enjoying the magnificent trails and scenery in the Bigelow area. Accommodations will be in shared twin or triple rooms at the Claybrook Mountain Lodge in Highland Plantation. The lodge is owned by Greg, a certified EMT and Maine Guide, and his wife Pat. Pat is a fantastic cook who will spoil us with her homemade bread, muffins, cookies and multi course meals. Made to order breakfast, trail lunches and dinner are included in the trip fee. All meals from supper on Feb 17th (day of arrival) through and including lunch on the 21st (day of departure). We will eat our trail lunch at one of the MHT huts whenever possible, so we can purchase hot food items as well. The Claybrook Lodge is clean, cozy and rustic surrounded by an array of mountain peaks. Leader: Ginette Beaudoin, 207-294-6302, ginette4000@yahoo.com.

March 1 – 2: Camden Hills State Park Cabin Overnight. Have you always wondered what it might be like to do a winter backpack but not ready to sleep in the snow in a tent? Join us for hikes and an overnight backpacking trip to a? A Park cabin instead. The old ski lodge that was totally rebuilt. Wood stove, 6 bunks, picnic tables, flagstone floor, privy. First three to book get bunks. You can also bring an air mattress for the floor or table, or bring a tent for winter camping outside. We will hike up the old road to the lodge and drop off our stuff, start a fire to warm up the place and then head out for a hike/snowshoe. Let’s do a potluck of appetizers and then fix your own dinner on the wood stove or bring your cooking gear. We’ll have wine and cheese to share for the evenings. Monday hike back out. $110 covers 2 nights lodging, 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts and 1 lunch. Limited space, reserve early. Call leader for registration and payment details. Leader: Roger David, 207-737-9870, roderick1972@fairpoint.net.

WORKSHOPS

Saturday, January 4: Beginner Winter Hiking Workshop. Want to get out and hike in the winter but not sure: How to Stay Warm and Safe? What to Wear? What Gear You Need? What to Eat and Drink? Who to go with? Where to Go? We can help! Join us for a beginner winter hiking workshop designed for those who want to get out in the snow and ice but have little experience. Michelle Moody and Judy Oneal, experienced winter hikers and AMC ski and hiking leaders, will answer these questions and more for you. Morning presentations at the Skotchton Springs Town Office will be followed by a potluck lunch with several AMC leaders available to answer any questions. There will be two follow-up beginner hikes in January and February in the Camden/Belfast area. Please email Judy Oneal to register and receive an information packet. Snow date will be January 5. Leaders: JudyOneal@fairpoint.net; Michelle Moody, 207-319-7355, mmecam@micstan.us.

Saturday, January 25: Cell Phone Videography for Outdoor Enthusiasts. Learn to make short videos with your iPhone and post them on Facebook and YouTube, and share with friends and family. Besides exploring the wilderness we will discuss when and where to pull out the camera, being mindful of the natural experience and the mediated experience we share through photos and video. Will cover technical aspects such as lighting, camera angles and framing and will introduce cellphone editing apps and share our shared media masterpieces. Workshop will take place both indoors and outside. Leaders: Jeanne Christie, 207-310-8708, jeanne.christie@aswvm.org; Richard Morse, 207-752-0703, richardmorse33@gmail.com.

Saturday, February 5: Freeride/Backcountry Skiing Workshop: Mt Washington Area. Our workshop will cover the basics of backcountry skiing using AT/tele gear. Focus areas: packing for backcountry skiing, uphill travel techniques, traveling in avalanche terrain, steep climbing techniques, steep skiing techniques. Requires current AT/tele gear, ability to climb & ski 3,000 vertical ft., advanced backcountry skier. With today’s freeride/backcountry focus in the ski industry, this workshop will provide participants with the fundamentals of backcountry uphill and downhill travel. The day will be spent primarily in the field, following some morning discussion on how to plan backcountry ski trips in New England, tour planning, skinning techniques, ski mountaineering basics, and steep skiing skills. Actual tour destination to be determined based on conditions, but Gulf of Slides, Tuckerman Ravine, Amaconosuc Ravine are possible. Advanced primary spots. Participants should be advanced skiers, comfortable on un-groomed advanced trails and have current Alpine Touring (AT) or telemark skis with skins. Recommended ski width is at least 90 mm underfoot. This is the first workshop in a series of two on backcountry skiing. Leader: Albert Mandell, 607-316-5773, mandell.ah@pg.com.

