

# Merrymeeting News

The Newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay • P.O. Box 233 • Richmond Maine 04357

## WINTER 2003

### *To Preserve, Protect and Improve the Unique Ecosystems of Merrymeeting Bay.*

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Support comes from members' tax-deductible donations and grants.

#### Education

Hands Around the Bay, Speaker Series, field trips.

#### Conservation & Stewardship

Protecting natural resources through private and public ownership, easements and stewardship.

#### Membership Events

Paddle tours of the Bay, field trips, conservation meetings, potluck suppers and shoreline clean-ups.

#### Research and Advocacy

Water quality, data collection, toxics, fisheries restoration.

#### 2003 Steering Committee

Frank Burroughs, Bowdoinham  
Dee and Clancy Cummins, Richmond  
Steve Eagles, Dresden  
Ed Friedman, Bowdoinham  
DeWitt John, Brunswick  
Kathleen McGee, Bowdoinham  
Bill Milam, Woolwich  
Leon Ogrodnik, Harpswell  
Steve Pelletier, Topsham  
Steve Taylor, Bowdoinham  
Peter Vickery, Richmond

#### On-Line

<http://knox.link75.org/mmb/fomb@gwi.net>

## LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES FOR 2002

Each legislative session brings a plethora of bills, only a handful of which the public hears about. Coverage of the State House is, at best, meager. Each year I continue to be awed by how 2000 bills, and more, can churn through those hallowed halls without us ever really knowing the impact they have on our lives, indeed, our daily lives.

All the adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, all the posturing and pompousness, all the confrontation and conciliation, the compromise and deadlock all hold incredible significance for each of us in the end, yet we drive down the street, watch TV, ski, read, and sleep blissfully unaware of the changes that await us.

In part I would like to report bills in this session that may affect the Bay and the surrounding areas. But I would like to also give readers an opportunity to see the breadth of issues that are covered, and the intensity of philosophical debate that gets played out between well-heeled lobbyists, wealthy corporations, selfish special interests, citizens, and citizen organizations.

Also of interest are coded language and co-opted issues, so turned around that one would have a difficult time determining whether a bill may protect and defend or attack and undermine our precious and oft time endangered natural resources. It helps to know the legislative roster. A bill submitted by one legislator who may be an environmental manager for a paper company entitled, say: An Act to Amend Subdivisions, may relax laws for the paper industry to liquidate land. On the other hand, the same title submitted by a librarian could restrict the ability to turn areas of perfect beauty poised on the edge of a fertile wetland into housing developments. Looking at the cast will likely give you an idea of the quality of the movie.

Some bills of which our members may wish to be aware and weigh in range from land protection to toxics. By the time this newsletter is in your hand some of these bills may have already been heard.

#### Land Protection:

Land for Maine's Future, a bond overwhelmingly passed a few years ago, gives Maine the ability to purchase and protect land (Maine has one of the smallest proportions of public to privately owned land in the country).

There are three bills currently before the Agriculture Committee that will strictly curtail LMF's ability to continue to acquire land for the public.

- LD 92: An Act to Require Joint Special Committee Approval for Land for Maine's Future Land (Rep. Sherman)
- LD 94: An Act to Limit State Funds for Easements (Rep. Joy)
- LD 176: An Act to Require the State Hold All Land for LMF (Rep. Carr)

There is also another bill, not yet printed, restricting land acquired by the state: LD 348: An Act to Limit State Land Ownership (Rep. Shorey)

Also under the auspices of the Agriculture Committee are several bills concerning children's exposure to toxics, use of pesticides and notification thereof. Bills to help the future of farming in Maine, create the Kennebec River Trail, and give preference to wood and paper products that are derived from sustainably managed forests have also been proposed.

#### Alternative Energy:

In our last newsletter we discussed how valuable "true" homeland security is; protecting Maine's food sources, promoting local, organically grown foods, and generating our own energy through sustainable, alternative means.

Several bills have been put forth to that end. Representatives Adams and Strimling and Senators Hall and Brennan have submitted several energy-wise bills from creating a Commission on Comprehensive Energy Planning (the Legislature loves commissions, especially as a first step!), to conservation of energy and finally promoting renewable energy.

