



The Alpine Steward

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Fostering the Spirit of Wildness and Conserving the Alpine Areas of Northeastern North America

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Trails, Paths, & People

By Charlie Jacobi

In a wonderful new book entitled *On Trails*, Robert Moor writes: "When we take a step back, we find that the key difference between a trail and a path is directional: paths extend forward, whereas trails extend backward." He goes on to explain this by asking whether you would prefer to lie down in the *path* of a charging elephant or its *trail*.

If you believe Moor is on to something here, then the *trail* of the Waterman Fund extends back at least 16 years. But it started as a new *path* ahead and into unknown territory. Looking back, we see its peaks (this is an alpine path after all, and we're in an elevated position) and other points of interest. From alpine gatherings to grants and more, the trail wended its way through the Moosilauke Ravine Lodge, the Adirondack Loj, and even the Joe Dodge Lodge for a board meeting or two; rose up Mount Monadnock and Mount Mansfield; skirted Millinocket Lake and ventured Beyond Katahdin; and passed in and out of the Mount Washington Museum, the

Whitefield (NH) School, and the Rey Center. It passed through East Corinth often (and still does) before striking off in new directions each time. Our trail also ran through the mind of every reader of *Wilderness Ethics*, the winning essays, and more. We know the toil it took to walk it and build it at the same time.

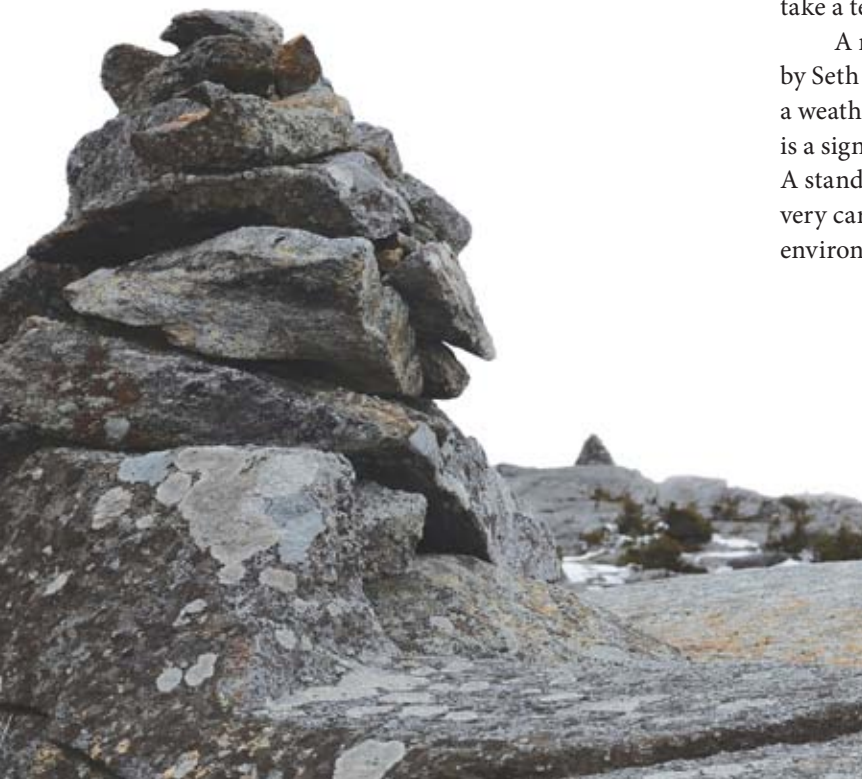
Fortunately, the trail behind us illuminates the path in front of us. That path will take our Wildness Panel across the Northeast. It will collect our winning essays in a new book. It will award a 14th round of grants in January. And most interestingly, it may take us to Franconia Ridge. The Board is exploring the idea of a significant trails project there with the White Mountain National Forest and the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Regardless of the geography of the receding Waterman Fund *Trail*, and whatever the geography of the always-emerging Waterman Fund *Path*, the outstanding features in

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Why Shouldn't You Stack Stones?

By Peter Palmiotto, Alyssa Milo and Dianne DuBois



Across the northeast stacks of stones above the tree line, known as cairns, are being disturbed or destroyed. Meanwhile other stacks, sometimes on the edge of cliffs, are being built. Why is this behavior a problem and why shouldn't you stack stones? Cairns are official trail markers, built to withstand the harsh high elevation environment. They are intended to keep hikers safe and also protect the alpine vegetation. They guide hikers safely along trails and off the mountain during times of poor visibility such as cloudy weather or snow storms.

The alteration of cairns removes that safety net for hikers leading them into potentially dangerous situation or areas with sensitive alpine vegetation. In addition, taking stones directly from the soil to build new cairns or tamper with existing ones often leads to soil erosion and the death of alpine plants.