Saturday, February 22: Sled Building Workshop. Tired of the heavy winter backpack? Try constructing and then pulling a sled at this workshop. You can make one of a large selection of sleds designed by anyone from a user extraordinaire, Dale Temm. We will make sleds using materials found at local hardware and sporting goods stores. You will receive a list of materials you need to bring to the workshop and leave with a finished and tested sled. After the sleds are completed, we will enjoy a light lunch at a local restaurant and then go to Sears Island to test out our sleds and practice. Register early; group size will be limited. Snow date is Feb 23. Leaders: Judy Oneal, judyoneal@fairpoint.net; Michelle Moody, 207-319-7355, mmecam@micstan.us.

For the most complete and accurate information and up-to-date listings—and so you don’t miss spontaneous outings—please periodically check out the calendar online at www.amcmaine.org/calendar.

Women in Harmony Chorus Presents All One Planet Concerts

Women in Harmony, a sixty-member chorus in the Portland area, is performing two concerts at the Maine Cultural Arts Center in the Washington Area.

March 20: Women in Harmony Chorus Presents All One Planet Concerts

The piece program range from contemplative to energetic and from serious to funny. Performances are at Woodfords Congregational Church, 202 Woodford Street, Portland, on Saturday, January 25 at 7 pm, and Sunday, January 26 at 6 pm. Tickets are $12 and available in advance at Longfellow Books and Starbird Music in Portland, and Nonesuch Books in South Portland, or via Women in Harmony’s website at www.wihmaine.org. General admission is $12 at the door.

www.amcmaine.org
Wilderness - continued from page 1
difficult to define. As Nash debates, sometimes it is used as an adjective and sometimes as a noun. This leaves a lot to personal interpretation. While one person’s idea of wilderness might be an untrampled and trail-less expanse of forest, another might consider their local town forest or park to be wilderness. Some consider the inner city to be its own type of wilderness.

The “Wilderness Camping” page on the Maine Campground Owners Association (www.campmaine.com) states: “Of course, wilderness camping is a term that means many things to many people. Some think of a resort campground where they can park their RV. Others picture a remote site where they can drop their backpack and pitch a tent. Still others imagine a sporting camp, where they can enjoy a week by a lake in an old cabin.”

So, perhaps there is a spectrum of wilderness, and what constitutes a wilderness experience is truly up to the individual. Wilderness is not the same for everyone. It’s personal, and you know it when you see it. Some folks think that a cabin on Daicey Pond in Baxter State Park is in the middle of nowhere, while others can’t wait to leave that very same cabin and hike off into the “forever wild” park to get away from it all. Wilderness is in the eye of the beholder.

I asked Shannon LeRoy, Program and Office Manager for AMC’s Maine Wilderness Lodges and past president of the Maine Wilderness Guides Association, how she would define wilderness. Shannon grew up in Wyoming and spent considerable time camping in wilderness areas out west. And while she felt there are obvious differences between eastern and western wilderness, what they have in common is “the opportunity to get away and reconnect with the natural world.” Sounds like something Muir or Thoreau or Abbey might have said. “... Confront the essential facts of life;” “The closest path to the universe...” Wherever we find it, wilderness allows us to lose ourselves and find ourselves again.

It’s also a pretty good marketing term, the word “wilderness.” When AMC began acquiring and managing property near the Appalachian Trail in Maine we called it the “Maine Woods Initiative.” However, Little Lyford, Medawisla and Gorman-Chairback have now become the “Maine Wilderness Lodges.” And for good reason. Who, after all, would book a long weekend stay at the Maine Working Forest Lodge? For some, these AMC lodges represent a true wilderness experience, for others they are a jumping off point for an adventure into the wild woods, and for some they are out-of-place luxury accommodations. But if these lodges attract folks who might otherwise never venture into the wild, and give them an opportunity for a wilderness experience, then I’m all for it, because wherever or wherever it is, wilderness matters!

Chapter Youth Program Participates in Teens to Trails Rendezvous
By Jeanne Christie

Over Columbus Day weekend, three Maine Chapter Youth Program (CYP) leaders participated in the Teens to Trails Rendezvous, leading two workshops apiece in fire building and nature videography and an afternoon slide show. Teens to Trails is a unique Maine-based nonprofit dedicated to increasing the opportunities for teens to experience the out-of-doors through a variety of programs that promote and support high school outing clubs all over the state through a variety of activities, such as providing safety and training skills, small grants, workshops, and outdoor rendezvous like the one this fall.

