



Update

F.O.P. Newsletter, Fall 2008, V. 22, No. 3

Annual Meeting November 18, 2008 – Hinsdale Community Center

From the President

WOW!!! What a spectacular Fall we have been graced with!

As my husband heard once, "Bravo Mother Nature"! It has been a busy time with happenings in the Park! A lot of wonderful excursions, productive workdays and Historical documentation have kept folks busy. The Technical Team has been meeting with the State for almost two years, and is looking towards having a draft of their contributions to send on to the Steering Committee, come their December meeting.

A little refresher, the Technical Team consists of representatives from Antioch University – NE, Franklin Pierce University, Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory (AVEO), Moosewood Ecological and the Friends of Pisgah (FOP) as well as representation by the state from the Department of Forests and Lands (DFL), the Department of Fish and Game, the Natural Heritage Bureau and Natural and Cultural Resources. The folks involved have donated a great deal of time and energy compiling scientific information to inform [guide] and contribute to a comprehensive management plan for the Park. Attention also has been given to the Historical and Cultural aspects of the Park as well as trail infrastructure. The information gathered by the Technical Team is then passed on to the Steering Committee created by the state to assist in developing a master management plan for Pisgah Park. The Steering Committee will create the final document that then will be presented to the Commissioner of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). The Steering Committee is a broad representation of community members that were appointed by DRED.

At our last Steering Committee meeting, we finalized a Vision Statement for the management plan. An ongoing task of the Steering Committee has been to inform the general public about the management plan. The public has always been encouraged to attend the meetings with an opportunity for comments and questions at the end of each session. We have had three public Forums so far: one presented by Tom Wessels on old growth in Pisgah; the second focused on the nuts and bolts of the Division of Forests and Lands, presented by the Director of DFL, Ken Demarais; and the most recent, a Recreational Forum aimed at getting information on how people use the Park, and how those experiences can be enhanced or be detracted from by aspects of Park operation and facilities. Please feel free to call or email me (603-363-4482 or ktthatcher@gmail.com) with any questions or comments.

The next Steering Committee meeting date has yet to be determined, but you can send me contact info and I would be happy to send you the date when I have it. We do have our Annual Meeting coming up on November 18th, a great place to touch base with FOP! I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ginny Knapp to the Executive Council. Ginny has been active in many different capacities in the park, even attending monthly meetings! She has been instrumental with regard to beefing up publicity for FOP activities in the park. Ginny will be completing the term of Cliff Struthers who has found he has more on his plate than he can manage at this time. Cliff has been, and fortunately will continue to be, very involved with the happenings in the Park. Thank-you Cliff for past, present and future service to the Park!

A heads-up to folks, it is hunting season! For more information Google the N.H. Dept. of Fish and Game. I strongly recommend during the months of November and a good part of December that persons hiking in the Park wear one of the day-glow vests and/or hats widely available. Its about that time to get out into the Park myself, perhaps I'll see you there!

Kathy Thatcher

Around the Park

Friends of Pisgah and NH Natural Heritage Bureau

For the past three years, the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) has been collaborating with FOP and other local partners to collect and assess existing biodiversity information for Pisgah State Park and to conduct targeted field inventory. At the time this work started, NHB had virtually no ecological information about Pisgah Park in its database. This project was part of a multi-year effort to fully inventory Pisgah for rare species, exemplary natural communities, and significant wildlife habitats.

We are fortunate to have several representatives of the NHB able to address the FOP membership at our Annual Meeting. See the abstract of the talk and some background on our speakers on page 5.

Final decisions relative to the management of Pisgah State Park are, by statute, made by the Commissioner of DRED. However, the data collected during this project is already contributing critical information to land managers.

Come to our Annual Meeting with questions you may have about this vital survey.

Invasive Plant Survey

As a member of the Pisgah State Park Technical Team, Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory (AVEO) collaborates with Antioch University New England, Keene State College, Franklin Pierce University, Moosewood Ecological Services, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, Harvard Forest, the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands, and the Friends of Pisgah to inform landscape-level management planning for the park.

Technical Team ecologists have identified invasive species as a significant potential threat to Pisgah's ecological integrity. In response, AVEO is coordinating the first-ever Pisgah State Park Invasive Plant Survey. Beginning in October 2008 and continuing through at least autumn 2009, AVEO volunteers will be surveying roads and trails throughout the park for the presence (and, hopefully, absence) of select invasive plant species, in order to help track and control the introduction and spread of these harmful non-native plants in Pisgah. For more information or to volunteer to assist us in this project, visit www.aveo.org or contact AVEO Science Director Brett Amy Thelen at 358-2065 or brett@aveo.org.