*con't on back page*

## SWAN ISLAND BUDGET CUTS

For years a day trip to or overnight stay on Swan Island has been sure to bring sightings of deer, turkey, bald eagles and other island residents.

Future public access may be restricted or even eliminated, however, if current budget proposals are approved. The State is thinking of eliminating all of the ranger positions on Swan Island, and will "deactivate" it. This would eliminate the ferry service to the island, the truck tours, official camping, educational activities, as well as wildlife habitat protection.

The FOMB Steering Committee has contacted local legislators and MDIF&W representatives to stress that Swan Island is an excellent way for the public to enjoy the Kennebec and Merrymeeting Bay. FOMB also testified at an Appropriations Committee hearing, and stated that the amount saved with this cut would be way out of proportion to services lost.

Without ranger presence it's possible that vandalism and poaching would increase. If you've enjoyed Swan Island and have opinions on these cuts or have suggestions for ways to maintain services with less money, we encourage you to contact your legislators and/or the new MDIF&W commissioner: Danny Martin, MDIF&W, Statehouse Station 33, August, ME 04333 with a copy to Ken Elowe at the same address.

*Warren Whitney*

Winter 2003  
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February, 2003



### *Merrymeeting News*

is the newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 223, Richmond, Maine 04357, and is published seasonally.

*Merrymeeting News* is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay. For information call Warren Whitney, Executive Director, at 666-3376.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- MAR 12** **BIRD SOUNDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY.**  
Will Broussard, *Cornell Certified Natural Sound Recordist.*  
7:00 p.m., Beam Classroom, Visual Arts Center, Bowdoin College
- APR 9** **WILD RICE COMMUNITY DYNAMICS.**  
John Lichter, *Bowdoin College Assistant Professor,* Julie Grinvalsky and Tim Pasakarnis, *Bowdoin College Students.*  
7:00 p.m., Beam Classroom, Visual Arts Center, Bowdoin College
- MAY 14** **THE KENNEBEC ICE INDUSTRY.**  
Eleanor Everson, *Ice Historian.*  
7:00 p.m., Beam Classroom, Visual Arts Center, Bowdoin College
- MAY 17** **MERRYMEETING BAY CLEANUP**  
Call 666-3376 for more information.
- MAY 20** **BAY DAY**  
Field trips for area 4th grade students. Call 666-3376 for more information.

Contact us at 207-666-3376 or [fomb@zwi.net](mailto:fomb@zwi.net) for more information.

## BAY GEOLOGIC MAPPING TO CONTINUE

If you are out amongst your daffodils and tulips this spring and you see a car with state license plates driving back and forth in the area don't panic, you are hopefully not under surveillance by the Office of Homeland Security. Your land, however, may be, not by OHS but instead by Tom Weddle of the Maine Geological Survey, a branch of the Department of Conservation.

After a few summers away from his home territory (Brunswick) Tom will be returning in an effort to complete the mapping of surficial geology features in the Merrymeeting Bay area. Mapping of these glacial, marine, and riverine features that sit atop bedrock is done in geographic units defined by our 7.5 minute USGS topographic quadrangles. In the area, Bath, Brunswick, and Lisbon Falls surficial geology maps have already been completed, and the fieldwork for the Bowdoinham quad is done. This summer Tom will be conducting the field survey for the area covered by the Richmond topo. Any courtesy you can extend Tom as far as access to your lands would be appreciated. With Tom's assistance we hope to shortly address the blank geology section of our web site! Tom may be contacted in Augusta at 287-7170 or [thomas.k.weddle@state.me.us](mailto:thomas.k.weddle@state.me.us) with any questions.

