



## Lake Region 'Greenprint' underway



Volunteers place the roof of the downtown park kiosk.

### Park construction progressing

The 60-foot Bob Dunning Memorial Bridge, which will serve as the main entry way from downtown Bridgton into Pondicherry Park, is a step closer to reality. The Pondicherry Park Steering Committee recently signed a \$94,747 contract with Hardypond Construction of Portland to fabricate and install steel beams

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What if a property has intriguing values, such as large forest with wetlands and streams that provide waterfowl habitat, but it isn't particularly suited to public access? What if another property that has come to our attention at the very same time has a lovely view and landscaped fields, but little else?

**Carrie Walia**

*Executive Director*



These are questions that Loon Echo has to consider and address on a daily basis, requiring careful research and thought. And with a seven town service area that is 320 square miles in size, deciding where to invest our limited financial and staff resources can be a bit daunting at times.

In some cases, Loon Echo can make "obvious" project choices, such as continuing to build upon the lands that are already protected. The Pleasant Mountain Phase II expansion project that is underway, and the earlier Sebago Headwaters Preserve project used this

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## Why I Care

### Peter Schoonmaker

**Member since:** The beginning, just after Loon Echo was formed in 1987.

**Occupation:** Farmer

**Town:** Casco, Maine

**Personal:** Peter gifted a conservation easement on his 60-



acre farm off of Quaker Ridge in 1993. His goal is to "try growing vegetables in our sun-room this winter."

**"Conserving farms is so important. And I support all land conservation efforts, like the Pleasant Mountain and Bald Pate Mountain projects. I wish I could still walk on those trails!"**

# Pleasant Mtn. woodland communities

In my last article, we explored the Ironwood-Oak-Ash Woodland community and some of its unique characteristics. A trip to the Ledges Trail in August allowed folks to get a firsthand look at some of the very old Ironwood trees, Fern-leaved False Foxglove and interesting grasses.

The woodland community to be discussed in this newsletter may have less diversity than the Ironwood-Oak-Ash, but may be the more interesting. Please follow me to the blueberries and red pines of Pleasant Mountain's North Peak.

## Part 2: Red Pine Woodland

The Red Pine Woodland is an open canopy setting. Other tree species vary in this community and may include white pine, red spruce, red maple and paper birch.

As discussed in the last article, the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) classifies all the natural communities and plant species in the state. They are ranked by their state (S) and global (G) rarity. This ranking method is explained at the Department of Conservation website, in the Maine Natural Areas Program section (<http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mnap/>).

The understory will often have ferns, berries and reindeer lichens. The soil is often a thin layer over bedrock and evidence of fire is typically found. The Red Pine Woodland has a state ranking of S3 (rare with 20-100 occurrences).



**The Red Pine Woodland is an open canopy setting.**



**Jon Evans**

*Stewardship  
and Volunteer  
Coordinator*

The Red Pine gets its name from the reddish bark which divides into large plates as the tree matures. It is often used in reforestation in low lying, well drained areas (e.g. gravel pits) and is commonly referred to as Norway pine. Apparently this name came from pre-colonial times when English explorers confused the red pine with the Norway spruce.

The red pine is native only to North America and in some areas can reach heights of 90 to 100 feet. However on Pleasant Mountain the red pine community is subject to the intense weather coming across the White Mountains and Saco River Valley and because of this the trees are more stunted.

Many animals call this community home including white tailed deer that browse on saplings and snowshoe hare which feed on seedlings.

The pine seeds are eaten by red squirrels, chipmunks and mice. Birds may include pine grosbeaks and pine siskins.

I always marvel at this particular part of Pleasant as it has an entirely different feel than other parts of the mountain. It is very open and inviting with many great vantage points looking west. Mount Washington looms over you, posing for photos, as you sit in the warm afternoon sun munching a handful of wild blueberries. If you aren't in a hurry you may find yourself drifting off to the sounds of the wind in these wonderful pines.

I invite you to join me for a moderately challenging hike to this special woodland community on Saturday, August 14, 2010 at 9 a.m. If you are itching to get out this spring, I will also be leading a hike up the Southwest Ridge Trail to look at wildflowers on May 15, 2010 at 9 a.m.

