

EAGLE ISLAND NEWS

FRIENDS OF EAGLE ISLAND, INC.



LEADERSHIP TRANSITION by Chris Hildebrand FEI New President

Dorcas R. Hardy has served as our President from the beginning. She has kept the organization focused on finding a way to acquire Eagle Island and never wavered from that vision. With that goal accomplished, the focus is now on the restoration and reopening of the camp, a task that requires daily hands-on attention.

Under Dorcas's guidance we have hired our previous Treasurer, Paula McGovern, as full-time Executive Director. Carole Mackenzie has moved from Assistant Treasurer to Treasurer, and Steve Reich has accepted the role of Assistant Treasurer.

In addition, Dorcas' other responsibilities in Washington, DC and international Girl Scouting led her to pass the reigns of President in what has become a day-to-day working position.

Effective December 2015, the Board elected Chris Wubbolding as FEI President. Chris was formerly a member of the Board of GSHNJ having served on Property and HR Committees and Chair of the Audit Committee and who had a tremendous desire to see Eagle Island continue as a camp for girls.

Chris Wubbolding is the person primarily responsible for our business plan, and she took the lead this summer, along with Paula McGovern and Lauren Parmington, our Secretary, and Bob Goodsell, our Attorney, in completing the acquisition of the island. We are very fortunate to have such skilled and dedicated leadership. "Dorcas enthusiastically remains a Board member and we are forever grateful for her many years of

CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE!

Chris and Ginny Hildebrand with Rowain Kalichstein hosted a party in January to celebrate FEI's ownership of Eagle Island. Mary Hesslegrave generously opened her home to the small gathering which included a few impromptu speeches from new President Chris Wubbolding, Executive Director Paula McGovern and attorney Bob Goodsell. Of course there was singing, cake, and viewing of a 1938 Eagle Island camp album! The highlight had to be a few agile attendees climbing Mary's rock climbing wall! Thank you Mary!

Board secretary Lauren Parmington hosted a get together in her Brooklyn home on January 17th. Over twenty Eagle Islanders attended in celebration. It was great fun to catch up and talk about the past, but more importantly, the future of the Island.

How are you celebrating? Send us your thoughts and stories.

service as President", said Chris, "and while I expect that our Board will continue to evolve to meet the needs of the organization, I am pleased to take on this leadership role at this time".

FUNDRAISING UPDATE by Mimi Harrington, FEI VP

Over \$500,000 Raised

Thank you! You answered the call! The moment Eagle Island belonged to Friends of Eagle Island, the Fundraising Committee began making calls and sending emails. You answered the phone, you replied to the emails, and you made donations—and how!

Friends had already donated **\$220,000** in the previous seven weeks, but after we closed on November 6 we asked you to step up with another **\$100,000** in order to meet an amazing **\$100K** match. It was a huge challenge, and the response was immediate and overwhelming. By December 31, **426** people who love Eagle Island had donated over **\$500,000** toward its renovation and reopening.

Along with the donations came heartfelt notes, and here is a sampling:

"When one of your group called me it brought back many wonderful old memories. I was a camper and then a counselor from 1941 through 1950. Those were the best years of my life, and I learned skills that I never would have learned in South Orange."

Our donors & supporters

The 2015 support of **426** donors is incredible! **177** of you gave back in 2011 when FEI newly formed. Those who donated each and every year since our incorporation gave us the confidence to stay on course. This support demonstrates the long-term commitment of our donor base. Many of you made pledges five years ago and when asked, not only satisfied them but in some cases increased the gift significantly. You continue to donate your support, time, talent and ideas. Each and every one of our friends is valuable to our future success. **THANK YOU!!**

"I can't wait to introduce my daughter to Eagle Island."

"We were 'over the moon' thrilled to hear that Friends of Eagle Island acquired the island."

"The joy I had in knowing you has lasted my whole life through."

"The first time I was a camper was August 1945 – just as WWII was ending... I have many wonderful and joyous memories of Eagle Island."