*Ed Friedman*

## 2002 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Education

- Bay Day (275 students)
- Hall-Dale on the Bay (100 students)
- Curriculum Binder (10 lesson plans about the Bay for 4th grade)
- Web site updates
- Initiate and facilitate oral history projects on which Heather Perry and Bowdoin College are now working
- Exhibit at Pejepscot Historical Society
- Presentations at Communities of Merrymeeting Bay Business Association annual meeting and League of Women Voters meeting

### Membership

- Paddle Series (25 attendees)
- Speaker Series (400 attendees)
- Source to the Sea Trek (30 attendees)
- Newsletters

### Conservation and Stewardship

#### Acquisitions and Donations

- Bishop - 125 acres, 4,000' shoreline in Bowdoinham
- Palmer Pond - 80 acres, one mile of wetland shoreline in Dresden/Pittston/Alna

#### Easements

- Two easements, 35 acres, 3000' of shoreline
- Six easements in progress, 150 acres

#### Stewardship

- Working to resolve first easement violation (ATV Trail)

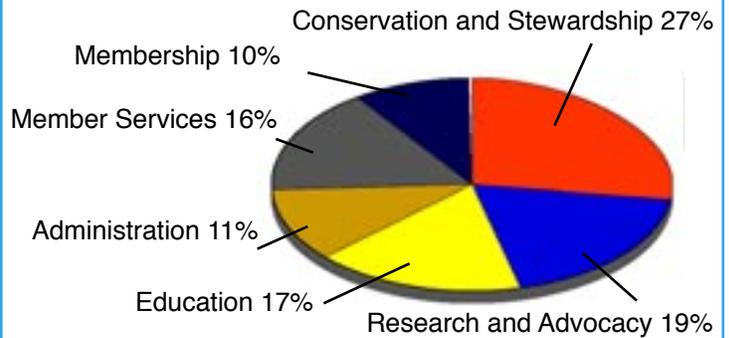
### Research

- Mussel project final report and follow up
- Coordinated on Plant Transect project with Bowdoin College/John Lichter
- Final Sediment data
- Coordinated on Invasive Plant project with The Nature Conservancy
- Boat Count
- Water Quality Monitoring - 13 sites
- Water Quality Monitoring - applying for EPA Certification

### Advocacy (postings, letters, testimony, etc)

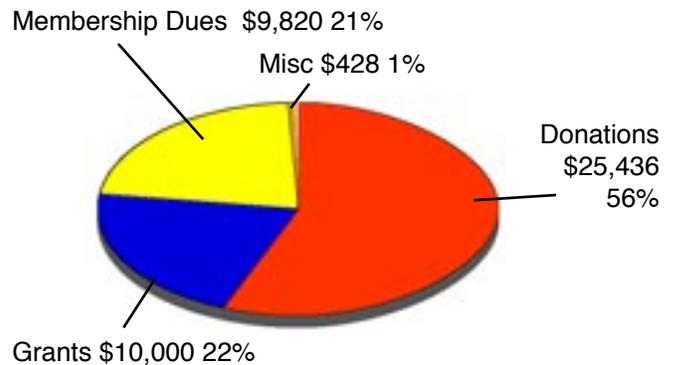
- Speed limit signs
- Merrymeeting Bay sanctuary signs
- SAPPI relicensing
- Kennebec River reclassification
- Distribute "In Harm's Way"
- Bowdoinham marina
- Richmond marina
- Pesticides in and around schools
- Dioxin monitoring program
- Mercury amalgam
- Fort Halifax dam removal
- Kennebec wild salmon genetics
- Baldacci commissioners letter
- Fish consumption advisories

### HOW THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPENDS HIS TIME

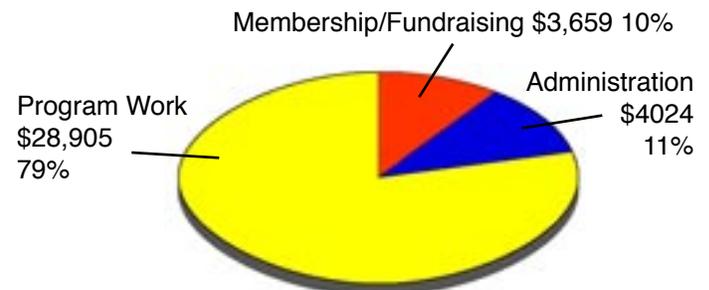


### 2002 FINANCIALS

#### Income



#### Expenses



- Sprawl workshops (Topsham, Dresden, Richmond)
- Identify two Kennebec PCB hotspots, initiate DEP corrective measures at one.