Right: Fred Doolittle and Tony Perlowski with mums won in drawing held at the end of the Annual Picnic. (Photo courtesy of Ginny Knapp)

Monthly Work and Hike Days

We plan to resume work/hike days at the Dort property every second Saturday of the month starting in November. We often hike in addition to some work on the property which is owned by FOP and is adjacent to the northwest corner of the Park. We meet at the Kilburn Pond trailhead and carpool a short distance to the Dort property. Information: 256-6301.

John Herrick, Trails Chair

Annual Picnic

The Friends of Pisgah's Annual Picnic was held Saturday, September 20th, a perfect fall day! We had a good turn-out of Friends, old and new, who shared a bounty of food and spirited camaraderie. We greatly appreciated John Herrick's expertise at the grill, serving up perfectly barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs to the crowd.

People meandered about the grounds and into the barn to view the farm machinery and tools so carefully preserved and displayed. Thank you to Laurel Powell for the time and effort she has put forth to make our barn a true museum of Pisgah artifacts! Just outside the barn Bill Robert's antique one-lung engine attracted lots of curious on-lookers.

The picnic ended with pumpkins and mums donated to lucky raffle winners. People went off in a variety of directions and activities including hiking for some, and kayaking for others. John Summers provided the kayaks to all those interested in kayaking leisurely on Fullam Pond; a perfect ending to the day.

Gary Montgomery, Vice-President

Mid-Week Work Days

The mid-week work days have been changed from Wednesdays to Thursdays. The work crew of John Hudachek, Gil Cameron and Jerry Goslant has been helping Norma by doing trail maintenance work on the Chestnut Hill Trail, the Parker Trail and the south side of the Lilly Pond Trail. Trails Bureau also has been doing major trail work, essentially bulldozing an eleven foot wide trail along Hubbard Hill and Davis Hill Trails in order to accommodate the state snow grooming machine.



Getting Around On Foot, Snowshoe or Cross Country Skis in Pisgah

The FOP has on occasion provided information about hiking, snowshoeing or cross country skiing in the Park. We have decided to try and publish such information more regularly in the future. We may just publish a trail description or, as you will note below, may provide a more descriptive and encompassing story about hiking a trail in a particular season. For those of you looking for an interesting hike or ski, etc., you might peruse the Park maps (summer and winter editions) and make a guess. Unfortunately, the two dimensional maps do not quantify the elevation changes and the potential limitations for travel on some trails. We hope to address these considerations in future articles.

Some Sources of Pisgah Hiking Information

In addition to the official Park maps, hiking in Pisgah has periodically been mentioned in hiking books about New England and the northeast. Very comprehensive coverage, including a small scale topographic map, is to be found in Southern New Hampshire Trail Guide, Burroughs and Daniell, Appalachian Mountain Club, 1999, pp 22 – 59. Hiking the Monadnock Region, Adamowicz, New England Cartographics, 1997, pp 182 – 187, contains a description of the Kilburn Loop hike. An updated version, The New Hiking the Monadnock Region, Adamowicz, University Press of New England, 2007, pp 210 – 215, describes a hike from the Kilburn Trailhead to Mt. Pisgah and mentions the Kilburn Loop but does not discuss it in detail. Another description of the Kilburn Loop can be found in Walks & Rambles in the Upper Connecticut River Valley, Kibling, The Countryman Press, 1989, pp 164 – 168. A hike from the Horseshoe Trail Head to Fullam Pond and return (written in the early days shortly after the creation of the Park) is described in Fifty More Hikes in New Hampshire, Doan, New Hampshire Publishing Company, 1978, pp 5 – 7.

Habitat Trail

On a glorious Sunday, October 5, a group of folks [Matt Edson, Gary Montgomery, John and Patty Hudachek, Kathy and Jon Thatcher] headed out onto the Habitat Trail to do trail work. A lot of the focus was on the path through the beaver pond, brush-cutting and clearing away debris that was encroaching on the trail. A number of the old utility poles that were used to create the walk-way in the vicinity of the beaver pond are in need of replacing, a larger task than the crew we had on hand could handle! Regardless, it is still a beautiful walk that can be completed in about an hour's time, adding quick side trips, if desired.

