



Update

F.O.P. Newsletter, Winter 2006, V. 209, No. 1

From the President

Dear Friends,

The New Year has started off more like spring – a few cold days, not much snow but a lot of rain. Winter will return so plan on more hiking, skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling in the Park before spring and mud season.

A change has been made on the Council. Jan Carpenter resigned as History Chairperson principally due to her location in Westmoreland and the length of travel during the winter months. Jan has had to travel considerably farther than any other member of the Council to attend our meetings. At the last Council Meeting in January, Laurel Powell was appointed by the Council to replace Jan. Laurel is a resident of Hinsdale and is a frequent user of the Park. She is a teacher in the Chesterfield Elementary School. (Editor's note: see a short biography of Laurel on page 4.)

Progress has been made in the barn basement. The ceiling is being finished with sheet rock per the State of New Hampshire requirements and should be completed by the time you read this.

A couple of weeks ago I spoke with Allison McLean, Director of Parks, and asked for a meeting with her and other members of the Parks Staff. Members of the Council have concerns as to the way things are going in Pisgah at present. Allison indicated that a meeting will happen soon and we expect to meet with her in early February. If you have ideas or questions about Pisgah State Park or the Friends of Pisgah, please call me at 603-336-5462 (preferably after 5 p.m.) or e-mail me at mdrwer2@verizon.net.

This spring I hope we will be able to arrange the historical farm articles we have on the main floor of the barn so it can be open for visitors. We are still looking for real old farm equipment donated or on loan to display. Anything donated is tax deductible. You may contact me or Laurel Powell (603-336-7479) to discuss donations or loans of historical materials suitable or pertaining to the Pisgah Park area.

Treasurer John Larson has found someone to take over the Treasurer's job as John and Pat will be moving from the area in the spring. John will be sorely missed as he has done a wonderful job for us.

Up until this past Monday, January 23, the trails in the Park have been in poor shape due to the warm weather. The frost is out of the ground and the roads are soft causing great concern of wheeled vehicle use. Normally the Park is closed in the spring until mud season is over, so please be careful and respect the roads and trails. A freeze will certainly firm things up again but mud season will come for good in a month or so.

Bill Roberts

From the Park Manager

General

Since the last Newsletter a lot has been accomplished repairing the flood damage throughout the Park. The help from some dedicated volunteers enabled us to reopen the Park trails in mid-November with the exception of Broad Brook Road and a couple of trails.

By mid-December we had all the trails passable for the winter season. Thankfully Danny Ford was able to stay on board an extra month to help us with the trail repairs. Clyde Kimbal and Pete Franklin worked numerous hours replacing Kings Bridge on Broad Brook Road. This project became a nightmare with one problem arising after another trying to obtain access for the materials and equipment needed.

Special thanks are owed to Gary Beaman for lending us his enclosed heated tractor to finish filling in the back side of the bridge in sub-zero temperatures. It was really appreciated along with the great work and numerous loads of gravel his crew helped provide.

Help also was provided by the Ashuelot Valley Blazers Snowmobile Club repairing and resetting bridges on the Doolittle Trail making it passable and open for use. Cliff Struthers volunteered several hours with his tractor, and the "Midweek" volunteer crew assisted me resetting bridges and doing trail repairs throughout the Park. Without the generous help from all these dedicated people the Park would still be closed.

Thanks so much Guys!

Unfortunate News

Many of you probably wonder why nobody is ever around on weekends now and where is Diane, our smiling Weekend Ranger? Unfortunately, owing to the State Park System's 1.6 million dollar deficit after the floods, all seasonal and part time employees were laid off just before Thanksgiving. The State Parks are self funded and significant deficits occurred this year owing to weather related problems. We were told there was no money to keep our extra help on board and pay them.

As many of you have expressed to me, we sure do miss Diane and hope to see her back here this spring. She has been a great asset to this Park and the visitors who seek information.

[Editor's Note: Diane also provided much delightful commentary for the Update during her brief stay with the Park. I too hope to see her working again later this year.]

Many Annual Volunteer Hours Given In 2005

Throughout the 2005 calendar year, many volunteer hours were donated to Pisgah Park. Most work time was estimated and recorded. However, we can not be sure that we have noted the time spent by all the persons who have helped the Park this past year. We are certain that there were many volunteer hours not recorded or reported. If we have not mentioned you here, it is not for lack of appreciation. We do our best to keep track of all volunteer help efforts.