### Primary Partners

- The Nature Conservancy
- Bowdoin College Environmental Studies Department
- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Maine Natural Areas Program
- Friends of Casco Bay
- Maine Toxics Action Coalition
- Applied Biomonitoring
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust

## TIDINGS

A friend from South Carolina likes to talk about what he calls Old Growth Vocabulary. It exists where speakers of American English have lived and interacted with their environments for a long time without too much outside disturbance, thus enabling some unmodern ways of using English to survive.

It is especially a language of local naming. Surprisingly often, it can be traced to obsolete British English--to the way certain words were used three or four hundred years ago in Scotland, Norfolk, Essex, Ulster, and so forth; or were used by certain groups of people, like sailors or country squires or urban guttersnipes.

### 1. *Chops* (noun)

This appears to be a no-brainer, right? All of Merrymeeting Bay, and therefore of the Kennebec and Androscoggin watersheds, funnels out through this narrow passage between two granite headlands. When the tide is falling strongly, it spawns rips and counter currents, hydraulic upwellings and vortexes, as though the river here were shallow, full of barely submerged ledges. It isn't. The agitation is created by a mighty constriction and collision of currents. If there is an upriver wind blowing, the place gets even choppier, and will pitch your small boat around in a way that catches your attention.

That seems to explain how the Chops got its name. But it doesn't.

Used as a noun, *chop* once meant *jaw*. (It was sometimes spelled *chap*, as when, in 1678, the English poet Andrew Marvell warned his girlfriend about the effects of "time's slow-chapped power"--it would make short work of youth and beauty, and so he and she shouldn't shilly-shally.) In more or less modern usage--maybe in a gangster movie from forty or fifty years ago--a tough guy, confronting the same situation that Marvell faced, but less genteel in addressing it, might threaten to give the noncompliant dame a whack across the *chops*--a hard slap in the mouth.

A little more to the point, *chops* was also used figuratively, in relation to landscape. It was basically a narrow passageway, like an alpine gap or valley. And even more to the point, the south end of the English Channel, where it widens out into the Atlantic Ocean, was familiarly known to British sailors and the Lords of the Admiralty as the Chops of the Channel. My exceedingly slender research does not find that *chops* was used much, if at all, in reference to other bodies of water. Alliteration gives to its association with *channel* a kind of inevitability: *the Chops, the Channel*--no need to identify them further.

Of course the usual name for a place like that, where a narrower body of water opens out into a broader one, is a *mouth*. It is always specified--you hear of the mouth of the Kennebec or the mouth of the Mississippi or whatnot. But if you think about it, *mouth* has a different connotation from *jaw* or *chop*. Jaws are studded with teeth and operated by powerful muscles. They may grind, chomp, clench,

and otherwise abuse whatever enters them. *Mouths*, by comparison, are less threatening, and can be used for such gentle purposes as articulation and osculation--the purposes for which Andrew Marvell used, and hoped to use, his. The Kennebec mouth is lipped by Popham Beach, and doesn't look particularly menacing. The Chops is another story.

I am guessing that Englishmen liked the sound of *the Chops of the Channel*. It's the kind of downright phrase that one imagines Winston Churchill (who had a pretty good set of chops himself) would have relished. The Chops of the Channel was rough, tricky water; a lot of ships came to grief there. It was doubly dangerous in time of war: the jaws of death, a place of ambush, without much maneuvering room, a hard passage for a big fleet to sail into or to sail out from, if some good sailors were determined to stop it. Those Chops had history and a lot of bones at the bottom of them. And I am guessing that when the first Englishmen sailed up the Kennebec, through that narrow passage, and out into the unexpected expanse of the Bay (no need for us to specify--we know which bay is *the Bay*), they thought of it as a kind of miniature of the Chops of the Channel. They planted the familiar name on the unfamiliar place, in about the way that a New Yorker might refer to the principle street of some muddy little village in which he found himself marooned as Broadway. It would be a mixture of homesickness and sarcasm.

