

# The Alpine Steward

NEWSLETTER OF THE GUY WATERMAN ALPINE STEWARDSHIP FUND

November 2005 Issue IV

## Reaching The Summit

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CHUCK WOOSTER,  
GWASF PRESIDENT

I remember rounding a corner of the road in August of 1975 and seeing Mount Washington for the first time, looming in the windshield as we drove up towards the Ammonoosuc Ravine trailhead. I turned to my Dad and made the rather obvious (it seemed to me) observation that the mountain was too big to be climbed.

I was only eight years old at the time. My Dad responded by saying, "Well, let's just get started and see how it goes." So we did, and it went, and before we were up and back down again, I was lost to the mountains for life.

Who among us hasn't stood at the base of a mountain somewhere in the world, looked up, and judged the summit to be out of reach?

I confess that I had a similar (if more metaphorical) feeling five years ago while sitting at the round, pine tabletop in Laura Waterman's kitchen in East Corinth. A small group of enthusiasts had just decided to take what had started as a simple memorial fund to the life and work of Guy Waterman and transform it into an active, permanent endowment for the protection of the Northeast's alpine areas. We set a goal of raising \$250,000 by the end of 2005.

I was carried away by the spirit of the moment and gladly joined the team.



The Board of Directors; L-R Front row: Laura Waterman, Mary Margaret Sloan, Rebecca Oreskes; Middle row: Louis Cornell, Doug Mayer, Carl Demrow; Back row: Chuck Wooster, Dennis Shaffer.

I suspected privately, however, that this particular summit was going to remain out of reach. Few of us had any fundraising experience, and none of us thought we moved in the circles where this sort of money seemed to be available for the asking.

So I'm gratified to announce that, as of October 10th, 2005, gifts and pledges to the Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund total \$258,000. We've reached our first summit!

Nearly 400 people have contributed to the Fund so far. Many have made philanthropic gifts for the first time in their lives. Fourteen people have served or are serving on the board of directors. Dozens of you have volunteered your time, offered advice, or donated services. This is an extraordinary achievement made possible by many, many people.

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Where will the trail lead from here? The board of directors will be spending the next few months addressing exactly this question, refining both our vision for the future and the specifics of how best to support the clubs and agencies who work on behalf of the alpine peaks. We know that we will continue fundraising. Last year, we were only able to fund a third of the grant requests we received, and we had to turn down a number of worthy stewardship projects. We expect the upcoming years to be equally if not more competitive.

As I write this letter, we have an extraordinarily generous offer on the table: every contribution between now and the end of 2005 will be matched, dollar for dollar, up to \$18,000, by a friend of the Fund. More details are inside this newsletter. There's never been a better time to support the Fund.

As many of you know, Guy Waterman died in the belief that his work on behalf of the Northeast's mountains had been largely ineffective. I think it's fair to say that our efforts here would have changed his mind. A quarter million dollar endowment for alpine stewardship seemed unthinkable five years ago. Now it's not only on hand but also accompanied by an enlarged circle of friends and supporters working on behalf of our beloved high peaks. Thanks to all of you for being part of the Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund, and for caring so much about the Northeast's mountains.

## On Entering The Age Of Stewardship

LAURA WATERMAN

*"In the Northeast the age of exploration has receded into the past, as has the age of trailbuilding. The age of stewardship has dawned."*

I wrote these words in the winter of 2003, when I was working on the Preface for a new edition of *Forest and Crag*. But, what does it really mean to be entering the "age of stewardship"? Are we entering this age because we have to? Because, if we don't take care of what we love we're going to lose it? Have we finally evolved to realize we have a responsibility to the land and the mountains?

Twenty-five years ago, Guy and I started working on the Franconia Ridge Trail, a 1.8-mile stretch of mountaintop footpath that was being used very hard. We had little idea what we were getting into or where this trail work would take us. We weren't thinking in broad philosophical terms of stewardship, but we saw that the land was scarred by an increasing army of hikers who had come to the mountains in the 1970s. Something had to be done.