According to my calculations, the number of volunteer hours recorded in 2005 by people working on the trails within the Park boundaries were as follows: FOP trail work days = 14 hours, Ashuelot Valley Blazers = 25 hours, Scott Blodgett and crew (on the Hinsdale Trail) = 500 hours, Cliff Struthers = 226 hours, Midweek Work Crew = 585 hours, park hikers including Kathy Thatcher, friends and family plus Gil Cameron and Kim Nilsen = 250 hours.

This much appreciated effort totals to approximately 1600 hours of valuable service to Pisgah Park. Thank you very much for the time you have spent in helping.

Norma Reppucci

A Note on Membership

As Membership Chair, I along with our Treasurer, John Larson, track the membership records through the year. Our yearly membership totals have stayed fairly constant having crept up about 5 % over the past several years. We have about 150 to 170 households or groups to which we mail. This includes our complimentary memberships, principally to local libraries and newspapers. We are approaching the 100 mark for total memberships but non-complimentary family renewals at this time (end of January 2006) are only about half of what we normally achieve for a full year. We hope to get to our usual numbers and beyond in the next month or so and we would like to hear from you with your renewal soon. The membership application is on the address page of this newsletter. If you have not renewed, please take time now to fill out the application and send your check on to the Friends. We welcome your membership, new or renewed, and your donations as well. We have been very pleased with the generous donations already received from many of you for the 2006 year.

Matt Donachie



Remember the Annual Picnic in September?



Working to Reset One of the Kilburn Brook Bridges



*John Larson, Gerry Goslant, Kim Nilsen (rear)
Gil Cameron, Danny Ford (front)
Resting After a Job Well Done*



*The Rebuilt King's Bridge on Broad Brook Road after the
Flood Repairs Were Made*

Top 2 photos this column courtesy Bill Roberts
All other photos courtesy Norma Reppucci

New Pisgah Project Started

You may have recently seen a number of articles in the local papers regarding a new project getting underway in the Park. The "Pisgah Restoration Project" started in December 2005. Rhonda Winegarner of Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound and Hinsdale Prevention Coalition has been the principal person behind this project which involves several other Friends of Pisgah members and interested parties. You can read an article about the development of this Project in the Jan. 27, 2006 issue of the *Star Spangled Banner* (published by the Keene Sentinel).

Purpose: To establish a legacy for The Friends of Pisgah to do continuous work in Pisgah State Park and the adjacent Dort property (owned by FOP). Adults and teens are needed to participate in trail maintenance and clearing, as well as brush cutting and burning. Participants in trail maintenance physical activity should be comfortable dragging limbs, doing heavy lifting, and hard work.

Each Saturday session starts with an informational moderate to strenuous hike in the Park environs and then the participants get down to work. In addition to physical maintenance, trail maps and signage need to be made and signs repaired. Thus, there is a variety of activity possible for persons interested in the continued presence of a local wilderness area in which to enjoy the natural world now and in the future. There are additional opportunities for volunteers who are interested in historical and educational projects.

This project, at present a function of Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound and Hinsdale Prevention Coalition, is a service to the community and to FOP. We urge you to participate as often as you can.

When: 2nd Saturday of each month; 10:00am-2:00pm

- February 11
- March 11
- April 8
- May 12
- June 10
- July 8
- August 12

Where: Call for location as it varies with the date and time of the year.

What Participants Should Bring: Water, snacks, lunch, work gloves, and weather appropriate clothing and boots for wilderness hiking and work.

Who to Contact:

For Saturdays, contact Rhonda Winegarner in Hinsdale at 603-336-5458

For signage and related map activities, contact Kathy Thatcher in Chesterfield at 603-363-8301

For historical and educational projects, contact Laurel Powell in Hinsdale at 603-36-7479

[Editor's Note: John Herrick of FOP has provided principal field direction in Pisgah for the project's work on clearing trails and areas in the Park and adjacent FOP property. Although John, Kathy Thatcher and Laurel Powell are members of the Executive Council of the Friends of Pisgah this project is being sponsored by Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound and Hinsdale Prevention Coalition. The FOP is pleased to have the assistance of this project in reinforcing our mission to support Pisgah State Park.]

New History Committee Chair Selected

As noted in Bill Roberts' message, Laurel Powell is our new History Committee Chair. Growing up in Nashua, NH and then in the local area in Greenfield, MA. Laurel graduated from Keene State College. She started her teaching career in Vernon, VT and then transferred to Hinsdale Elementary School where she stayed for 16 years teaching almost all the grade levels as well as special education. She and her husband, Charlie, lived in the Chesterfield area during that time.