Heading in from the Horseshoe parking lot, you will stroll down along the Old Chesterfield Road, passing an area on the left where early succession maintenance is being done to encourage wildlife habitat. On your right, you can see the remains of an old foundation. In the Spring the area is blooming with Forsythia and scattered Daffodils, a clue to previous human habitation. This section of trail is also a great place to visit in early Spring to see a beautiful bank of Bloodroot accompanying you down the trail. Purple Trillium follows a little later in the season. But back to Fall! When you reach the first fork in the trail, head uphill to your right, following the sign for the Habitat Trail, which is also indicated by a wooden sign with a turkey track. As you crest the hill, you will find another area on the left kept open for wildlife habitat as well as a stunning view across the field to a vibrant splash of color on the hillside beyond. A little further along the trail another old home site is visible on your right. A beautiful line of magnificent old maples guides the eye along the entrance to the old homestead. Moving on, you will come to an intersection of trails where, instead of continuing towards Winchester Road and access to the Hubbard Hill Trail, take a sharp left following the sign with the two turkey tracks. You will make your way down a gentle slope, coming alongside the open field you previously passed from above. This section of trail is pretty wet and also fairly rocky, so be prepared with the appropriate footwear. At the next trail junction continue straight (instead of going left and back up to Horseshoe parking lot).

A short distance ahead you will come to another junction and you will bear left on the Habitat Trail. Turkey tracks and a faded Habitat/Ski Trail on one of the orange signs let you know you are going in the right direction. Continue on till you see a smaller trail to the left and bear left. Now the signage is for the "Wildlife Trail" instead of the "Habitat Trail". This is a little confusing, but now you will be following the Wildlife Trail signs! This section of trail takes you to a wonderful beaver pond inhabited by a number of beavers, which you might well have the pleasure of seeing, often greeting you with a slap of the tail (on the water, that is)! This is a great spot to simply pause, watching, listening, waiting, enjoying the beauty that surrounds you. At the end of a walkway along some utility poles, you will meander through the woods a short distance, coming back onto a wider section of trail, heading towards the South Woods Trail. This section of the Habitat/Wildlife Trail is a beautiful stroll through hardwood forest bordered by stone walls. You will come to a tee in the trail, with the Habitat/Wildlife Trail going to the left, South Woods Trail to your right. Following the Habitat/Wildlife Trail, stonewalls, hardwoods and conifers[softwoods] will accompany you as you wend your way back, passing through a grove of Sumac before turning right onto the Old Chesterfield Road again and heading uphill to the Horseshoe parking lot. Walking at a steady pace, this loop takes about one hour, even with the side trips!

When you have more time on your hands, South Woods is a beautiful trail, with a lot of diverse, natural communities. We will cover South Woods in a future Update!

Kathy Thatcher

Glacial Rock Hike

On September 13, a group met at the Rte. 119 Ashuelot parking area and 4 of us car pooled to the upper parking lot for Pisgah reservoir. We headed up the hill to the reservoir and stopped to look over the rocks, old foundations, water and island. After heading north along the two mile pond to the Chestnut Hill trail, we discovered many trees down across the trail; there were very few trees that we could move. After going over the hill, we set out for Harvard Forest and we came right onto the one live tree that is left of the old pines that were blown over in the hurricane of 1938. We walked around taking some pictures of ourselves and the tree then checking out some very long logs all mostly facing north.

We took a short break and headed down an almost vanished trail that took us to the Dogwood Swamp area where we found an interesting green pool under the pine trees. After crossing the Dogwood Swamp Trail we were in sight of the first glacial rock (see photo page 6), not very big but on a hilltop. We had our lunch at this point. From the first glacial rock, we headed south just east of the trail, following the hilltop and began to find more and bigger rocks. At one hilltop we also found some whole trees that were blown over by storms; they were uprooted and there were roots 10 feet in the air and all rock in the ground where the roots used to be. We continued on but were confused about where to go from there so we ended up back on the Dogwood Swamp Trail. At that point, some folks wanted to head back as they were uncertain about how long it would take to return to the car. Surprisingly, it was not that far and we returned, emerging on the reservoir parking lot where one would hardly know that a trail existed. Pisgah has lots of things like this to see. We will explore other interesting locations in the future.