The word 'cairn' is Scottish in origin, but Scotland isn't the only place you'll find them. They occur throughout the world in just about every treeless landscape with loose rock. In the Presidential range there are more than 50 miles of trails and 2500 cairns above tree line. These cairns are maintained by AMC volunteer trail crews, the local mountain clubs and the USFS. It is estimated that these crews put in about 100 person-days each year to maintain alpine cairns. To build a cairn that will hold up to the elements may take a team of two volunteers an entire day.

A recent article in the Adirondack Mountain Club's newsletter by Seth Jones emphasizes how time consuming constructing a weather resistant cairn actually is, noting their alteration is a significant problem in the High Peaks of New York State. A standard cairn requires many rocks, and trail workers are very careful about selecting and removing rocks from the local environment.



An official cairn on Mount Monadnock.

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Alteration of cairns and the so called stone stacking phenomenon is an issue for mountain stewards across the region and the country, and in a variety of habitats including streambeds. In 2014, several northeastern managers contributed to the development of the following five guidelines now promoted by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.



Kiosk at Park headquarters at Mount Monadnock State Park.

1. Do not build unauthorized cairns. When visitors create unauthorized routes or cairns they often greatly expand trampling impacts and misdirect visitors from established routes to more fragile or dangerous areas. This is especially important in the winter when trails are hidden by snow. Thus, visitor-created or “bootleg” cairns can be very misleading to hikers and should not be built.

2. Do not tamper with cairns. Authorized cairns are designed and built for specific purposes. Tampering with or altering cairns minimizes their route marking effectiveness. Leave all cairns as they are found.

3. Do not add stones to existing cairns. Cairns are designed to be free draining. Adding stones to cairns chinks the crevices, allowing snow to accumulate. Snow turns to ice, and the subsequent freeze-thaw cycle can reduce the cairn to a rock pile.

4. Do not move rocks. Extracting and moving rocks make mountain soils more prone to erosion in an environment where new soil creation requires thousands of years. It also disturbs adjacent fragile alpine vegetation.

5. Stay on trails. Protect fragile mountain vegetation by following cairns or paint blazes in order to stay on designated trails.

In an effort to address the stacking stone problem on Mount Monadnock in southwest New Hampshire, the Monadnock Ecology Research and Education Project (MERE) based in the Environmental Studies (ES) Department of Antioch University New England partnered with Monadnock State Park to develop signs to elevate hikers’ awareness of cairns. A team consisting of the park manager, ES faculty, and graduate students developed a simple sign using the universal Ghost Busters red circle with a line placed over a person stacking stones. The words ‘Follow cairns, don’t build them’ border the image.

This sign was placed at each trail where it emerges above tree line. A second sign was placed on all kiosks at the base of the mountain asking the question, ‘Why shouldn’t you stack stones?’ Below the question are key reasons why you shouldn’t and that it is illegal in NH. Park manager, Beth Kintz, has been pleased with the hikers’ responses saying that they have seen the signs and are asking questions about the cairns.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Treasurer's Report

By Matt Larson

For the year to date, The Waterman Fund has awarded grants totaling \$15,315 for six projects advancing alpine research, education, and outreach in Northeastern North America, and committed \$4,000 to University Press of New England to facilitate the publication of a new anthology of essays that celebrate and explore issues of wilderness, wildness, and humans in our alpine areas provisionally entitled “*New Wilderness Voices*.”

As of our last investment statement, the Fund’s total assets were \$360,103, an increase of nearly \$20,000 since October of 2015. Over the same time

period, liabilities (grant payables, primarily) have increased from \$13,100 to \$19,815. Consequently, the Fund’s net worth is now \$340,288, up approximately \$12,000 for the year to date.

The Fund has received contributions totaling in excess of \$13,000 in the first ten months of 2016, up by more than 30 percent from October of 2015. Operating expenses are approximately \$2,700, up noticeably from the prior year but still within our operating budget. As the Fund’s operating expenses continue to be minimal in relation to annual contributions, we should once again have an operating surplus at the close of the year.



How Waterman Fund Grants Protect the Alpine

By Peter Palmiotto

The Waterman Fund provided \$15,315 to organizations and individuals this past year on projects that protect the alpine in multiple ways. Similar to last year, trail work tops the lists with three grants awarded, followed by two grants for stewardship and one for research. The Fund believes

keeping hikers on the trails and off the alpine will have the most immediate and long lasting effect. Thus, projects like the GMC puncheon reconstruction on Mount Mansfield in Vermont and constructing gravel based causeways on Cadillac's South Ridge trail in Acadia National Park, Maine, keeps the vast number of hikers on hardened surfaces thus protecting the alpine.

Supporting trail work is an important investment we need to make to protect the alpine. Identifying problem areas along trails is valuable information so that overseeing authorities can prioritize their efforts. Therefore, the Waterman Fund supported a White Mountain wide trail assessment this past season. The assessment was conducted by Sam Kilburn who identified 154 trail problems across the more than 50 miles of alpine trails he traveled. This information will be shared with the appropriate organizations so the limited resources can be allocated wisely. Clearly there is plenty of trail work to do out there!