The Maine Chapter Youth Program is one of many partners of Teens to Trails, helping to lead high school outings, identifying service projects such as trail maintenance and providing outdoor skill training. The fall rendezvous almost didn’t happen. Acadia National Park, the site for the rendezvous, was closed on Columbus Day weekend due to the government shutdown. But the folks at Adventure Bound in Caratunk stepped up and offered their facility and the event was relocated to their wonderful location along the Kennebec River.

CYP leader Lawrence De Hof provided instructions on four ways to start a fire without matches, showing how to combine unusual materials such as a battery and steel wool, and cotton balls and hand sanitizer. CYP leader Richard Morse’s workshop focused on using cell phones to take pictures and videos. Richard demonstrated basic video techniques such as panning, close-ups and composition. He also provided guidance on how pictures and video can be joined together though simple editing apps available on cell phones to make a short movie to forward via e-mail or Facebook.

On my natural history hike we examined the landscape closely to discover clues to its past and identify current inhabitants. We pondered the history of pieces of long abandoned iron tools and other implements found along the river, and deliberated over the likely succession of plants and trees. Halfway through the hike everyone spread out in a wide band to go off trail on a “silent walk” to explore a pond hidden in the interior of the property. At the edge of the water we stopped and stood and observed, letting nature soak into our senses. Elsewhere we found signs of beaver, skunk and bear. We pondered signs of erosion and sought to understand the geology hidden beneath the soil.

The weather wasn’t perfect, and the scenery was no match for the dramatic shore and mountains of Acadia, but no one seemed to notice. People who like the outdoors are adaptable. Being in the outdoors with like-minded people is just plain special. It doesn’t matter if you are 15 or 50. The Teens to Trails Rendezvous was a great success!
Maine Chapter Annual Meeting Recap

The chapter held its annual meeting for the second year running at DiMillo’s Floating Restaurant on the Portland Waterfront on Saturday, November 2. A robust crowd of about 75 persons showed up to socialize for an hour and then enjoy a four-course dinner. After dinner, elections were held for the Executive Committee for the coming year. The slate was approved by show of hands.

Please welcome your new 2014 Executive Committee: Roger David, Chair; Peter Roderick, Outings; Fran Leyman and Gerry Sawyer, Meetings and Education co-chair; John Mullens, Maine Woods Initiative; Carey Kish, Newsletter Editor; Paul Hahn, Nominating Committee and At-Large; Larry Dyer, Past Chair; Mary Riendeau, Secretary; Kim Sanders and Sarah Keats, Young Members co-chairs; Tim Flight, E-Communications.

Next up, volunteer recognition and awards were presented by Larry Dyer with assistance from Peter Roderick. The Appie of the Year was awarded to Al Mandell, who unfortunately could not attend in person. Al was presented the coveted walking stick which is inscribed with the names of past winners of this award as well as a gift certificate from a local outdoor retailer. Lorraine Hussey and Sarah Keats were also nominated for Appie of the Year.

A certificate of appreciation for service to the chapter was presented to Larry Dyer, outgoing Chair. Larry also received a gift certificate in recognition for his years of service as Vice-Chair and Chair.

The following individuals were awarded certificates of appreciation for their service as members of the Maine Chapter Executive Committee: Scott Dyer, outgoing Member at Large; Denise Courtemanche, outgoing Treasurer; John Mullens, outgoing Meetings and Education chair.

Finally, we were pleased to welcome once again the president of the AMC, John D. Judge, who gave us an overview of the AMC, its current initiatives, and a look into the future.

A good time was had by all!

**Awards from Annual Meeting:**

**Appie of the Year: Al Mandell**

At was presented the coveted walking stick which is inscribed with the names of past winners of this award as well as a gift certificate from a local outdoor retailer.

Lorraine Hussey and Sarah Keats were also nominated for Appie of the Year.

**Certificates of Appreciation: Larry Dyer – Chair**

Larry received a certificate of appreciation as well as a gift certificate in recognition for his years of service as Vice-Chair and Chair.

**Outings Committee Leader Recognition By Michelle Moody**

As past chair of the Outings Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the leaders and co-leaders that made 2013 a successful year. Special congratulations go to Al Mandell as the new Appie recipient and to Lorraine Hussey for posting the most trips this past year. Below is a list of the leaders who were active this past year. Next time you join them on an outing be sure to say thank you.

**Leaders with 1 to 4 outings for the past year:** Carolyn Welch, Judy O’Neal, Ginette Beaudoin, Jane Gibbons, Sarah Toner, Laura Flight, Lisa Graves (new leader), Jeff Aceto, Larry DeHof, Jeanne Christie, Bill Brooks, Denise Reddette (new leader), Frank Brooks (new leader), Mike Boutin (new leader).