In the next newsletter we will visit the Oak-Pine Woodland Community. In the meantime, feel free to contact at 207-647-4352 or [jon@lelt.org](mailto:jon@lelt.org)

## LELT Calendar of Events

Program	Description	Date
<b>Mushers Bowl Snowshoe Hikes</b>	Join Loon Echo for a moderate snowshoe hike to the summit of Bald Pate Mountain in South Bridgton during the popular Mushers Bowl Weekend. Snowshoe hikes both days begin at 10 a.m. Check in at the Five Fields Farm Stand at 9:45 a.m. to register. Hikers should bring the appropriate winter clothing, snacks, water and snowshoes (a few pairs are available upon request).	<b>Saturday and Sunday January 23 and 24</b>
<b>Pondicherry Valentine's Day Snowshoe Hike</b>	Bring your sweetheart to a snowshoe hike in beautiful Pondicherry Park in downtown Bridgton. Hikers should meet at the town garage on Willett Road behind Hannaford at 12:45 p.m. After the hike, there will be a wine and cheese social at the Tannery Pub inside the fantastic Magic Lantern Theater. Hikers should bring the appropriate winter clothing, snacks, water and snowshoes (a few pairs are available upon request).	<b>Saturday February 13</b>
<b>Sunrise Hike at Bald Pate Mtn.</b>	A special early morning hike to welcome the first sunrise of spring from Bald Pate Mountain in South Bridgton. Hikers should bring appropriate winter clothing, water, snacks, flashlight and snowshoes (a few pairs are available upon request). Brave hikers will meet at the parking lot on Route. 107 at 6 a.m. Sunrise is 6:41. Tailgate party with donuts and hot cocoa to follow.	<b>Sunday March 21</b>
<b>Trail Maintenance at Pleasant Mountain</b>	Join Loon Echo and Maine Chapter AMC for trail maintenance on the popular Ledges Trail at Pleasant Mountain at 9 a.m. Tools supplied. Bring work boots, gloves, water and plenty of energy rich snacks. Workers will meet at the trail head on Mountain Rd. at 8:45 a.m.	<b>Saturday April 10</b>
<b>Earth Day Hike at Bald Pate Mtn.</b>	Fun for the whole family as we celebrate Earth Day from the summit with poems and music. Meet in the parking lot on Route 107 at 3 p.m. Afterwards, enjoy a Bald Pate Celebration Ale and tap your toes to the Highland String Trio at Bray's Brew Pub on Route 302 in Naples. A portion of the proceeds go to Loon Echo.	<b>Thursday April 22</b>
<b>Mayberry Hill Clean-Up</b>	Come along for a spring clean-up walk at Mayberry Hill Preserve in Casco. This will be a chance to see the preserve come to life after the long winter. Light trail maintenance will be done that day and appropriate clothing is recommended. Bring your camera and some snacks. Hikers will meet at the preserve trail head on Mayberry Hill Rd. at 10 a.m.	<b>Saturday April 24</b>
<b>Spring Hike at Pleasant Mtn.</b>	One of our favorite hikes will take place at Pleasant Mountain on the improved Southwest Ridge Trail. Hikers will go to the Southwest summit, and along the way we will see lady slippers, columbine and other wildflowers in bloom. This is a moderate to difficult hike and the proper boots, clothing, energy rich snacks and bug spray are required. The group will meet at the trail head on Denmark Road at 8:45 a.m.	<b>Saturday May 15</b>
<b>Summer Solstice Hike at Bald Pate Mountain</b>	Celebrate the first day of summer with a traditional hike up Bald Pate to remember Bob Chase, a founder of Loon Echo. A short walk of 20-30 minutes brings you to the rocky summit with views of the surrounding lakes and hills. All hikers are welcome and should meet at the Bald Pate parking lot on Route 107 at 5 p.m.	<b>Monday June 21</b>

All outdoor hikes and walks are subject to weather conditions. Additional activities will be posted to LELT's online program calendar at [www.lelt.org](http://www.lelt.org). Please contact Jon Evans at [jon@lelt.org](mailto:jon@lelt.org) or 207-647-4352 for more information.

# \$90,000 donated to expand preserve

By Carrie Walia  
Executive Director

The Pleasant Mountain Phase II Expansion Project continues to make progress and was recently awarded a \$35,000 grant from the Kendal C. and Anna Ham Foundation and \$50,000 from an anonymous foundation, with an additional \$5,000 for an ecological study of the mountain's flora and fauna.

These grants provide some of the necessary "match" to the state's \$761,000 award from the Land for Maine's Future Program, pledged in July of 2008. Since then, the state has been reviewing the details of the project and will soon make its first funding allocation to the project to help pay the note on 61 acres of land containing the Bald Peak Trail and the Needles Eye waterfall.

A second project parcel, a 350-acre property on the southeast side of the mountain, is currently making its way through state review and is scheduled for closing in June of 2010. A third parcel has entered the project thanks to the generosity of K&W Timberlands. K&W has pledged to donate 34 acres of land on the west side of the mountain and they will also gift an endowment to allow Loon Echo to steward the property.