Stewardship is a critical aspect of protecting the alpine. The Alpine Stewardship Network, comprised of over a dozen organizations that steward our alpine resources in the northeast, contribute numerous hours collectively to get the word out about the alpine. The Fund supported a model



Mount Mansfield Puncheon. (GMC photo)

program, the ADK Mountain Club's alpine stewardship program, this past year to help maintain their stewarding staff. On average, ADK stewards contact 85 persons per day

Keeping hikers on the trails and off the alpine will have the most immediate and long lasting effect.

which over the season equals over 7000 hikers. This large number of hikers then hears directly the message that alpine plants are special and fragile. With photo monitoring the ADK Mountain Club has demonstrated the effectiveness of their vigilant in person stewardship showing how the degraded alpine in the high peaks has recovered well. The Fund also supported the Maine Appalachian Trail Club to train their caretakers in alpine ecology and stewardship. Annually the MATC caretakers make contact with over 8000 hikers in the alpine. The additional training allowed the caretakers to provide an expanded and effective message.

Invasive species are also a new concern in the alpine. The discovery of dandelions in snowbed communities on Mount Washington in the last few years has been well documented as has the eradication efforts supported by the Fund. The Fund

supported researchers Bob Capers and Nancy Slack and their seven volunteers again this past year to continue their efforts. They report a slight reduction in abundance from the previous year and where dandelions persist the plants are smaller. USFS botanist and researcher, Dan Sperduto, has a good understanding of what is required on Mount Washington and is now taking the lead on the dandelion-eradication project. The Fund is pleased that we were able to support this effort at the critical beginning phase and pleased the Forest Service will maintain the eradication effort.

We thank all supporters of our grant program and we thank all those project participants who we were able to fund and those we were not who work so hard to protect the alpine.

Photo at left: ADK summit steward, Kayla White, speaks to hikers on Mt. Algonquin. (Peter Palmiotto photo)

DEADLINE FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

Grant applications for alpine project funding are due on 12/15/2016.

For information: Visit watermanfund.org or write to grants@watermanfund.org.

To apply: Submit a proposal as a PDF file to grants@watermanfund.org. Paper applications are no longer accepted.

Trails, Paths, and People... from page 1

either direction are not peaks, but people. Think about all who founded, nurtured, and guided this organization to the present: Chuck Wooster, Carl Demrow, Rebecca Oreskes, Doug Mayer, Mary Margaret Sloan, Annie Bellerose, Val Stori, Rick Paradis, Rick Sayles, and many others too numerous to name them all here. I'm grateful for their past leadership and continuing guidance, which we have sought.

Well before our founders created the Waterman Fund, others throughout the Northeast pioneered similar paths. We see this best in the Adirondacks, where alpine stewards flourished over three generations. The passion of Ed Ketchledge inspired Kathy Regan, and both of them inspired Julia Goren, only recently retired from the Board. All three are well-deserving winners of the Guy Waterman Alpine Steward Award, with Julia the most recent awardee. Two former Adirondack Summit Stewards, Seth Jones and Brendan Wiltse, now serve on the Waterman Fund Board. That's an impressive lineage.

Back in 2009, the Waterman Fund began nurturing a new stewardship program for Mount Monadnock led by Peter Palmiotto of nearby Antioch University. Since then, Peter has mentored graduate student Jill Weiss to assess and compare all the stewardship programs in the Northeast under another Waterman Fund grant. He also hosted the first Wildness

Panel, a model for the Waterman Fund to continue pursuing its wildness mission. Of course, part way through all of this, we co-opted Peter to serve on the Board. On a similar note, the first of two grants to the Rey Center for educating youth on the Welch Ledges was awarded in 2012. Kim Votta led that program. We eventually persuaded her to join the Board too. Do you see a pattern?

Which is all to say once again, it's about people. In 2017, Kim will serve as our next President and Peter as Vice President. We're also now looking for two new champions to serve on the Board in 2017 as Matt Larson and I are termed out after six years each. We'll find them because the spirit of wildness is timeless, the alpine zone inspires a passion for place, and the connections engendered through the alpine gathering and the other work of the Waterman Fund bring new people into our path every year.

I'll close by recognizing the two most important people for us: Guy and Laura. Inspired by Franconia Ridge, Guy and Laura saw the need, articulated a mission, and envisioned a path to achieve it. And here we are with dozens of grants, essays, and alpine stewards in our wake. But we could not continue to create this path without the people reading this column. Thank you for walking it with us. I look forward to even more great progress in 2017.

Anthology of Waterman Fund Essays to be Published

We here at the Fund are thrilled that the University Press of New England has contracted with the Waterman Fund to publish an anthology of winners, runners-up, and other essays of distinction from the Fund's essay contest.