"Even though I never had the opportunity to be a camper at Eagle Island, my time spent on the island as a staff member was no less influential in my character. I have experienced several significant life changes the past few years, some good, but many very challenging...It is with inner strength and peace gained from my experiences on Eagle Island, that I successfully persevere in conquering each hurdle. I wish I could donate millions to Eagle Island, but am only able to donate a drop in the bucket, but it is there and I am proud to contribute what I can."

So thank you, Friends, for this gift

"To all of us, and to the place we hold so dear."

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Dorothy "Dart" Emerson (center) sharing stories and lessons with the younger staff during her final visit to the island for Women's weekend, 2008, where she celebrated her 86th birthday.

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Christine Wubbolding

The stars were aligned

2015 has come to an end and as I sit here writing this article reflecting on the accomplishments of FEI, I am in awe of those people whom if it were not for their passion for Eagle Island, the Adirondacks, youth camping, and historic preservation, I wouldn't be writing this article at all!

While 2015 was a roller coaster ride with tremendous highs and excruciating lows, it is the end result that matters and not necessarily what we went through to get there.

Of course our ultimate high was completing the purchase of Eagle Island from Girl Scouts Heart of NJ in November, equally in first place was the phone call from our Donor offering to help. Our lows were really low but through all those downs I kept saying to everyone, "this is meant to be". Even the weather

cooperated. It was as if Mother Nature was looking down on us favorably and decided not to freeze the lake before we could close up the camp, gave our engineers one more visit to take measurements, and let our preservation architects visit the island. It was as if all the energy from the alumnae, counselors, staff and friends just willed this to happen.

Over and over again I am amazed by those who were so inspired in their youth from an adventurous summer on an island that they would collectively and so generously donate over \$500k toward the restoration of this magnificent property and the vision of having young people enjoy similar adventures.

So, thank you all, our friends, for your support and enthusiasm and for making the highs outweigh the lows!

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR by Paula McGovern

It's all about the passion

It is an honor and privilege writing to you as the FEI Executive Director. Everyone says that the best job is one that you are passionate about; this is THE BEST job. It's the passion of alumnae and friends that has enabled us to see this dream through to the day WE took ownership of the island.

Winter seems like a quiet time for an Adirondack island camp but our engineers are working diligently to assess our current situation in regards to the water supply, sewer/septic, structural (roofs) and electrical needs to design systems, changes and upgrades. A preservation architect has been hired to assess the historic structures and provide a conditions report and a conservation plan that will serve as the working document to prioritize renovations with regard to safety, stabilization and future use. A surveyor will be hired shortly to prepare a detailed topographic survey to be used by both the engineers and the architect. ALL of these preliminary efforts are to establish an Overall Plan that can be shared with the Township and community. If all goes well during these winter months of planning we can start to initiate some of the imperative work on the property so further deterioration can be avoided.

As a volunteer organization, we are pulling together people who are graciously donating time and



professional expertise with everything from graphic design to boat maintenance, fundraising to environment, and accounting to legal. The collective enthusiasm is inspiring. Just today, I was talking with a long-time supporter who was looking to help in one area and when I learned that she is a nurse supervisor and educator she is now ALSO putting together a complete first-aid "Go Bag" for use on the island this coming season.

Planning has begun for **Open Island** events this summer so that our friends and the local community can visit, some for the first time others as a trip down memory lane. Please drop me a note, what's your story? What's YOUR passion?

In Memory

Dorothy, "Dart" Emerson a camper in 1938, the first year of EIC, passed away in January 2016. She attended through a campership, for which she was extremely proud. She donated for camperships until the camp closed, when she became an instant supporter of FEI writing letters to the GSHNJ and GSUSA in an attempt to save EIC.

Dart was Director of EIC for 7 years, the last year being 1959. She remembered so much of the early years yet she lived in the present. She was thrilled to learn that her beloved camp was saved.

In Memory

It is with great sadness to report that **Beth Rosengarten Rubin**, a founding member and long-time supporter of Friends of Eagle Island passed away suddenly in January 2016. Beth, a writer and editor, played an important role helping FEI with its publications and press releases. Fellow '58 & '59 Mariners, Chris Hildebrand, Gail Shultz Lozier and Jane Brailove Rutkoff attended her memorial in Annapolis, MD. She will be truly missed.

Back issues of this newsletter can be found on the website.



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