We and others in the clubs and public agencies learned the practical on-the-ground ways to take care of alpine trails, and the scars began to heal. Guy and I were always glad when hikers stopped to ask us what we were doing when we repaired a cairn or added a stone to a scree wall. "See these tiny plants?" we'd say, waving a hand to include the whole sweeping beauty of the ridge.

"We're working to make sure they can keep on growing here." The hikers would look around with widening eyes, and we'd see in their faces a new comprehension and know that our message of stewardship had taken root. Though we hadn't put it in these words at the time, Guy and I had transitioned from "users" to "stewards." That was what we saw happen in action to these passing hikers, who, after they left us, would bend to pick a rock out of the path and replace it on the scree wall or cairn.

A message, a philosophy, is coming clear: by taking care of the trails, of the mountains, we are turning ourselves from "users" to "stewards." An age of stewardship is dawning. As I see it, all of us are learning to be good stewards not just for the present generation, but for future generations to come. We're entering the age of stewardship together.

## Welch: A Mountain For Learning

NAT SCRIMSHAW

Once again small, craggy Welch Mountain at the entrance to Waterville Valley has become what Guy and Laura Waterman described in *Backwoods Ethics* as a “hotbed of ... experimental approaches to onsite education and public involvement.” And again this is thanks to the initiative of an “extremely shrewd ecologist-teacher by the name of Dick Fortin.” (p. 206)

Many will recall the summit stewardship work of the Sandwich Range Conservation Association (SRCA) in 1991 and 1992. SRCA hired Dick, then an Antioch New England graduate student, to develop a strategy to protect the rapidly deteriorating outcrop communities on Welch’s lower ledges. His work led to a successful effort that combined physical changes (using stones and brush to delineate ‘recovery areas’), interpretive information, personal contact, and hiker involvement.

Thirteen years later a unique funding arrangement negotiated by GWASF board member Doug Mayer partnered Dick as an independent ecologist with Welch’s traditional maintainer, the Waterville Valley Athletic and Improvement Association (WVAIA), along with the Waterville Foundation and the Waterman Fund. Add to this support

from the United States Forest Service (USFS) and renewed involvement from the Antioch New England Graduate School (ANE), and the stage was set in 2005 for a productive new program.

Dick hired Antioch graduate student Chris Hilke to be the 2005 Summit Steward, and Chris has proved to be as shrewd and creative as Dick was in 1991-92. Beginning in June, Chris quickly surveyed the trail’s hiking patterns, repaired and added to strategically placed piles of rock and brush, more clearly defined the trail route, and spoke to hundreds of hikers. Working with his advisory committee and USFS, he also developed new interpretive material and added a summit kiosk so that the ‘recovery area’ is clearly marked from both directions.

Chris also confirmed Dick’s 1991 observation: many of Welch’s numerous visitors are beginning hikers. This makes it an ideal site for elementary education in the basics of alpine stewardship.

*(Welch’s advisory committee: Richard Fortin, Chris Hilke, Rebecca Oreskes, Jenny Preiss, Nat Scrimshaw, Tom Wessels, and Laura Waterman. For more information on Welch and other mountain stewardship projects, go to [www.mountainsteward.net](http://www.mountainsteward.net).)*



Dick Fortin (center) meets with Advisors atop Welch Mountain.



2005 Summit Steward and Antioch graduate student Chris Hilke examines an alpine recovery area.

## Some Special Thank-Yous From Paige Hollow

**Nancy Hirshberg** and **Brian Rehrig**, for strategic advice at critical moments. **Sue Painter**, for giving so generously of her time and positive energy while serving on our Board. **Fred Stott**, for his sage advice, support, and all-round friendship. **Charles W. Sloan**, for valuable legal council. **Robert Sobel**, for his generous gift of books (Laura’s *Losing the Garden*) that we can give as thank-yous to our generous donors. **Peter Antos-Ketcham** for maintaining our website. **Laurie Rinaldi**, for designing our Fifth Anniversary newsletter.



Laura Waterman and Carl Demrow present Lester Kenway with a framed Peter Cole photograph of Katahdin.