The anthology, composed of eighteen essays, is titled *New Wilderness Voices* and will be released in the Spring of 2017.

The winning essays, since 2009, have been published in the Appalachian Mountain Club's journal *Appalachia*. Christine Woodside, the journal's editor, is the editor of the anthology and will co-author the Introduction with Annie Bellerose, past board member, who handled placing the book with Stephen Hull, the publisher.

Amy Seidl, an ecologist and environmental scientist at the University of Vermont, has written

the Foreword. Amy works with her students on environmental writing and is the author of *Early Spring: An Ecologist and Her Children Wake to a Warming World*, a compelling mix of memoir and science.

Laura Waterman has contributed a "Letter to Readers," that talks about the Fund and the importance of the essay contest to our work.

The Fund has agreed to help out with publishing costs as this anthology aligns with the Fund's mission of encouraging new voices to explore in writing wilderness and wildness issues.

We plan to celebrate the publication of *New Wilderness Voices*, a landmark event for the Fund, and will keep you informed at watermanfund.org.

—Laura Waterman

Excerpt from an essay by Will Kemeza, submitted for the initial year of the contest in 2008; Will's essay will appear in the forthcoming anthology, New Wilderness Voices. He now serves on the Fund's board.

Dark Night on Whitewall

In the lengthening afternoon of that December day, as I hauled myself over the lip of the mountain's headwall, I was lightheaded with hunger and chilled by sweat. I looked east, the direction in which I'd been moving, up at familiar mountains: ice-glazed trees white against a flint-gray sky. Then I turned around, to look down the long valley. There, already obscuring the peaks at the southern end of the notch, was a towering wall of the darkest cloud I'd ever seen. The cloudbank was moving north and east, toward me. It moved slowly but with unflinching purpose, like a slow flood or a black glacier on the march. It enveloped everything—the sky's fading light, the peaks and the valley's trough. It was like seeing a negation, like watching the advance of absence. I had climbed that mountain with the last of my strength, looking for the solace of the peaks. Instead, in the cold dark, I felt the full iron weight of winter. Winter, which is the world being what it will be. Not what we ask of it, or what we would have it be. This time, there was no solace. Wildness has a way of attacking our ideas about wildness - about its healing powers, about its place as a locus of easily accessible meaning. And this may be the final, and the great gift, of mountain peaks.

2017 ALPINE ESSAY CONTEST

Guy and Laura Waterman spent a lifetime reflecting and writing on the Northeast's mountains. The Waterman Fund seeks to further their legacy of stewardship through essays that celebrate and explore issues of wilderness, wildness, and humans through the Fund's annual essay contest.

For the 2017 Waterman Fund essay contest, emerging writers are asked to offer and explore stories of what humans build in wild places, considering the ecological and emotional integrity of wilderness and wildness. From trails and bridges to communities and visitor service facilities, humans have an undeniable impact on the wild places we love, even as we seek to steward these most meaningful landscapes for their own sakes, ourselves and future generations. How do we strike a balance—personally and culturally—between discovering and sustaining the spirit and substance of wilderness and wildness?

The deadline for submissions is April 15, 2017.

Submissions should be 2000-3000 words. Please include contact information and a few lines about why the writer feels

their essay is appropriate for the contest. Online submissions of double-spaced manuscripts in a 12-point font, Word doc compatible file are preferred. If submitting by mail, please include an email address. We will announce the winners at the end of June. The winning essayist will be awarded \$1500 and published in *Appalachia Journal*. The Honorable Mention essay will receive \$500. Both essays will be published on our website as well. Our definition of "emerging writers" is online, as well as more specific information regarding official rules of entry.

The Waterman Fund's objective is to strengthen the human stewardship of the open summits, exposed ridge lines and alpine areas of the Northeast. We welcome personal, scientific, adventure, or memoir essays; fiction, poetry, or songs are not eligible for this contest. More information about the Waterman Fund and on the essay contest is available at watermanfund.org, Facebook, and via essays@watermanfund.org.

2016 ESSAY CONTEST NOTE:

In celebration of the National Park Centennial, the 2016 Waterman Fund Essay Contest invited emerging writers to explore stories and connections between wilderness and management of public lands through the lens of the National Park System. After much deliberation and review, the Essay Committee felt that, while the essay contest received many fine essays exploring either wilderness or public lands, none of the submitted essays truly bridged the two with the depth that we felt the topic merited.

However, three essays stood out and we would like to

publicly offer those writers special recognition here. We truly appreciate the energy, effort, and courage emerging writers put forth in submitting their thoughts on wilderness and wildness to the Waterman Fund Essay Contest, and we encourage all to continue writing and submitting in future years.