John Herrick

Beal's Road – A Historical Hike

On Saturday, October 13, FOP hikers ventured into the northeast corner of Pisgah off Old Swanzey Road from the Beal's Road trailhead. To get to this trail, leave Rte 9 across from the Spofford Fire Station to access Tuttle Road. Go 0.4 of a mile to the intersection with Old Swanzey Road. Travel 1.7 miles south along the tarred then dirt road until you come to the junction of Stone Mill Road on the right. Follow this to the Pisgah gate.

This part of Spofford and Pisgah was referred to as "Hardscrabble" because eking a living off this land was most challenging. In the late 1800s about 100 families lived near the Crouch Sawmill. The remains of this mill are evident off Stone Mill Road. Nearby foundations were probably a boarding house and shop for the mill. Some refer to this area of Hardscrabble as Nash City and according to an 1858 map of Chesterfield there were two Nash residences near Fullam Mill and its dam at the northern end of Fullam Pond, although equating it to a city is not quite accurate. About 15 minutes from the trailhead, following Beal's Road, the Latham-Beal Cemetery sits on a hill on the north side of the road. There are marble and slate gravestones ranging from 1790 to 1885. The Brown, Beal, Latham, Crouch, Faulkner and Nash families rest in this quiet, beautiful spot. Curiously, some unmarked fieldstones in the back, northwest corner may denote graves as well.

On the south side of the road in this general area are an intricate maze of stonewalls, foundations and large piles of stones. The foundations are huge, suggesting barns. The most intriguing aspect of this area is a ¼ mile narrow road-like section lined by high walls that spans the distance between the "barn and the fields". We speculated that this was a path used to herd sheep to the barn or onto the road to take to market.

The trail travels along a beautiful beaver pond, up into the woods and then descends downhill following Beal's Road, a rough trail that is bordered by stonewalls and the cemetery mentioned above. Follow the blue rectangle trail markers to the intersection of Beal's Road and Fullam Pond Trail. Along your journey, either on the way in or back, be sure to travel the short loop to Beal's Knob following the blue triangle trail markers. You'll end up at a spectacular vista of Mt. Monadnock. There are two accesses to this loop, one near the gate and one at the intersection of Beal's Road and Beal's Knob Trail. The timing of this hike depends on how much time you spend exploring the stone structures but allow an hour for this "History Mystery Hike"!

Laurel Powell

[Ed. note: This whole area in the northeast part of the Park is interesting to hike anytime or to cross country ski in winter. There are many sights and sites to see from the road/trail and the ridgeline as described above. Also, hikers who wish to carpool can take this route and hike down to Fullam Pond where a car may have been spotted for the long return trip to the Beal's Road trailhead. Of course one could hike down the Fullam Pond Trail and then northwest up either the South Woods Trail from the north end of Fullam Pond or northwest on Old Chesterfield Rd from the south end of Fullam Pond, arriving in either case at the Horseshoe Rd parking lot and then return to Beal's Road via a spotted return vehicle left at Horseshoe Rd parking lot.]

Friends of Pisgah Annual Meeting

**Tuesday November 18, 2008
Community Center, Hinsdale
7:00 PM**

Agenda

President's Report (Kathy Thatcher)

News from the Park (Norma Reppucci)

Committee Reports

Report of the Nominating Committee (Dave Freitas)

(All nominees have agreed to serve if elected.)

Officers

President	Kathy Thatcher (Chesterfield)
Vice President	Gary Montgomery (Chesterfield)
Treasurer	David Freitas (Hinsdale)
Secretary	Robert Smith (Keene)

Council Members - To serve a Three Year Term, expiring in November 2009

William Roberts (Hinsdale)
John Hudachek (Chesterfield)
John Herrick (Chesterfield)

Election of Officers

Nominations from the floor

Close nominations

Cast ballots

Speaker:

Pete Bowman

Topic:

Pisgah's Rare and Endangered Plants and Exemplary Communities

The Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) has completed its three-year inventory of Pisgah State Park. Inspired by initial support by the Friends of Pisgah, NHB conducted desktop and field inventories for rare species and exemplary natural communities, including collection and analysis of tree cores from apparent old growth areas of the Park. Preliminary findings identified only one rare species. NHB has not yet designated any exemplary natural communities, although some may warrant consideration. Data analysis continues. Findings will support the Pisgah State Park Management Plan. Pete will discuss the inventory and will be supported by Don Kent.