## Lester Kenway Receives 2005 Alpine Steward Award

DOUG MAYER

The Waterman Fund presented its 2005 Alpine Steward Award at the group's annual dinner this past April in Bethel, Maine. The award is given each year to a person or organization that has demonstrated a long-term commitment to protecting the physical and spiritual qualities of the northeast's mountain wilderness.

This year's recipient is Lester Kenway of Bangor, Maine. Kenway currently serves as Program Coordinator for the Maine Conservation Corps, and is the owner of Trail Services, LLC.

Kenway's stewardship of alpine areas dates back three decades. After leading trail crews in Maine, he rose to become Trails Supervisor of Baxter State Park, a position he held for 22 years. During that time, he pioneered a number of trail-building techniques that reduced impact on alpine areas and became accepted as standard practice around the country.

In nominating Lester Kenway for the award, Baxter State Park Trails Supervisor Paul Sannicandro wrote, "Lester's innovation allowed him to become a pioneer in alpine zone trail reconstruction methods ... he mentored hundreds of volunteer trail workers and has left a great legacy of fine work in the alpine zone of Maine's great mountain, Katahdin." Kenway has also trained crews for the Student Conservation Association, the National Park Service, US Forest Service and countless trail clubs.

Board member Laura Waterman noted: "Lester Kenway has truly revolutionized

trail work above treeline with his Griphoist. Like magic, this tool can lift and transport large rocks through the air from one place to another, without damaging a single plant. For the careful and caring thought behind his invention, and for his many years training and inspiring an entire generation of trail workers, Lester has surely achieved this award, many times over."

In accepting his award at the Waterman Fund annual dinner, Kenway commented, "I must confess that when I was inventing the alpine tripod system, I was totally focused on solving a problem. I did not realize until much later that this technique had not been used anywhere else before. The Guy Waterman Alpine Stewardship award helped me realize how many people have benefited from this rock moving method over the past sixteen or so years."

Kenway received a dramatic, framed photograph of Katahdin in winter, by noted mountain photographer Peter Cole of New London, N.H.

### Nominations

To nominate a candidate for the 2006 Alpine Steward Award, please go to:

[WWW.WATERMANFUND.ORG](http://WWW.WATERMANFUND.ORG)

### Past Award Winners:

2004 Ed Ketchledge  
2003 Roger Collins

## Fund Board Welcomes New Members

### LOUIS CORNELL

The Waterman Fund is pleased to announce the appointment of two distinguished newcomers to its Board of Directors.

After spending the past seven years living with his family in the San Juan Islands of Washington, Dennis Shaffer recently joined the Board upon his return to northern Vermont. A former Executive Director of the Green Mountain Club, Dennis is currently Northern New England Field Office Director for the Trust for Public Land. He has also worked with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Dennis now resides in East Calais, Vermont.

Mary Margaret Sloan worked for the American Hiking Society from 1995 - 2005, first as Conservation Director and then as President. She is currently the Alumni Director for the Student Conservation Association in Charlestown, N.H. Mary Margaret attributes her connection to high alpine areas to early hikes in the White Mountains on family vacations.

Directors are appointed for three-year terms, which may be renewed once. We're grateful for this fine opportunity of welcoming our new colleagues, as we acknowledge the valuable services of past Directors.



New Board Members, Dennis Shaffer, and Mary Margaret Sloan.

## Jim Anderson Offers Challenge To Donors

### CHUCK WOOSTER

Donate by December 31st and your gift will be matched dollar for dollar!

Jim Anderson, who lives just up the road from Laura Waterman in Corinth, Vermont, has made an extraordinarily generous pledge to the Fund: he will match, dollar for dollar, every contribution that the Fund receives between now and the end of the year, up to a total of \$18,000.

This will be the largest one-time gift that the Fund has received in its first five years, assuming, of course, that the rest of us can meet Jim's challenge. So step right up! Send in your gift by the end of 2005, and it will be worth twice as much to the Fund.

Jim first met the Watermans in 1990, when he began working for the Appalachian Mountain Club in its shelter system. His AMC career spanned three years and included hutmaster stints at Zealand Falls and Mizpah huts. Jim, his wife, Cynthia Monroe, and their two children now live in Corinth, where Jim is a business entrepreneur who creates worldwide digital maps.