2016 Special Recognition Writers and Essays:

Lilace Mellin Guigard: *Making Ourselves at Home in the Wilderness*, Dan Kriesberg: *The Wonder of Yellowstone*, Corrie Parrish: *Gateway Into the Wild*.

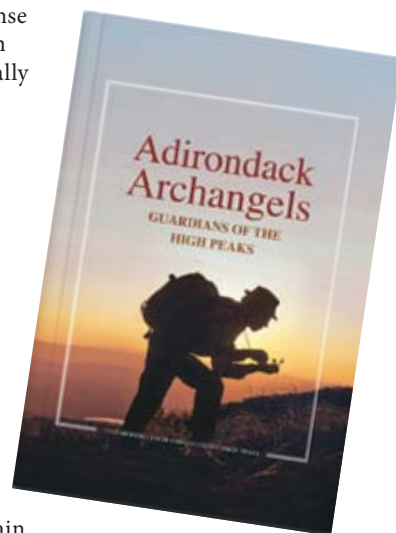
—Bethany Taylor

Add *Adirondack Archangels* To Your Winter Reading List

Primo Levi writes, "Evenings spent in a mountain hut are among the most sublime and intense that life holds". Surely, that billowing pleasure has to do with the fact that these evenings are often spent swapping stories about mountains. And, of course, all good stories about mountains are really love stories: about awe, about companionship, about tough lessons, and about soul-shuddering beauty.

The experience of reading *Adirondack Archangels* is like one of these evenings. It is a collection of essays by people who love the mountains—and who have thought long and hard about why they love them. The voices of the contributors are varied. There are essays about trail work, about natural history, about rivers, and, among other topics, about an oil-painting hermit. But—and this is the most powerful element of the book—all of these writers have thought long and hard about how to love the mountains, in the practical ways which may allow our children and grandchildren to love them too. This is a hopeful book, and a challenging one. It is hard to read about Ed Ketchledge's legacy of Adirondack stewardship without deep gratitude—and without feeling moved to put one's own mountain-love to good use.

A final note: were it not for the superb collection of essays, *Adirondack Archangels* could be mistaken for a coffee-table book. The photos are stunning, capturing the expanse and color of the range, as well as the people who have worked to save its diversity and its character. If there is an irony associated with the book, it is this: you will find yourself reading about a mountain range strained by its popularity, and you will, nevertheless, start planning your trip. —Will Kemeza



T H E Y E A R *in*



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2



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Photographs



7



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9

10

1. Mountain Honeysuckle
2. Lapland Rosebay
3. Alpine Sweet Grass
4. Bearberry Willow
5. Bog Laurel
6. Black Crowberry Fruit
7. Field trip to Cannon Mountain (Charlie Jacobi photo)
8. Franconia Ridge: edge of trail erosion and dieback of alpine vegetation (Sam Kilburn photo)
9. Sam Kilburn inventories the condition of the Alpine Garden Trail (Charlie Jacobi photo)
10. Alpine plants exposed to winter conditions on the summit of Algonquin Peak, NY

(photos 1-6 and 10: Brendan Wiltsie)



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Guy Waterman Alpine Steward Award

By Seth Jones

Every June I try to make it up to the summit of either Algonquin or Marcy to take in the vibrant colors of the first alpine flowers in bloom. I usually see lapland rosebay, a pink alpine rhododendron, or *Diapensia*, a deep green mound with petite white flowers. If I make it over to Skylight I might even get a glimpse of the alpine azalea, a small, deep pink flower only found on Skylight's summit in the Adirondacks. I also usually see another alpine flower, one even more rare and colorful than the ones already mentioned. This flower will talk to you about her special, fragile home and even answer your questions about which jagged peak you see off in the distance. To many, this alpine flower's name is Julia Goren, a human, but in the alpine ecosystem of New York, she could be considered the rarest and most beautiful alpine flower of



Julia Goren with Laura Waterman and Charlie Jacobi.

them all.

Julia currently serves as the Education Director and Summit Steward Coordinator for the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK). Charlie Jacobi, Waterman Fund's President, describes Julia as, "an amazing, energetic, and deeply committed alpine enthusiast who has raised the bar for summit steward programs throughout the northeast through her leadership of the Adirondack High Peaks Summit Stewardship Program. She is an

educator, motivator, manager, scientist, and botanist all rolled into one."

On October 22, 2016, Waterman Fund President Charlie Jacobi and founder Laura Waterman presented Julia Goren of Saranac Lake, New York with the 2016 Guy Waterman Alpine

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Fund's Annual Dinner Held in Crawford Notch

By Ryan J. Harvey

Waterman Fund board members, supporters, alpine enthusiasts, and friends gathered for the annual dinner and presentation of the Guy Waterman Alpine Steward Award at the AMC Highland Center in Crawford Notch on October 22, 2016.