In addition to the land protection efforts, Loon Echo has been busy working to further improve the ten mile hiking trail system on the mountain. The Appalachian



**An Appalachian Mountain Club trail crew installs water bars on the trails at Pleasant Mountain.**

Mountain Club (AMC) donated two weeks of trail crew labor this summer to build more stone stairs and water bars to mitigate soil erosion. The AMC Maine Chapter volunteers also continue their work as a part of our trail adoption program. There is a new Pleasant Mountain brochure with the trail map and trail descriptions available at [www.jelt.org](http://www.jelt.org) or the Loon Echo office.

## Another great Hike n' Bike Trek!

155 registrants

\$26,826 in entry fees, pledges and sponsorships



Thanks to all participants, volunteers and sponsors!  
Next Trek: 9/18/2010. Mark your calendars for the Trek's 10th Anniversary!



# Lake Region Greenprint

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very premise. But the not-so-obvious project choices, in a pool of seemingly endless conservation possibilities, are the real challenges. Becoming proactive about such challenges, and turning them into opportunities, is the key to success.

One strategy that Loon Echo is undertaking is to develop a comprehensive plan that will identify the most important conservation opportunities in the Lake Region area. The first phase of the **“Lake Region Greenprint”** project is underway.

This planning project has a lot more to it than just developing a plan. It will bring many organizations, municipalities, and citizen groups together to set a vision and action plan for protecting and enhancing the Lake Region’s natural assets (lakes, forests, scenic areas, trails, etc.) for our future economic well-being. Loon Echo sought the services of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to bring their “Greenprinting” planning services to our service region, which includes Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison, Naples, Sebago and Raymond.

A “Greenprint” is designed to meet a community’s open space, park, recreation and conservation goals. During the planning process conservation organizations, municipalities, citizens and economic development groups are asked to participate. Engaging town and economic development leaders in the process will allow conservation priorities to be aligned with other economic development and land use planning initiatives.

Loon Echo and TPL have been promoting the “Lake Region Greenprint” project to the seven town select boards and have received positive feedback. The towns of Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harrison and Sebago have agreed to participate and pledged to provide \$1 per capita in funding, but three (Bridgton, Casco and Harrison) are subject to 2010 town meetings. The two remaining towns are actively discussing the project and reviewing their budgets to determine where they can find the modest amount of funding.

Loon Echo and TPL will initiate the project in early 2010, which will then take sixteen months to finish. We have several things in our favor at the moment, which

“Maine’s principal advantage in today’s global economic competition is our Quality of Place. We have majestic mountains, unbroken forests, open fields, wild rivers, pristine lakes, a widely-celebrated coast, picturesque downtowns, lively arts and culture, authentic historic buildings, and exceptional recreational opportunities. We must learn to think of them as the basic infrastructure of Maine’s future prosperity.”

*-- Quality of Place and Job Growth: A New and Needed Maine Investment Strategy, 2nd Report of the Governor’s Council on Maine’s Quality of Place. (May 2008)*

should allow the project to get started on time:

- TPL and Loon Echo have raised 90 percent of the project budget, with grants from the Environmental Funders Network, Elma B. Sewell Foundation, Open Space Institute and the Davis Conservation Foundation. Several of the foundations require matching contributions from the municipalities.
- The project is tied to a larger concept of protecting Maine’s “Quality of Place.” In the past two years there have been numerous studies, most notably by GrowSmart Maine, the Brookings Institution, and the Governor’s Quality of Place Initiative. All studies have said that Maine’s economic future is in protecting its “brand,” or what makes Maine distinctive from other areas, including its quaint New England town centers, open and natural areas, historic structures and resources, and rural character.
- The project has a regional focus and is intended to foster relationships and benefit a variety of groups. For example, if a town is lacking an open space plan or needs a user-friendly on-line GIS mapping model, this project will provide it. Another example is if Loon Echo wishes to collaborate with a town on a future project, we will have a better chance at securing grants and other funding with regional backing.

*If you would like to view the Lake Region Greenprint presentation given to the seven towns, please check out the Lake Region Television schedule at <http://www.lakeregiontv.org/>. The 30-minute presentation is being aired through the end of the year.*

# Helping Loon Echo 'puts spark in life'

Loon Echo's annual meeting was held on August 30 at the Tannery Pub in the Magic Lantern Theater in



**Connie Cross**

*President*

Bridgton, capping a beautiful walk in Pondicherry Park, led by our Stewardship and Volunteer Coordinator, Jon Evans. Those who were new to the Park and those who hadn't been there for awhile were impressed with the handsome trail signs created by our good friend Ernie Kozun, the bridges, trails, and work that has been done at the old cabin foundation to alleviate safety concerns and create a rustic amphitheater that can be used for educational or recreational purposes.