**Leaders with 5 or more outings:** Kim Sanders, Roger David, Al Mandell (new leader), Sarah Keats, Debbie Kantor, Ray Cooper, Peter Roderick, Michelle and Stan Moody, Lorraine Hussey.

**Really new leaders (no outings on their own):** Carla Dow.

**Co-leaders:** Robin Fiske, Jay Evans, Andrea Hafner, Keith Chapman, Jeff Brown, Dave McCarthy, Denise Anderson, Colleen Craig, Brian Le.

**Workshops:** Peter Broderick and Laura Flight – Winter Hiking; Ray Cooper – Backpacking; Al Mandell and Michelle Moody (with help from Lisa Graves and Stan Moody) – Self and Assisted Kayak Rescue.

Looking ahead, there are many exciting offerings already posted on the calendar at web.amcmaine.org, so if you haven’t joined us in the past be sure to plan on doing so this coming year.

Thank you to those of you who have made our outings fun by joining us; hope to meet you on the trail. And good luck to Peter Roderick, our new Outings Committee Chair; thank you Peter for stepping up.

**Seguin Island’s Volunteer Lighthouse Keepers**

*Join Mary Hillery and her husband Greg Guckenburg for their presentation on their unique experiences as 2013 Lighthouse Keepers on Seguin Island off the coast of Maine. They will talk about the history of the lighthouse and many interesting details about the lighthouse, such as the preservation of the buildings and lens. They will further discuss the varied flora and fauna of the island and the hiking trails found on the 64 acres of Seguin. A slideshow of 200+ pictures to play silently while Greg and Mary talk about the Seguin Lighthouse. The couple will share the thrills and hard work of being volunteer lighthouse keepers and let us know how they came to be lighthouse keepers.*

For more information on Seguin and its lighthouse visit www.seguinisland.org or find Friends of Seguin Island on Facebook.

Join us on Thursday, April 17 at Curtis Memorial Library, 23 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, ME. Optional potluck at 6:00 PM, please bring a food item to share and a plate and utensils, followed by the presentation at 7:00 PM. The talk is free and open to the public. FMI go to www.amcmaine.org/calendar or for driving directions to www.amcmaine.org/meetingsandeducation or contact Fran Leyman, co-chair meetings and education at education@amc.main.
Retracing Thoreau’s Ancient Wabanaki Canoe Routes in Maine’s Wilderness

A Meetings & Education Program in Brunswick on March 20

Join Paul Johnson as he retraces Henry David Thoreau’s trips to Maine in 1846, 1853 and 1857, each of which followed ancient Wabanaki canoe routes through vast, primitive wilderness. He climbed high on “Ktaadn” in 1846, visited Chesuncook Lake with Penobscot guide Joe Attean in 1853, and reached distant Eagle Lake in the Allagash with Penobscot guide Joe Polis in 1857 before returning to Indian Island via the East Branch of the Penobscot River. In The Maine Woods Thoreau wrote, “I looked with awe at the ground I trod on… This was the Earth of which we have heard, made out of Chaos and Old Night.”

Paul Johnson on Thursday, March 20th at the Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick for this informative program.

The Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail, a project initiated by Maine Woods Forever, consists of traditional Wabanaki canoe routes and portages in Maine’s Kennebec and Penobscot River drainages over which Henry David Thoreau traveled on his excursions into the Maine Woods, his last two with Penobscot Indian guides. In these woods and along these waterways Thoreau’s ideas about nature and conservation were shaped through his observations and through the Penobscots’ philosophy imparted by his guides. The goal of the Thoreau-Wabanaki Trail is to ensure the permanent availability of a traditional Maine Woods experience to all who wish to trace Thoreau’s journeys and appreciate first-hand the inspirational landscapes that shaped his views.

Maine Woods Forever is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the legacy of Maine’s forests and woodlands by: 1) Promoting stewardship of these natural resources; 2) Finding common ground with diverse people and groups to foster responsible use and shared stewardship of Maine’s forests and woodlands; and 3) Working with others to designate exceptional natural, cultural, and historic sites for the education, benefit, and spiritual well-being of Maine people, visitors, and future generations.

Paul Johnson, a member of Maine Woods Forever, worked as a fishery biologist for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in the Moosehead Lake region, where he had the opportunity to become familiar with the woods and waters visited by Thoreau.