Attendees gathered for appetizers and conversation, followed by dinner in the Washburn Room showcasing the stunning mountain photography of the Brad Washburn. After the meal, Board President Charlie Jacobi reviewed projects that the Waterman Fund has supported this year and led discussion regarding the Fund's direction in the coming year. Part of this presentation centered on the potential funding of trail projects in targeted alpine areas using the Waterman Fund endowment to assist in the costly and demanding aspects of alpine trail work. Supporting trail restoration and

stewardship along Franconia Ridge is of particular interest to the Board, where the mission of the Waterman Fund grew out of the devotion, exemplary work, and stewardship of Laura and Guy. Participants discussed in small groups and offered insightful comments, feedback, and encouragements to the Board.

The evening culminated with the awarding of the 2016 Guy Waterman Alpine Steward Award to Julia Goran, Adirondack Mountain Club's Education Director and Summit Steward Coordinator. For her efforts in strengthening the Adirondack Summit Steward Program and fostering it's long-term vitality, Julia was presented with the framed, original artwork, *Diapensia*, by Paul Smith's College professor and artist Lee Ann Sporn. Julia was joined by family, friends, and colleagues that made the trek from the Adirondacks, some of whom were current and former summit stewards working under her tutelage. Please read the article above on Julia's award and accomplishments.

The gathering ended with participants returning to their respective homes and evening accommodations amid blustery fall weather in which the higher mountains saw some of the first substantial snow of the year.

We hope you can join us next year for the annual dinner to share in the camaraderie of mountain enthusiasts and stewards of the wild.

Alpine Steward Award Nominations!

To nominate someone for the Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Award, please send nomination letters to the Waterman Fund (forms available on our website), citing specific examples of the nominee's stewardship of the Northeast's wilderness, along with other relevant personal or professional experience. If you have nominated someone in the past, the nomination remains in our files and is reviewed annually. **Nominations are due January 15, 2017.**

· · · MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS · · ·

RYAN J. HARVEY joins the board from New Hampshire where he homesteads 28 acres along the South Branch of the Asquamchumauke River with his partner Bethann Weick. Ryan is a licensed professional forester, land manager, and trails consultant. He has worked various backcountry stewardship positions in the White Mountains, Adirondacks, and Berkshires, including nine years serving in the Pemigewasset District of the White Mountain National Forest. Now working as a forester, he oversees land management of both private and public lands. As a trail consultant he continues to work with New Hampshire towns and residents to build and maintain recreational trails. Ryan also sits on the board of directors of Rumney Ecological Systems/Pemi-Baker Land Trust.

WILL KEMEZA teaches English in the field-based “Rivers and Revolutions” program, at Concord-Carlisle High School in Concord MA. Will has worked in the backcountry for the Appalachian, Green, and Randolph Mountain Clubs, and as a program manager for The Trustees of Reservations. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School, where his studies centered on religion and ecology. He lives with his wife, Charlotte, their two boys, a dog, and a couple dozen chickens in Harvard, MA.

BRENDAN WILTSIE has a deep connection to the Adirondack mountains. He spent ten seasons working in the Adirondack backcountry, first on Poke-O-Moonshine mountain, then as a Summit Steward, and finally as the Johns Brook Property Coordinator. Brendan is the second longest serving caretaker of Johns Brook Lodge (JBL), a



From left: Brendan Wiltzie, Will Kemeza, Ryan Harvey.

distinction he received while also attending graduate school in Canada. Somehow he convinced his graduate supervisor to finish his research and writing while living in the Adirondack backcountry. Lodge guests were often surprised to see him working on a computer, even more surprised to find that he was writing a Ph.D. thesis on the response of lake ecosystems to recent climate change.

While working as a Summit Steward Brendan developed a passion for the alpine zone and wild places. He continues to help spread the message of alpine stewardship through richly detailed images of alpine plants. Besides serving on the board of The Waterman Fund he is also a founding member of Adirondack Wilderness Advocates, a grassroots organization focused on the protection of Adirondack Wilderness areas. Brendan currently works for the Ausable River Association as the Science & Stewardship Director and teaches as an Adjunct Professor at Paul Smith's College.

Alpine Steward Award ... from previous page

Steward Award at the Fund's annual dinner at Appalachian Mountain Club's Highland Center.

In 2006, Julia first became involved in the High Peaks Summit Stewardship Program, a partnership between ADK, the Adirondack Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. She spent her first two summers surveying the alpine zone for New York's rarest plants and took over management of the program in 2008. She continues in that role today, and also serves as Education Director for ADK. In her short tenure, Goren's leadership has significantly expanded the professional summit steward program and instilled a high standard for the roles served by stewards in informal education, research and trail work.

She led a qualitative evaluation on the effectiveness of the stewardship program by using a repeat photography study to measure if alpine vegetation was recovering on steward-



staffed summits. This evaluation was the first of its kind in the northeast, and the program is now a model for evaluating the effectiveness of other stewardship programs. Under Julia's leadership, an endowment for the summit stewardship program has also been started, the #507 Fund.

