

# Discovery

Early Winter Newsletter from the Ferry Beach Park Association

DECEMBER 2014

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Sunrise on the winter solstice, 2014. CS

## Culture Shifting at Ferry Beach

*"It's using the opportunity to make energy efficiency a way of enabling community resilience." (Judith Rodin, CEO of Rockefeller Foundation)*

Providing grants for 100 cities around the world to become more resilient, Rodin's efforts are part of a global movement of philanthropists, spearheading a change in how we live on our precious planet.

The words, "sustainability" and "resilience" are popping up everywhere. Here at Ferry Beach, we have been talking about our own resilience and sustainability as an organization, but also as a community and a physical place. Our efforts to move into a place of compassion (our theme for the summer of 2015) are grounded in a framework from eco-philosopher, Johanna Macy, which she coined, "The Work That Reconnects."

We are also using this framework to ground our volunteer program, "Ferry Beach Keepers" into sustainability and resilience. (See related article about Ferry Beach Keepers in this edition on page 2.)

In her "Work that Reconnects spiral", Macy begins with gratitude (as we did last year) for what we have, move into compassion and awareness for both our resources and our challenges from the past and the present and begin to see the world with new eyes. As we do this, we move into "active hope" a way of "doing" that is informed by gratitude and compassion for one another and ourselves. (Learn more on page 2.)

Macy and many others believe that we have fallen asleep to the needs of our earth and each other. We are living beyond the capacity of the earth's resources: polluting our oceans and

streams, clear cutting forests and overusing our natural resources. We have become disconnected not just from the earth, but from one another as well. In the process, we are harming ourselves today as well as jeopardizing the future.

If Ferry Beach is a microcosm of the macrocosm, then we have the opportunity to put into practice a change right here in this community and organization we love so much. We have the opportunity to change the path we have been traveling to one of resilience.

In the past, Ferry Beach has stretched beyond its means, forgetting that we must put back as well as take from our resources and community. We have stretched ourselves out beyond our limits of resources, and it is time to take a good look around and see with new

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## Building Progress

As you know, we have been raising funds for the Hopkins House renovation. We are about \$30,000 short of our goal. Our efforts to complete the project are part of our ongoing commitment to make Ferry Beach more handicap accessible. We will be working to do as much universal design as possible as we renovate and fix up the campus. Our commitment is to build a Ferry Beach that is open to all of us!

If you would like to join our effort, you can find the "donate now" button on our website under the "Giving" tab. Or, you can send a gift to: Ferry Beach, 5 Morris Avenue, Saco, Maine 04072. Thank you!



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### Culture Shifting....

eyes, the path that is clear to us for sustainability, resilience and right relations.

The Rockefeller Foundation is trying to mobilize a revolution of resilience. While we don't have the reach that they do, nor the resources, we do have a vibrant community of people who are social activists in many different communities. What if Ferry Beach could ignite small sparks of change?

Consider joining us for three different opportunities to learn about the Work that Reconnects framework. The weekend of February 20<sup>th</sup> we will be offering an experiential workshop around this issue. In July, during a family conference for all ages focusing on deep ecology and several times this summer, we will be sharing the 6 hour training for becoming a Ferry Beach Keeper.

**The Work  
That  
Reconnects  
(Ferry Beach  
Style!)**

*Practice Gratitude for What We Have  
We are resource-rich!*

*Honor our Truth and Practice Compassion for our Shortcomings  
Embrace our shortcomings, honor those who came before us.*

*Look at Ferry Beach with New Eyes  
We live in right relation, we make decisions that support our sustainability.*

*Go Forth, With A Renewed Sense of Purpose  
We renew our mission and vision with a larger scope.*

*Create and Sustain a Resilient Organization and Build an Ever-Larger Community.  
We give back to the greater good.*

## Summer 2015: Practicing Compassion by Becoming a Ferry Beach Keeper

*True compassion does not come from wanting to help those less fortunate than ourselves but from realizing our kinship with all beings. -Pema Chodron in Start Where You Are*

This summer, our theme is *Practicing Compassion*. The key, as we learn from others practicing compassion, is to begin where we are and do something significant for our family, friends, those around us, and the world that is close to us.

Compassion begins when we look at the world with new eyes and see ways we can make a difference, right where we are. It seems only fitting then, that we would launch our volunteer program at Ferry Beach this summer.

Last summer, we asked our conferees in Town Halls each week about ways they might make a difference at Ferry Beach.

Out of those discussions, the board of Ferry Beach has launched the *Ferry Beach Keepers*. Our goal is to create a sustainable campus and community at Ferry Beach that honors our history and legacy, upholds our mission, and provides stewardship and support for all of our resources. We are working to build a resilient organization! Shifting our culture to one of prosperity and stewardship is a secondary goal, but one which will have a significant impact on our precious Ferry Beach.