Some background on our speaker(s): Pete Bowman, NHB Ecologist. Pete conducts field inventories and works with NH Division of Forests & Lands foresters on the management of State lands. Prior to joining NH Natural Heritage, he worked as a research technician at the Joseph Jones Ecological Research Center in Newton, Georgia. He holds a B.S. in environmental science from Cook College, Rutgers University and a Master of Forestry from the Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University. Don Kent, NHB Administrator. Don is responsible for the overall direction, management, and administration of the NH Natural Heritage Bureau. Before joining NH Natural Heritage, Don worked on watershed issues in the Everglades as the Executive Director of the Community Watershed Fund in Florida, conducted applied environmental research for Walt Disney Imagineering Research & Development in California, and instructed environmental decision makers of developing countries for the U.S. Environmental Training Institute. Don has a Ph.D. in Biology (Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior) from Boston University.

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President Kathy Thatcher & Secretary Bob Smith at the Annual Picnic



Past Treasurer John Larson & Park Manager Norma Reppucci at Annual Picnic



An Attraction Provided by Bill Roberts (white shirt at left) at the Annual Picnic Was a 6 hp 100 yr old Abenague Engine (right), Running an Antique Water Pump Using a Belt Drive. This Engine is the Same Model as Used by Rod and Fred Doolittle's Father on the Doolittle Farm Which Sat at the Bottom of the Hill Below the Visitor Center.

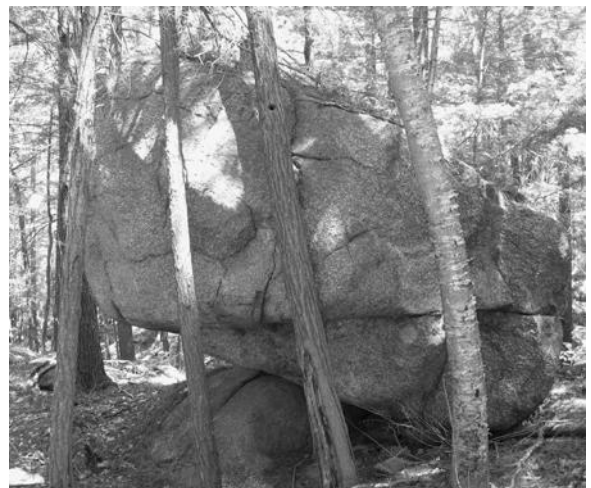


Ginny Knapp and John Hudachek At Area of Glacial Rocks



Annual Picnic Burger and Hot Dog Chef, John Herrick

(Pictures on this page courtesy of Ginny Knapp and John Herrick)



Glacial Boulder Near Dogwood Swamp Trail

David Foster Presentation at Pisgah Steering Committee

The Harvard Forest of Harvard University is located in Petersham, MA and manages not only the forest and museum located there but also has properties in other areas of New England. Created in 1907 by Harvard University, the Harvard Forest is a research and education site for the study of forest ecology, conservation and land use history. The Forest is one of 25 locations in the United States involved in a collaborative effort, created by the National Science Foundation Long Term Ecological Research Network, (LTER), to study important ecological and environmental questions and concerns. The Petersham property consists of 3,000 acres of diverse forest and field, ponds, streams and swamps. There is a forest plantation and agricultural land as well, representing the on-going studies and teaching that take place on the property. One of the Harvard Forest properties is a parcel within Pisgah State Park,

the remains of an old-growth forest. The Pisgah Tract is located deep in the center of the Park. This tract was virtually the last location in Pisgah of the renowned tall trees which in colonial times were reserved for the King's Navy.

On August 12, 2008, Dr. David Foster, Director of the Harvard Forest, talked to the Steering Committee (see President's Message on p. 1 for information on the Steering Committee and other groups) about Pisgah as it relates to studies done by the Harvard Forest. He feels it is absolutely critical that we protect as much forest as possible in New England. We have done a lot to protect forest lands and now have an opportunity to protect more forests. We should recognize that we are now at the peak of reforestation in New England and starting to lose that forest to somewhat indiscriminate development and practices that put the woodlands in jeopardy. It would make sense to have a goal of 50% of the landscape as forests with 90% of that area open to active management of different types from harvesting to other active management.