In 1990, they moved to Hinsdale and Laurel took a teaching position in Chesterfield. Fourth grade is where she's settled and her students love hearing stories about local history. Whenever possible, she enjoys traveling and exploring New England while hiking or snowshoeing. She has been hiking and traveling in Pisgah Park for many years. Laurel's first project as historian will entail updating then reissuing *A Guide for Historic Sites in Pisgah* noting, particularly, sites of interest in the Winchester area of the park.

Treasurer's Report

Another successful year has ended. Our on-going income from membership dues (\$1330) and member contributions (also \$1330) subtotaled (\$2660). As it is supposed to do, this income more than covered our ongoing Administrative expenses of \$2126 – for such things as newsletters (\$570), meetings including the picnic (\$466), N.H. fees (\$100), gifts (\$300), office supplies (\$124), and the Visitor Center (\$389).

Including interest income of \$2942 (from our checking account and CD's), our total 2005 income was \$5602. This additional income enabled us to pay expenses associated with both our Plains Road and Dort properties, as well as to pay \$520 in expenses for the continuation of work on the Pisgah Management Plan that was started last year.

Additionally, this fall we received \$955 in Memorial donations to a new Charles Powell Restricted Fund. This fund will be used for educational programs/purposes within the park.

I can't let this opportunity go by without putting in another plug to please get your memberships renewed. As I pointed out last year at this time, our books run on a calendar year ending December 31st, and thus, for those of you who have not either joined or renewed since our picnic in September, your memberships have technically expired. I realize that some of you pay at various times throughout the year, but as of January 15th, less than half of last year's membership had renewed. Your membership is important to us, not only for financial support, but also to remind the state of New Hampshire that we are a strong and active group which is very interested in Pisgah State Park.

Finally, this is my fourth and final annual report to you. Due to an upcoming necessary move in the spring to Pembroke, I will no longer be serving as your treasurer. I've enjoyed it (for the most part), but it's time to move on. After a fair amount of searching, I'm pleased to announce and welcome my replacement, Nancy Miller. Since my move won't take place until June, we've got several months to work together and get Nancy up to speed. Just as a side note – we've now got the whole Miller family involved with Pisgah, as husband Robert (Bob) is helping with the Midweek Work Crew. Any other families we can somehow get involved??

Sincerely
John Larson

Mud Season Approaches!



© Stu Copans 2005

Winter may be upon us but in a short couple of months we will be entering the dreaded 5th season of the northern New England states – the infamous Mud Season!

As President Bill Roberts noted in his message, we have already seen the precursor of this annual event with the early January thaw. Lakes in parts of NH have not yet even reached complete ice cover. Some ponds and lakes in Pisgah have open leads and water around the shores. Most may not be safe to walk on and it is not yet February! The mud season may come earlier this year than most. Please do your best to avoid the Park during the worst of the season to minimize damage to the trails.

FOP member Stu Copans has supplied a cartoon (left) which seems to sum up the annual event. Thanks Stu!

Matt Donachie

Update is published occasionally during the year by Friends of Pisgah, Inc.

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First Class Mail

Membership Note

Please use the form below and send to the address shown if you wish to join FOP or renew your membership.

The Friends of Pisgah maintain a nominal dues structure with the intent of encouraging as many individuals and families as possible to join. Over half of the single address dues provides for printing and mailing the Update and the Annual Picnic notice, as well as for the fine food you are provided at the picnic. Dues are \$10 to cover all persons at the same address. Group (club) memberships are \$20.

Cut here -----

If you are joining or renewing, please use this form. Your dues support our Park efforts.

Date: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ (Home)

Phone: _____ (Work)

E-mail: _____

Category
(Check applicable boxes)

- New
- Renewal
- Single Address (\$10.00)
- Group (\$20.00)
- Donation \$ _____

Willing to Assist On Committee for:

- Annual Picnic
- Educational Programs
- History/Archaeology
- Membership
- Newsletter Articles
- Planning & Strategy
- Public Relations/Park Info
- Rails to Trails Advisory
- Trails/Maintenance
- Wantastiquet-Monadnock Greenway
- Other _____

*Questions? Call Bill Roberts (603- 336-5462)
or Matt Donachie (603-239-6590)*

*Send form and check made out to **Friends of Pisgah to:***

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