### 2. *Guzzle* (noun)

My American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (third edition) boasts 350,000 entries and implies that it is just about the last word on the American vocabulary. It lists *guzzle* as a verb, the one that we use to describe how SUV's and fraternity boys satisfy their thirsts. But it does not list it as a noun.

Around the Bay, a *guzzle* is a small creek or channel going back up into a mudflat, or sometimes back into the woods--everybody knows that. The sound of it suggests a kinship with words like *gullet* and *gut*. And so if you enter through the Kennebec mouth and pass through the Chops, and then go up the *guzzle* that runs in toward Pleasant Point, your beautiful trip is following a rather unpleasant logic of ingestion, mastication, and digestion. In England, where the word is now obsolete, a *guzzle* normally referred to something like a gutter or an open sewer--the sort of filthy little channel or ditch that ran along the edges of the unpaved streets of London, or through a pigsty. Preachers were fond of referring to the *guzzle* of depravity in which sinners spent their lives.

But in the New World--at least in the New England portion of it--a *guzzle* was in general a tidal creek, most often one going in behind a beach. I can't find any evidence that the word was used further south than Cape Cod, but I haven't looked very hard. Along the South Carolina coast, what is called a *guzzle* on Cape Cod is called a *swash*, a piece of Old Growth Vocabulary from a different ecosystem.

### 3. *The Grass* (idiom)

The older hunters and guides around the Bay don't talk

much about *the marsh*. They speak instead of *the grass*. Wild rice is, of course, a member of the grass family, while other marsh plants, like bullrush, cat-tails, or spartina are not, so there is a precision in the phrase. But I also find that in England, *the grass* was used by the sporting gentry to designate a hunting field, a place that was good habitat for partridge and pheasant.

It's at least reasonable to assume that this explains the way the term is used on the Bay. In any event, if you hear someone around the Bay say that he intends to *push the grass* at the foot of Swan Island, he doesn't mean that he is planning to pitch hay or sell marijuana in that vicinity. It means that he intends to pole a gunning float through the wild rice on a half tide, in the hopes of jumping a duck.

I suspect that this way of using *grass* is extremely local. The King James Bible tells us that all flesh is grass; it, even more than bread, is the staff of life, because so many of the animals that we eat eat it. And around the Bay, wild rice has that kind of basic, life-sustaining importance--the staff of much local life, characteristic of the Bay and crucial to its ecology. I have never heard or read of any other locality where marshland vegetation in general, or wild rice in particular, is referred to in this way.

#### 4. *Float* (noun).

When the Normans conquered England in 1066, they brought with them their own language, which was French. The language of the conquered people was Germanic. The two languages gradually merged, and in this process, some words of the old Germanic vocabulary experienced a kind of demotion. For example, the Old English word *stol* referred to the piece of furniture that a king sat on. It was replaced by the Old French word *trone*. Our words *stool* and *throne* descend from these, but of course *stool* now refers to something you would sit on to milk a cow, but not to rule a kingdom.

*Float*, as a noun, suffered the same fate that *stol* did. Twelve hundred years ago, in the great Old English poem *Beowulf*, a *flota* was a ship--specifically a slender, swift, double-ended, clinker-built, high-prowed longboat, of the type the Vikings used. From the standpoint of grace and beauty, not many boats, ancient or modern, exceed it. But in the centuries after the Norman Conquest, *flota* or *float* came to refer to the most rudimentary type of watercraft imaginable--a barge, or simply a raft.

In the past five or six hundred years, when the word is used to refer to a boat, that is the kind of boat it invariably refers to: a seagoing shoebox.

The duck-hunting boats that are built and used around the Bay are called gunning floats, and they are not at all boxy or raft-like. They are streamlined and curvilinear, made to slip through the water and the grass with a minimum of friction and noise. Except for the stern, just about every piece of wood in them is bent, beveled, or tapered. How did they come to have a name that seems to do them no justice at all?