The Harvard Forest tract in Pisgah was established in the 1920's by Richard Fisher who lead a national fund raising effort to buy a 600 acre parcel of old growth forest in the region of Pisgah owned by the Dickenson family who once lumbered extensively in Pisgah. The purpose of the purchase was to study nature and to guide management. Prior to the hurricane of 1938, Pisgah's Harvard Forest was dominated by 3 ft diameter white pines and hemlock. After the hurricane 50% of the blow down in the Pisgah area was salvaged but arrangements were made to leave the Harvard Forest tract un-salvaged so it could be studied. After that disturbance, the Pisgah Harvard Forest is composed primarily of small diameter trees such as hemlock, black birch, red maple and American beech. When it has fully regenerated after the 1938 disturbance it may end up a completely different forest type. Seventy years after the hurricane there is still a lot of debris and it is difficult to walk through.

In the intervening years since the hurricane, some 13,000 plus acres of the Pisgah area were purchased or otherwise acquired by the state of New Hampshire for the creation of the current Pisgah State Park. David Foster's recommendation for Pisgah is to think about the unique features of the area and the opportunities that people have on State land that are not available on private land. Some of the unique features of Pisgah are: it is a big block of land, it escaped deforestation and agricultural use for the most part, it is an island of public land surrounded by private land and it is critical to work with private landowners to encourage long term management.

Dr Foster concluded by recommending to the Steering Committee that, for Pisgah, it would be a good idea to set aside the areas that have the most old growth and the area of least use. Active management would be best done in areas that have had previous land use.

Mushrooms in Pisgah

Every fall for many years, Pisgah Park has been the location for a hike to explore the various mushrooms that can be found throughout the Park. This year was no exception.

On a warm, Sunday afternoon in early September, a small group of curious hikers joined David Moon to discover some of the romance and mystery of mushrooms that grow in the Pisgah forest. The Director of AVEO, David first explained that this summer season was particularly conducive for bountiful mushroom hunting, with lots of warm, moist weather, which encourages mushrooms to flourish. Within the first few minutes of our hike to Kilburn Pond, David sent us all out to "foray", which we learned is the proper descriptor for a mushroom hunt. When we each brought back our mushroom collections, we laid them out on the forest floor in a beautiful display of variety and variation. David then explained the basics of mushroom identification, varieties and their characteristics. Most importantly, he described the differences between edible and poisonous mushrooms, complimented by delicious sounding recipe suggestions. As he shared his wealth of knowledge with us, other hikers passing by stopped to observe, and listened with interest. Who would have known that our Pisgah forest environment includes such a vast variety of these interesting non-flowering plants? We thank David for being a wonderfully entertaining and knowledgeable guide, and look forward to future hikes together!

For more about mushrooms, consult: The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms, Lincoff, Alfred Knopf Publishers, various editions since 1981, or Mushrooms. A Quick Reference Guide to Mushrooms of North America, Bessette and Sundberg, MacMillan Publishing, 1987.

Friends of Pisgah, Inc.
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First Class Mail

Please use the form below and send to the address shown if you wish to join FOP, renew membership or give one as a gift . The Friends of Pisgah maintain a nominal dues structure with the intent being to encourage as many individuals and families as possible to join. Over half of the student/single/family dues provides for printing and mailing the Update and the Annual Picnic notice, as well as for the fine food at the picnic. Dues are as follows: student - \$10, single - \$15, family - \$20, group (club) - \$30.

Cut here -----

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

Date: _____	Category <i>(Check applicable boxes)</i>
Name(s): _____	◇ New
Address: _____	◇ Renewal
_____	◇ Gift
_____	◇ Student (\$10.00)
Phone: _____ (Home)	◇ Single (\$15.00)
Phone: _____ (Work)	◇ Family (\$20.00/address)
E-mail: _____	◇ Group (\$30.00)
	◇ Donation \$ _____

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

Name/Address of gift giver

Send form and check to:

Friends of Pisgah, Inc.
PO Box 134
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0134

Willing to Assist On Committee for:

- ◇ Annual Picnic
- ◇ Educational Programs
- ◇ History/Archaeology
- ◇ Membership
- ◇ Newsletter Articles

- ◇ Planning & Strategy
- ◇ Fund Raising
- ◇ Public Relations/Park Info
- ◇ Rails to Trails Advisory
- ◇ Trails/Maintenance

- ◇ Wantastiquet-Monadnock
Greenway
- ◇ Other _____