During her time as a steward she has talked to almost 40,000 people, hiked over 7500 miles and has summited Mt. Marcy over 300 times. If those statistics don't support it, I'm not sure what will but Julia is very passionate and dedicated to the efforts of this program.

She grew up in Nyack, NY a town in Rockland County just north of New York City, a piece of information she is always a little apprehensive to give up. She is the daughter of a pharmaceutical manufacturer (father) and a Montessori School administrator (mother) who initiated Julia's love for

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Exploring Diverse Ecosystems

By Ryan J. Harvey

On a sunny Friday, the 22nd of July, with a forecasted threat of severe thunderstorms, fifteen Waterman Fund supporters, friends, and board members gathered for the Fourth Annual Waterman Fund Field Trip. Participants once again joined David Govatski, US Forest Service retiree and avid naturalist, this time on the summit of Cannon Mountain via the Tramway.

After the group took a quick and seamless ride on the Tram, accompanied by stunning views, we enjoyed presentations by Philip A. Bryce, NH State Parks Director and by John DeVivo, General Manager of Cannon Mountain. The group learned about the history and legacy of the NH State Park system and, in particular, of Franconia Notch State Park and Cannon Mountain. Highlights included the movement that led to the Park's establishment, the Notch's present condition, and future plans.

From there, David Govatski led the group out the Kinsman Ridge Trail to explore the alpine and sub-alpine attributes of this unique ecosystem, including the interesting note that much of this section of the trail passes through a sub-alpine sloping fen. (For those of you who are aficionados of such, a sub-alpine sloping fen is a steeply sloped peat

mat located on the brow of a high-elevation cliff, which can harbor mosses, sedges, and dwarf heath shrub bogs.) The group made several stops along the way discussing topics of recreation management in popular and accessible areas such as Cannon Mountain, ecosystem dynamics, public education regarding wildland ethics, and the means of bringing such education to diverse visitors such as those that come to Cannon.

Our short hike took us to the overlook at Cannon Cliff, where David highlighted the glacial chatter marks left by the last glaciation on the bedrock. From here, it was hard to ignore the immense majesty of Franconia Ridge, which dominated the eastern horizon with its dramatic escarpments. Laura gave the group an abbreviated history of her and Guy's work up on Franconia Ridge, work which eventually led to the ongoing legacy of alpine stewardship, and to the creation of the Waterman Fund after Guy's death in 2000.

After lunch, the group descended via another ride in the Tram, and our field trip ended in an exemplary lowland ecosystem: a northern hardwood, old growth forest that escaped the loggers' ax. The uniqueness of this forest did not catch the eye immediately, yet with attention one could recognize the old growth characteristics: for example, the large diameter sugar maples, and the pit and mound formations that have been created from fallen and decayed



trees. This final highlight of Franconia Notch State Park was a surprise to the group – virgin growth only a stone's throw away from the highway. And the other surprise of the day? That the thunderstorms did indeed hold off, allowing all to revel in a stunningly beautiful summer day in the White Mountains.

Please look ahead to next year's field trip, to a location

yet to be determined. These outings are a fun way to connect to fellow alpine enthusiasts, share a love of the mountains, and discuss emerging issues within the context of alpine stewardship and wildness.

Photo at left: Waterman Fund friends descend to Profile Mountain through a garden of cairns, illustrating the rock stacking challenges articulated on pages 2-3. (Charlie Jacobi photo)

In Memoriam



We were saddened to hear of the passing of husband and wife, William (Bill) and Iris Baird in 2016. Bill died on February 19 at the age of 92. Iris passed away on July 7, at the age of 86.

Both Bill and Iris loved the White Mountains of New Hampshire. They settled in this region by chance, looking for a home with a great peak at its center, they explored the Adirondacks with its grand Mount Marcy and the Maine woods with its majestic Katahdin. A job offer from the Groveton paper mill prompted them to make northern NH and its imposing Mount Washington home.

Bill and Iris each created their own legacy in these mountains. Bill was a technical climber, trail builder, and for several decades, author of the North Country section of the AMC's *White Mountain Guide*. Iris, passionate about alpine flowers, hiked and explored our highest elevations with Miriam Underhill, who photographed alpine flowers for the first printing of *Mountain Flowers of New England* published in 1964 by the Appalachian Mountain Club. Iris, also fascinated by the fire towers that once graced many of New Hampshire's mountains, co-authored with Chris Haartz, *A Field Guide to New Hampshire Firetowers*. First published in 1992 for the Third Annual Conference of the Forest Fire Lookout Association, this one-of-a-kind publication, was reprinted in 2005.

You can learn more about Bill and Iris in the profile piece, *A Conversation with Iris and William Baird* published in our 2014 newsletter and found on our website at watermanfund.org in the News' archives.