Well, I wish I could tell you that it was because somehow the oldest sense of the word had survived, a fragment of the language of *Beowulf*. That would be Old Growth Vocabulary indeed. But there's no evidence to support that.

More likely, the first gunning craft were crude affairs--probably narrow, flat-bottomed, square-ended scows, suitable for poling. In England, boats of this type were generally called punts, but in Ireland they seem to have been called floats, and used in duck hunting. In this vicinity, with its great tradition of boat and ship building, the simple design was modified to suit the local conditions, and gradually evolved into the strange, low-profile and shapely little boats we have now. If you have ever sculled one up a guzzle, or pushed the grass with one, you can appreciate the elegance with which it marries form and function.

And yet it seems to me that even now, the men who make these boats refer to them rather disparagingly, as though they still thought of them as being as utilitarian and clunky as a milking stool. Perhaps that is simply an example of the regional habit of self-effacing understatement, or perhaps it takes an outsider like myself to get excited about something that is so locally familiar.

And it perhaps takes an outsider like myself to get excited about the language that once went out through the Chops of the Channel, came across the Atlantic, passed up through what we think of as *the Chops*, and rooted itself around the Bay.

Old Growth Vocabulary, like Old Growth Forest, is getting hard to find, and unlike Old Growth Forest, it doesn't have any champions. Language mutates constantly; new words appear and old ones disappear. But there is still a lot more Old Growth English around us than we bother to notice, and it expresses and enhances the uniqueness of the place that we inhabit.

*Franklin Burroughs*

*Tidings is a regular feature of Merrymeeting News*

*The older hunters and guides around the Bay don't talk much about the marsh. They speak instead of the grass.*

## YEAR END REPORT

In the work that many of us do we stand upon the shoulders of those who have come before. A couple of years ago in this space I paid tribute to two giants of the earth, David Brower and Paul Petzoldt, both of whom played an important part for myself and many others, in who we are, what we do, and how we do it. On January 8th another giant left us here in Maine, John Cole. Much has been written in the press about John: co-founder of The Maine Times, newsman, publisher, editor, gardener, tailor, environmentalist, outspoken advocate, family man, fisherman, and loving husband to name a few.

I knew John mostly through his years of writing for The Maine Times back in the days when it truly was a "must read" and also from his terrific book *Striper*, a chronicle of the days when he and Peter Matthiessen fished it up off the east end of New York's Long Island whose bays, marshes, and surf I too knew well. During the summer of 2001 I finally met John and his wife Jean face to face when they brought their visiting son, and if I recall correctly, part of his family out to Bowdoinham for a kayak tour of the Bay with me. Down East magazine had shortly before that (July 2001) published a very nice article on the Bay that John had written based on his experiences here and conversations with several of us at FOMB.

John leaves a legacy of environmental advocacy in Maine that few can match. The Kennebec would not be as clean as it is now without John, the striped bass might not have recovered in the northeast without John, and readers all over could not have tuned in to John's years of environmental concerns, broadcast in prose, from his bow pulpit at The Maine Times. In the work that I do for FOMB it is a privilege and an honor to stand lightly on John's shoulders. We would not be in as good a shape today as we are, without John. John was a shining example of how one person can make a difference for the greater good and, as I heard at his memorial service, how he could do the same for so many individuals as well.

In listening to John's answering machine or hearing a message from him on mine a smile always came to my face when I heard his words in that unique voice: "Johnny Cole here!" The message then went on and usually ended with a snappy "Over & Out!". We live on in those who cherished us. John may be "Out" (and if the commentary at his service is to be believed, then I hope he's out fishing), but he is certainly not "Over".

Prior to each FOMB annual meeting I sit down and tally up the list of our accomplishments for that year. What does the same and together we kneel on the floor and transfer this in a semi-legible manner onto "wallpaper" for the meeting. For those of you unable to attend this year's meeting please see page 3. For those of you who were there please take a closer look.

Every year this list astonishes me in its length, breadth and depth. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, very few organizations our size (a bit over 300 member families and one paid staff) accomplish so much with so little. I hope you are all as proud to be members as I am to receive your continued support. Our accomplishments would not be possible without that and the more you give the more we can accomplish.