If you would like to give of your time, talent, and treasure to this place that you love, perhaps you will want to become a Ferry Beach Keeper.

To become a Ferry Beach Keeper, you must be a member of Ferry Beach, donate at least \$180 (\$15 a month as a sustainer) annually, and be willing to donate 12 hours of your time to Ferry

Beach projects. All Ferry Beach Keepers will receive 6 hours of initial training which will include a history and legacy of Ferry Beach.

Volunteers will have opportunities in two areas starting in the summer of 2015: marketing/office and facilities, with more areas available in the future. They will learn new skills in short mini-trainings as well. A skills assessment will be a part of the initial training.

All Ferry Beach Keepers will be honored at our Annual Meeting, at the Fall Harvest event, and in our publications. Ferry Beach Keepers join a community of people who love Ferry Beach. Special opportunities for fun and connection will also be available. This summer, we will offer 4 sessions of the initial training for Ferry Beach Keepers in four summer weeks. Specific dates will be shared in April. Join us!

## What Does it Mean to Be “Different?”

by Cathy Stackpole

It was February when my kindergartener began to fear the Big Dipper or the “drinking gourd.” Every night she worried about the Big Dipper. We went online to look at the star constellation, we went outside to look at it. This went on for a few weeks until finally, as I was putting her to bed, she grabbed my face with both hands and said, “Why did slavery happen?”

My precious, insightful, African American daughter looked at me wide-eyed. I searched inside my brain for an answer that a 5 year old would grasp and stammered, “Because people were stupid.”

She pulled me closer, “Will it happen again?” And then she brought tears to my eyes when she said, “Will you protect me?”

I put my arms around her and pulled her close. “Yes, of course, yes, I will protect you.”



After I finished singing to her, satisfied she was asleep, I left her room. At the kitchen table I thought about how the collective group of white people I was a part of thought we were doing something good by having Black History Month in our schools. What does a 5-year-old know about slavery?

I have never asked my black friends when they have the slavery talk with their children. I know many friends who have the police talk around age 9 or 10, but I never thought about when to begin the conversation about our abhorrent history of racism. I imagine for many families it creeps in, like the conversation I had later that year in the car with my older daughter when she was 7 years old:



“Priscilla’s mom doesn’t want me to come over to her house.”

“Why, honey?”

“She doesn’t want children with brown skin at her house.”

I found myself seething in the front seat, speechless. As a mom, I want to protect my daughters. But as their mom I also know that I have to teach them to find ways to honor themselves in the face of racist and/or ignorant people.

As a lesbian I have had my share of homophobes, from discrimination at work to heckles on the street, I have felt the sting of “otherness.” When I was a child and a young teen, people thought I was a boy. As a young adult in the face of heckles or comments, I always had to resist the first temptation which was to question my own worth. Over time, I have affirmed my otherness as a gift in a world that needs more compassion.

Pride for self must be practiced repeatedly in a culture that would rather anyone different disappear. As their mom, I know that my daughters have been and will continue to be challenged for their skin color and sometimes, for my sexuality.

Since the summer police shootings, the lack of indictments, and the protest marches, I have been thinking more about Ferry Beach’s legacy. Bill DeWolfe’s memorial service reminded me how Ferry Beachers have always been on the front lines of social change: Bill was a part of creating an NAACP chapter in Texas. Getting historical material from Elizabeth McNab reminded me of Bill Metz’s efforts to explore and challenge Ferry Beachers to think about the big challenges of the day. One conference explored the reasons for and against getting into World War II.

We have this great resource here on the beach in southern Maine. Thirty-two acres and 19 buildings with a legacy of advocating and preaching for the dignity and worth of all people. Practicing and “preaching” our Universalist roots is an honor in a world so fractured by our divisions.

Two years ago when the program committee chose “gratitude” followed by “compassion” as our themes for the next two summers, we didn’t know how much we would need to affirm those ideas in our world. We have such a great legacy here—to rest our souls and bodies, yes. But also to share with one another the ways to address the challenges of our day, in a community of people united in Love.

I hope you visit Ferry Beach this summer and join in the dialogue.



### Summer Theme Songs

We are looking for songs that represent our theme of Practicing Compassion. If you or someone you know has written a chant or a song that you think fits with our theme, please email us at [registration@ferrybeach.org](mailto:registration@ferrybeach.org)

Thanks so much!

Please consider becoming a Sustaining Donor of Ferry Beach!  
Visit [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org) or call 207.282.4489 for details.

Winter Retreats: Visit [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org) for details!