The highlight of the meeting for me was being able to honor Pam Edwards of Casco as our "Volunteer of the Year."

Having worked with Pam on Casco's Open Space Plan, I am especially grateful that someone as capable and knowledgeable as Pam has been willing to spend so much of her time helping Loon Echo in a variety of ways, from researching models for regional conserva-



**Pam Edwards accepts the 'Volunteer of the Year' from Connie Cross (left) and Carrie Walia (right).**

tion, developing a GIS mapping program, and assisting with our organizational assessment.

"Volunteering for an organization that I feel is so important puts a spark in my life," Pam said in her acceptance speech.

She has been especially impressed that the organization is building human and financial capacity and she looks forward to helping out even more in the future. As good as her word, Pam is taking an active part on our Lands Committee where her skills will be invaluable.

We also elected Jerry Holt of Sebago to the Board of Directors. When asked what inspired him to become more involved in Loon Echo, Jerry replied, "I retired recently after many years of professional counseling and education at SAD 61, and now have the time to do my part in maintaining the health and beauty of the natural resources in the area."



**Jerry Holt**

We welcome Jerry and know he will be a fine addition to our Board. And speaking of our Board of Directors and our various committees (Lands, Bike Trek, Development, for example), we are always looking to add good people who are passionate about land conservation and eager to contribute to our mission.

If you are that person, or if you know someone who is, please let me know ([ccross1@maine.rr.com](mailto:ccross1@maine.rr.com) or 207-655-7224). We are especially seeking those who are knowledgeable in the fields of natural resources or those experienced in board and organizational development.

## Goals and accomplishments

Loon Echo developed its first annual report which was presented at the 2009 annual meeting held on August 30th. The report highlights the goals that the organization accomplished over the past year, a listing of volunteers who have contributed to our programs and a financial status report.

Accomplished goals include: building organizational capacity, starting the strategic conservation plan for our service area, continuing with three substantial land acquisition projects (Pondicherry Park, Pleasant Mountain Phase II, Pleasant Pond conservation easement), furthering partnerships with like-minded organizations, continuing with the Crooked River Initiative, redesigning the newsletter to a color format, advancing land stewardship and volunteer programs, and improving governance structure and policies.

To view the 2009 Annual Report, visit [www.lelt.org](http://www.lelt.org).

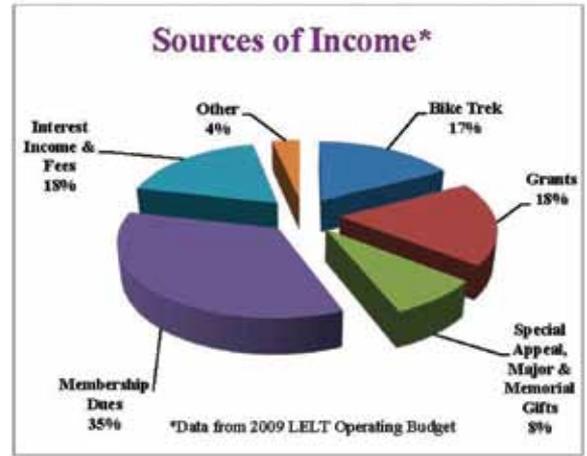
# Insider's Guide to Membership

By Heidi Schellenger  
Development Coordinator

Do you ever wonder how many other people support Loon Echo? Or whether the difficult economy reduced the number of contributions we received in 2009?

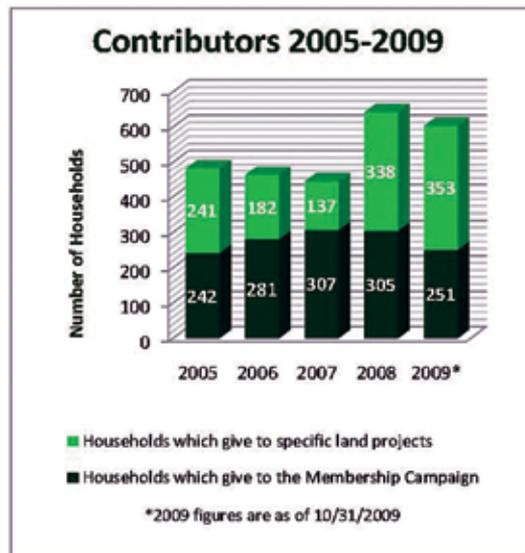
## How important are members?