Our by-laws describe the scope of FOMB in a very broad way reflecting an ecosystem or holistic approach to caring for the Bay. While many of us think of the Bay itself as some combination of the three actual embayments between Swan Island and Thorne Head, I believe most of us also understand that we are downstream of a huge watershed and also influenced by the Kennebec tidewater moving salt water upstream. As such, we have a vested interest in what goes up and comes down and our work often reflects that.

Several days ago I was on the phone with city officials in Gardiner to offer support for their waste water treatment plant upgrades (they have 10-12 overflow events yearly where untreated waste goes into the Kennebec), we continue to hold the DEP's feet to the fire on dioxin monitoring efforts, we have supported with volunteers nutrient monitoring studies encompassing the entire watershed, and we have supported various statewide land protection programs. Personally, I believe in our research efforts as worthwhile even if only to better understand the Bay systems, however most people (and funders) prefer an applied approach and our efforts do go a long way towards supporting our advocacy work on issues such as river reclassification, contaminants, sprawl or wake damage from speeding. Where will our resource stand with tomorrow's decision makers without our education efforts? Most of us have seen the widespread "Got Milk" ads. Perhaps in these days of so much computer screen time for our children FOMB should have its own slogan, "Get Muddy!" - certainly an area in which our educational efforts excel. Where will we find ourselves and our wildlife (literally, metaphorically, and psychologically), without meaningful land and water areas of protected habitat? What use will these areas be if only tiny islands surrounded by toxic effluent and shoulder to shoulder homes? None of our focus areas exist in a vacuum, none of our visions without advocacy.

It is a pleasure and honor to continue as active chair of a vital organization that works in all these areas. Very few do, and in my opinion, more should. Let me close by thanking all of those members, volunteers, partners, funders, and staff that have made our accomplishments possible.

Of that very large group several people deserve special mention; Will Brune, Assistant Director of Land Protection at the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy for always being a ready partner in land acquisition efforts, Warren Whitney for his organizational, administrative and easement efforts as our Executive Director, Mike and Sandra Salazar of Applied Biomonitoring (our caged mussel contractors) for their dedication, knowledge, work and support (far above the call of duty) of our efforts to bring credibility to the DEP dioxin monitoring program, and last but not least Kathleen McGee, our most involved Steering Committee member, Director of the Maine Toxics Action Coalition (working for years on issues at the intersection of the environment and public health), and my partner, for her awesome dedication to the cause, her deductive reasoning abilities, and her long time support.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Ed Friedman, Chair*

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Looking to get your sneakers wet, fingernails dirty and nose sunburned this spring or summer and help a good cause at the same time? Look no further.

FOMB has a variety of volunteer opportunities for the coming year:

Archeological Dig - The staff of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission will be doing a dig at Choice View Farm in Dresden to expand on the finds of Native American artifacts made last summer. FOMB volunteers are welcome, (full day commitment).

Water Quality Monitoring - Once a month, April through October, FOMB's water quality monitors take samples from various sites around the Bay. Each test takes about an hour.

Bay Day - Our popular Bay Day field trips for elementary school students will again need volunteers to help escort the students from station to station on May 20th.

Invasives Plant Survey - If you enjoy identifying plants, then this is for you!

Cleanup - We'll clean up a section of Bay shoreline on Saturday, May 17th, site to be determined. Wear your boots, bring your work gloves and be prepared to get muddy!

Call 666-3376 for information on all volunteer activities.