January 9-11: Aging as a Spiritual Journey: Claiming our Wise Woman (facilitated by D'Vorah Kelley).

February 13-16: GAYLA Winter Reunion at Ferry Beach!

February 20-22: Deep Ecology or the Work That Reconnects with Coleen O'Connell.

February 27-March 1: Spiritual Drumming with Susan Strand



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## Summer 2015 Conference Schedule: Our Theme is "Practicing Compassion"

Register now at [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org) or call us at 207.282.4489

### JUNE

**15-20: Work Week.** An opportunity for family and friends of Ferry Beach to help clean, paint, garden, and sew, along with many other projects!

**20: Ferry Beach Annual Meeting** in Rowland Hall, Saturday, 1pm. RSVP: 207.282.4489

**21-27 and 27-July 4: KFTE, Different Drummers, and FUUTURE.** Youth camps for children entering grades 4-12. (KFTE not available in week two of youth camp.)

### JULY

**4-10: Religious Education Week.** We welcome Reverend **Tandi Rogers**, Outreach Director for UUA, who will be teaching the class from Meadville Lombard.

**10-11: Talking with Students about Ferguson.** Georgetown Professor Marcia Chatelain will teach a two-day intensive on working with students and racial justice. CEUs for social workers and teachers. Visit [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org) for more.

**11-17: Choral Fest.** Great place if you love to sing. Choir membership is not required!

**11-18: GAYLA.** A wonderful, spiritual, and fun conference for gay men of all ages.

**18-25: Family Conference on Deep Ecology.** Workshops and activities for every member of the family on honoring and protecting our earth!

**18-25: Yoga Retreat.** Anne Falkowski returns with a fabulous opportunity for you to care for your body temple in the most relaxing and rejuvenating environment.

**18-25: Kayaking!** Join Marty Burgess and the FogDogs of Ferry Beach in a wonderful weeklong opportunity to explore the Maine coast.

**25-August 1: Family and Friends.** A conference of diverse families of all ages coming together to play, make music, explore our natural surroundings, and connect to our spiritual selves. Great young adult workshops and activities. Musician/folksinger **Andrew McKnight** joins us!

### AUGUST

**1-8: UUFAF** is a great place to connect with old friends, meet new people, and enjoy the beauty of Ferry Beach. **Jodi Hayashida**, theme speaker.

**8-14: Women's Week** welcomes Rev. **Judith Campbell**. Amazing women's circles and activities planned throughout the week.

**8-14: The Spiritual Art of Aging.** Join **Carol Strecker** and **Caryn Clark** as they share their journey of spirit and aging. Includes yoga, meditation, and much more!

**13-15: Exploring the Q.** What does it mean to be a girl or a boy? How has society limited our sense of our own sexual expression? These and more questions will be explored in this two-day intensive.

**15: Emma's Revolution Concert** in GAYLA Theater, Rowland Hall, 8pm.

**15-21: Circle of Music** conference welcomes the dynamic duo of **Sandy O and Pat Humphries**. They will inspire us to remember our roots and use our voices and resources to make the world a better place. Folksinger **Joe Jencks** joins the week on Wednesday!

**15-21: PSI/Integrated Spiritual Pathways** welcomes sound healer and Peruvian Shaman **Pierre Garraud** for a week of spirituality and healing.

**21-23: Weekend Getaway.** A short sampler of all the best that Ferry Beach has to offer.

**22-29: Quilting by the Bay.** An opportunity to quilt with others in an atmosphere of support

and growth. Learn new techniques and ways of completing your projects. Coordinated by **Barbara Stroup**.

**22-29: 12 Step Intensive.** A 12 Step Conference for anyone interested in exploring how to use the 12 steps to live a life of grace. Facilitated by **Roger White**.

**22-29: The Art of Seeing: Photography** with **David Sumner and Paul Provencher**. Ferry Beach is the perfect location to photograph sunrises, nature, and anything else that catches your eye!

### SEPTEMBER

**4-7: Labor Day Weekend, featuring our Old Fashioned Family Picnic.** Live music on Saturday from 4-8pm with **Rudy Gabrielson and Friends**, fantastic BBQ starting at 4pm on Saturday and great games and workshops for the whole family.

### Conversations of Compassion

Each week this summer, conferees will have the opportunity to explore three topics in a variety of ways. Our topics:

- Caring for our precious earth
- Exploring the Q (as in LGBTQ)
- Racial Justice and Social Action

We'll provide small-group opportunities to gather and share ideas and thoughts around these issues through a series of conversations. We'll vary time and spaces so that if you would like to engage while you are here at Ferry Beach, we will be sure to make it happen!

Join us for a vacation that feeds your soul, your mind, and your body!