—Kim Votta; photo source: Baird Family

Thank You

~Laura Waterman from Page Hollow 

Rick Sayles, former board member, who continues to guide our financial path with his sage advice.

Annie Bellerose, former board member, who wrote the book proposal that found us a wonderful publisher, the University Press of New England, for our anthology of winning essays.

Amy Seidl, Lecturer in Environmental Studies at the University of Vermont, for generously writing the ideal foreword for *New Wilderness Voices*, our anthology of our essay contest winners.

Christine Woodside for her very competent overseeing of every stage of *New Wilderness Voices*, and, as *Appalachia's* editor, enthusiastically continuing to publish our winning essays in the December issue.

Rebecca Oreskes, Annie Bellerose, Val Stori, Michael Wejchert, and Bethany Taylor, who diligently read for the Essay Contest, and a special thanks to Bethany who conscientiously manages the contest.

Anne McKinsey of AMCK Web & Print Design for the classy work she does on *The Alpine Steward* and for our website.

Brian Post for ensuring our website is safe and secure!

Philip Bryce, N.H. State Parks Director and John ("JD") DeVivo, Manager of Franconia Notch State Park for speaking to us on the top of Cannon Mountain for our Field Trip, and to the incomparable **Dave Govatski** for being our guide to Cannon's alpine world, fostering discussion on its continuing protection, and introducing us to the old growth forest in Franconia Notch.

Cristin Bailey of the U.S. Forest Service for coming on the Field Trip and knowledgeably answering our many questions.

Dense Spoor and Natalie Stephenson at the AMC's Highland Center for providing meeting space for our autumn board meeting and for once again so competently hosting our annual dinner in the Washburn Room.

Rick Paradis, former board president, whose continuing support is invaluable, particularly as he guides our thinking with the Wildness Panel.

Ken Linge and the Blake Memorial Library in E. Corinth, VT, for providing welcomed meeting space for our spring meeting.

Stones ... from page 3

Surveys conducted by MERE graduate students before signs were placed on the mountain indicated that 49% of the hikers knew what cairns were, but 82% were not aware of the impact of destroying or building cairns or that it was illegal. Preliminary results of post sign installation surveys suggest a significant increase in awareness of cairns with hikers commenting that they now knew the reasons why they should not stack stones. Many survey participants made comments indicating that they had noticed the cairns before but never realized what they were for. Although stone stacking has been a practice for millennia for navigational purposes, today's average weekend hiker has little awareness of the function and

importance of cairns in the alpine zone. Even after seeing the signs, the term 'cairn' was not one that hikers remembered, but they did grasp the concept of not stacking stones. Pictures speak a thousand words. There really are good reasons why we should not stack stones!

Like the message of 'Do the rock walk,' 'why shouldn't you stack stones' could also be a message uniformly shared. Such a deliberate and consistent educational effort is one additional way we can mitigate the potential damage associated with the significant increase in new hikers in the alpine zone. This educational effort would help make hikers aware, keep them safe, and thus enhance their alpine experience.

Alpine Steward Award ... from page 11

the Adirondacks with family vacations to Indian Lake at a young age.

When Julia was 12 she climbed Cascade, her first High Peak, and absolutely fell in love with the area. She describes this hike as a very defining moment in her love for the outdoors and still has a journal entry from when she was 12 describing how meaningful that experience was to her. She went on to hike the 46 High Peaks, a journey she shared with her mother, aunt and cousin. Julia had no idea she would someday be making a living on top of many of those very summits.

Alpine plants have a plethora of adaptations to help them survive the harsh, unforgiving environment in which they live. Julia's variety of past experiences gives her the extra edge in her own survival in the alpine zone. Julia earned a Bachelors of Arts in Medieval History from Williams College, a good degree to fall back on when the samurai swords start showing up on the backs of hikers (true story). Even more pertinent though is her Masters of Science in Environmental Studies from Antioch New England where she concentrated in environmental education, a degree she uses daily. But outside of formal training, Julia has had a variety of other life

experiences. She worked on a farm in Connecticut, worked for the Student Conservation Association doing environmental education and trail work, she has been a substitute teacher and even a barista at a coffee shop. She worked for the National Park Service in Arizona at Wupatki National Monument and hiked the long distance hiking trail, Camino de Santiago in Spain and also part of the Appalachian Trail. All these past experiences have given Julia the tools to adapt to being on the mountain and the ability to connect with hikers of all backgrounds as they pass through the summits.

Julia's position has become more administrative over the years but she can still day hike Mt. Marcy faster than most who attempt it. As for the future of the program that she loves so much, she hopes to keep expanding the natural and social science research that the Summit Stewards take part in and continue to work with more partners. Over the years Julia has become a part of New York's alpine tundra, her own species in New York's rarest ecosystem and along the way she has given so many of her tiny, vascular and non-vascular friends a voice, a voice that they had never had before.

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