Warren Whitney

**FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY**  
**Steering Committee**

- Frank Burroughs, 81 Wallentine Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 .....Secretary ..... 666-5979
- Dee and Clancy Cummins, RR1 Box 112, Richmond 04357 ..... 737-4175
- Steve Eagles, 123 River Rd., Dresden 04342 ..... 737-8023
- Ed Friedman, 42 Stevens Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 .....Chair ..... 666-3372
- DeWitt John, 134 Middle Bay Rd., Brunswick 04011 ..... 729-5881
- Kathleen McGee, 32 Wildes Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 ..... 666-3598
- Bill Milam, 107 Brushwood Rd., Woolwich 04579 ..... 443-9738
- Leon Ogradnik, 13 Hawthorne Ln., Harpswell 04079 ..... 725-4935
- Steve Pelletier, RR1, 9 Jesse Rd., Topsham 04086 ..... 725-0083
- Dan Stockford, 712 Carding Machine Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 ..... 737-2709
- Steve Taylor, PO Box 231, Bowdoinham 04008 ..... Treasurer ..... 666-8919
- Peter Vickery, PO Box 127, Richmond 04357 ..... 737-2958

**Education Coordinator:**

- Tracy Gregoire, PO Box 231, Bowdoinham 04008 ..... 666-8919

**Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator:**

- Bill Milam, 107 Brushwood Rd., Woolwich 04579 ..... 443-9738

**Executive Director:**

- Warren Whitney, 145 Pork Point Road, Bowdoinham 04008 ..... 666-3376

Thank you to David Hansen for designing this issue of MMNews.

**Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357**

**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS.**

- \$15.00 enclosed for individual membership.     \$20 Family
- \$30 Smelt     \$50 Alewife     \$100 Striped Bass     \$250 Salmon     \$500+ Sturgeon
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed as an additional tax-deductible donation.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

RR# OR STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN / STATE/ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

\$6.00 enclosed for a copy of  
**Conservation Options: A Guide for  
Maine Landowners.**  
(\$5 for the book, \$1 for postage)

- Renewal     Gift From:

## LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

(from first page)

### Natural Resources:

Of concern to many of our members, and the towns around the Bay, is the spreading of sludge. This is a difficult issue with few practical solutions and great controversy. There are three bills before the Natural Resource Committee concerning sludge.

- LR 802: An Act to Amend the Waste Management Laws Regarding the Spreading of Sludge on Land. (Rep. Rines)
- LR 1037: An Act Regarding the Disposal of Sludge (Sen. Hall)
- LR 1757: An Act to Protect Soil and Water Resources.

There are several other bills about which you should be informed, including two Sean Faircloth bills: An Act to Protect High-Value Bird Habitats and An Act to Require the Consideration of the Cumulative Effects on Protected Natural Resources When Permitting Activities. There are also bills to amend subdivision laws, shoreland zoning, citizen's property rights and protecting Maine's water as a natural resource.

### Inland Fisheries and Wildlife:

LR 173 is An Act to Amend the Ice Fishing Laws and LR 178 concerns public access to fish, game and wildlife resources (both Rep. Dunlap). There are 10 bills focused on ATV and snowmobiles, ranging from raising the legal age of using those vehicles to restricting where they may go. There are 12 bills on watercraft issues, including restricting use of jet skis on certain water bodies and promoting boat safety.

There continue to be a variety of bills on hunting, snaring, management areas, and increasing protection for endangered species.

### Marine Resources:

One bill in particular may be of interest: LR 510, submitted by Rep. Fletcher. It is a resolve to "provide for the effective implementation of anadromous fish restoration on the Upper Kennebec River system." And while we have not faced the controversy over aquaculture, we may wish to keep in mind that many of those we work with throughout the state have serious concerns about the viability, sustainability and pollution of aquaculture pens in our coastal waters. There will be at least one bill pertaining to that issue this year.

There are a variety of ways in which you can be informed about what is happening during the legislative session, how to be involved and with whom to work on issues that are important to you.

The website found at <http://janus.state.me/legis/session> will connect you with the pages for: bill searches, titles of bills submitted, public hearing schedules, past laws and their summaries, etc. To have the schedules sent to you directly you may also call the Clerk's Office (287-1400) or the Legislative Information Office (287-1692) and be put on an email or mailing list.

Furthermore, a publication that is invaluable, A Citizen's Guide to the Maine Legislature, is available from the Maine People's Resource Center. It gives bios of all the legislators, their affiliations, campaign expenditures, etc. It also has guidelines on how to be a citizen lobbyist and effectively engage in the process at the State House.

Call us for any information.

*Kathleen McGee*

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