Join Paul on Thursday, March 20th at the Curtis Memorial Library, 23 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, ME. Optional potluck at 6:00 PM, please bring a food item to share and a plate and utensils, followed by the presentation at 7:00 PM. The talk is free and open to the public. FMI go to www.amcmaine.org/calendar or for driving directions to www.amcmaine.org/meetingsandeducation or contact Fran Leyman, co-chair meetings and education at education@amcmaine.org.

Gary Dethlefsen “Retires” from AMC MWI

In November, our good friend Gary Dethlefsen left his position as Maine Woods Initiative Operations Manager with AMC. In a note Gary wrote: “It has truly been a great five years that I will forever remember. For those of you I have worked with, it has truly been a pleasure to work on this fantastic project and help our region grow and shine. For those that have helped me along the way, you have my heartfelt thanks!”

Gary wrote further, “I don’t have any immediate ‘professional’ plans, but am looking forward to unwinding and having some play time this winter. It has been an extremely busy five years and I really need some time to recharge. Plenty of snowshoeing and x-c skiing are what I hope for, so if you’d ever like to come visit and experience the wonderful Moosehead Region in winter please let me know, as I’d be happy to accompany you. We wish you the best of luck Gary. You’ve been a great asset to the AMC and a great friend to many. Thank you!”

Washington’s North Cascades

A Meetings & Education Event with Maine Audubon on January 7

Join Michelle and Stan Moody, AMC Maine Chapter leaders, on their photo journey of the Northern Cascades. The pair led hikes and an overnight canoe trip this year for AMC’s August Camp, which was located near Concrete, Washington.

The scenery is reminiscent of the Alps with snow covered peaks, pristine lakes, waterfalls and wildflowers. The Moodys’ spent a second week repeating the best hikes each had done and then took in breathtaking views down the Mountain Loop Highway as they headed back to Seattle.

On Tuesday, January 7th, join Michelle and Stan at Fields Pond Audubon Center, 216 Fields Pond Road, Holden, ME. Potluck dinner at 5:45 PM and their talk and slide show at 7 PM. Optional afternoon hike with the Moody’s at Fields Pond. See calendar listings for more info on the hike. Bring a potluck item to share and your own dinnerware (plate, utensils etc.). Drinks will be available. Or simply come for the talk at 7 PM. Free and open to the public. See driving directions at www.amcmaine.org under Meetings & Education committee. FMI, email Education Co-Chair Gerry Sawyer at education@amcmaine.org.
YOUNG MEMBERS: A Journey
By Denise Fredette

We started out through mist, our steps careful and strategic along a path so many have walked. We climbed, grabbing at rocks that seemed like they would hold, slipping on wet patches, thanking the tree limbs hanging just low enough to grasp when the rocks were too high and vertical, and did not yield. We yelled “rock!” when the loose ones were set free by our intruding boots. We moved through fog, high up with no view, motivated by the prize, a place called Katahdin, named by the Penobscot Indians and meaning “The Greatest Mountain,” a sacred place.

As we made our way to the signs that pointed to Baxter Peak one way and Hamlin Peak the other, we started to leave the quiet desolation of the fog behind us. As we neared the famous Baxter summit we were greeted by fellow hikers who were descending. In passing they smiled and said things like “not much longer” and “you are almost there.” It felt like we were approaching the Land of Oz as we followed the yellow brick, or in this case white and pink rock, road.

The sun came out just as we made our final push to the summit. The clouds lifted just enough to make out the terrain around us. People rejoiced, smiled, and were shooed away from the fragile alpine grass by the ranger. There were so many people milling around and a celebratory feeling was in the air.

After eating and taking the obligatory summit pictures we prepared to depart but were stopped in our tracks. The most beautiful and haunting music drifted over to us. A bearded hiker stood on the summit sign playing some kind of a wooden flute. Everyone became quiet and still, and looked over. We were awed by the sheer beauty of the music, of the place, of the journey so many have taken to be standing right here where we stood, and for what this place represented to the people who named it.

As we left the Baxter Peak for Hamlin Peak the fog wrapped itself around this world once again. Our trek to this less visited peak was a quieter one. We did not see another hiker for the rest of our journey until we would arrive back at the campground. We stayed here briefly as we were aware of the time and the few hours of sunlight we had left. We descended this peak, down a steep and rocky ridge for about two miles, until we reached the dark, wet enclosed space of the woods. We were tired and hungry and looking forward to dinner and resting our bodies. We had a good day. It was an amazing hike in a place I hope to return to soon.