Members are Loon Echo's lifeblood. The membership gifts that you contribute every year total almost \$50,000, and constitute 35% of our operating income. The pie chart above illustrates our sources of income. Currently, we are trying to grow our membership with prospect mailings and 'ask a friend' campaigns. A bigger membership slice would increase our ability to write grants, negotiate land deals, and facilitate other fundraising efforts, thereby increasing the size of the whole pie and the organization's capacity.



## How many members are there?

Membership numbers are always hard to tabulate. Loon Echo's by-laws state that any person who makes a donation of any kind, in any amount, is a member. By that measure, Loon Echo has received contributions from a total of 604 households so far this year. In 2008 we received a total of 643 contributions, but many of those gifts were given for a particular project, like for the purchase of Pleasant Mountain or Pondicherry Park. Other gifts were from people renewing their 'membership' with an unrestricted donation in response to our membership renewal letters.



Confused? Maybe this bar chart will help. The lower, dark green portion of the columns show that, aside from 2008, the number of households making membership contributions has increased every year. The upper, lighter green portion of the column varies widely depending on what land project is ongoing. For instance, in 2008 Loon Echo was fundraising specifically for Pondicherry Park, so there are more contributions than in the previous years. 2009 is not over yet, and we hope that by December 31, we can increase our last column to reflect our best year ever.

## How to Give to LELE?\*

How to give to LELE? Let us count the ways.  
You can use the phone, internet, or mail  
To help preserve a view, or fix a trail.  
Expand our membership with a present  
to a loved one, neighbor, or cherished friend.  
In memory of that perfect summer day  
Donate tax free, straight from your IRA\*\*  
Or was it a winter hike that so pleased?

Donate stocks or other securities.

Loon Echo is a 501(c) 3

Tax deductible your gift will likely be.

Thinking bigger? Create an endowment

To steward land – a tribute permanent.

And if death calls, yet you still want to live

With a bequest you can forever give.

*\*With heartfelt apologies to Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.*

*\*\*Contributions from IRAs are tax free only until December 31, 2009*

## Gurdon Buck, 1922-2009

Gurdon Buck, a long-time member and grantor of the 141-acre Cold Rain Pond conservation easement passed away on November 21, 2009.

Gurdon and his family came to Naples in 1930 and later bought part of the old Naples Town Farm. When home construction in the area increased, he became concerned about the impact it could have on the shores of Cold Rain Pond and gifted the development rights to Loon Echo in 1991.

“I had learned to love and respect the forest, and perhaps even more, learned to love the pond, as do my children and grandchildren. As a result of the conservation easement, my property will now remain as I want it in perpetuity.”

## Pondicherry progressing well

and pilings to support the Dunning Bridge. Once the steel infrastructure is in place, a community “barn-raising” will be held to build the covered bridge designed by Andy Buck of Naples and a team of local artists.

A new 12 x 12 post-and-beam informational kiosk and shelter, built in mid-October and designed by Buck, is located next to the Community Center and Downeast Inc. on Depot Street. More than two dozen volunteers helped Buck erect the kiosk, and with the help of a crane, it fell perfectly into place.

It will provide park use information and direct visitors to the Dunning Bridge, which will be located a few hundred feet away. Three smaller post-and-beam kiosks have been built at the three park entrances on South High Street and Willett Road.

Another big step forward will be the installation by mid-December of a

Loon Echo Land Trust  
1 Chase Street  
Bridgton ME 04009  
*Address service requested*

## Give a gift that lasts forever

Make a contribution to Loon Echo Land Trust to honor a friend or relative and you’ll give them the security of knowing that the special places in our community will be protected for generations to come. For a minimum donation of \$25, your friend will receive a full year’s membership in Loon Echo Land Trust and notification of your gift through a custom holiday card with this lovely painting (above) by artist Elna Stone. Just call 207-647-4352 or email [heidi@lelt.org](mailto:heidi@lelt.org).



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40-foot aluminum bridge to provide park access for the children at Stevens Brook Elementary School and the Bridgton Community Center. The Kendal C. and Anna Ham Charitable Foundation donated \$25,000 to construct this bridge, which is being crafted by Great Northern Docks in Naples.

While the park is making great progress, there is still a need for

\$138,000 in funds to complete the Bob Dunning Bridge, which will wrap up the entire park project. Reynolds and Norway Savings Bank each donated \$5,000 to kick off the final phase of the park campaign.

To make a contribution to Pondicherry Park, please send a gift to Loon Echo with the check payable to “Pondicherry Park Fund,” or visit [www.pondicherrypark.org](http://www.pondicherrypark.org).

### LELT Contacts

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