"I'm so pleased to be part of the Fund's efforts," said Jim. "The mountains have given me so much in my life, and I'm glad to have the chance to give something back."

Thanks, Jim, for challenging us all to do the same.



## “Is Ray There?”

FRED STOTT

On Friday, April 8, 2005, I went to bed early. Tired from a day’s physical activity I also had mental fatigue from wrestling with the question, “How can I best help the Waterman Alpine Stewardship Fund trustees achieve their declared mission?”

*The Age of Exploration has receded into the past. The Age of Stewardship has dawned.*

I didn’t fall into a really deep sleep. I was restless. Suddenly the phone rang. I waited through thirteen rings, glanced at the clock that said 2:00 AM. Then, silently cursing the caller, I said, “Hello?” An unfamiliar voice responded, “Is Ray there?” My terse “No” terminated the call. But the question of how best to advance the Waterman Fund lingered. So, with an anonymous nod to an anonymous Ray, I wrote the following. And after the writing I tripled the amount I had planned to pledge to the Fund.

\* \* \*

Included in papers already written, but which I cannot locate in my files, is a listing of the amount, in square miles, of alpine space in the four states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Cumulatively, while including some in each state, it is a small amount. But it is extremely important space and for many people, it is a jewel.

I next thought of the reasons why people hike and climb. There are two key elements: reaching the summit, whether it be a close by Holt Hill or Mount Washington or Denali or Mount Everest. The second element is the view from up high, where open summits provide sweeping vistas.

In turn, that moves the thinking back to the word “jewel.” While jewels can be sizeable, the thoughts that come first to mind are “of great value” and “small.” Linking the idea of alpine areas being limited in size and the fact that for many people the motivation to climb is “summitting” and “the view from the summit”—that linkage seems natural and appealing.

This line of thinking is reflected by the publicity attendant on reaching a summit. Vivid in my memory was the worldwide public acclaim for the summiting of Mount Everest by Hillary and Tenzing in 1953. Further, that acclaim has steadily stimulated the desire to reach the top of peaks throughout the world and in growing numbers. Immediately to mind comes the listing of the 4,000-footers, which has spawned many a version of the same, along with steadily growing membership. Or the Appalachian Trail, where the goal is achievement of the defined distance and the exposure to different people, different climates and different locations over a prolonged span of time ... where the experience is the goal. Human beings love to record their success in achieving defined goals.

So, I return to the thought that stewardship of the alpine areas is indeed a tangible goal of great importance. Our alpine areas are small in scope and, in effect, are a jewel. And, after committing these thoughts to paper, I have indeed tripled the amount I had planned to give to the Waterman Fund.



Peter Forbes; author, photographer and Co-founder of The Center for Whole Communities.

## How The Waterman Fund Began

PETER FORBES

When a great tree falls in the woods, the time of sadness is followed by expectation for what will grow in the new found light. I remember sitting at the dining table at Barra sometime in the early spring of 2000. There was still snow on the ground but we were bathed in warm light, and our words flowed naturally. How can the work continue, I asked Laura? Guy was no longer with us, but that didn't mean his work was done. I saw a need more than ever for Guy and Laura's wilderness ethics and their spirit of generosity and commitment. I knew there were many, many young people who yearned for their words and for whom Guy was an especially powerful role model.

As a New Englander, I was not willing to lose the work of such an important New England voice. I knew there were others who shared Guy's voice, but I didn't know how Guy's passing could become a point of light to shine and create new growth. Perhaps a small foundation could be created that might support future generations of wild souls who have not forgotten the alpine ways, who still find their source in the wind, touch it in stones polished by mountain streams, recognize its taste in the smell of cold mountain air.

Guy knew that everything you pile up outside your heart is lost, and so it seemed perfect to ask his many friends to give up just a little bit so that a greater lineage of gifts could continue. The fund was established quickly, thanks to the care and attention of Lisa Cashdan, and I was honored to make the first gift, out of my love and appreciation of the voice of life that spoke so powerfully in Guy Waterman.

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