The Slabsides Poets Star on Slabsides Day

Visitors who came to the October 2 Slabsides Day open house were treated to a reading by the Slabsides Poets, a group of friends who have been meeting casually each month for several years on the Slabsides porch to write poetry together in the spirit of John Burroughs. The noontime event was the centerpiece of a bright sunny day. For those who missed the presentation or who would like to more thoroughly appreciate the poems, the participants have kindly made the texts available for printing in Wake-Robin. Some of the poems have appeared previously in a chapbook, Universe at Your Door: The Slabsides Poets, published in 2010 by Post Traumatic Press. All are copyrighted by their respective authors.

Slabsided by Synesthesia
By Bobbi Katz

Rich has the key.
A clutch of poets gathers on the rustic porch.
We’re ready to be inspired by John Burroughs.
His books of poems & essays once sold like bedside Bibles.

A clutch of poets gathers on the rustic porch.
Maybe shreds of his spirit, spectral remnants still stir the breeze.
His books of poems & essays once sold like bedside Bibles.

Here’s where Burroughs lived, painting nature with a rush of fresh bright words.

Maybe shreds of his spirit, spectral remnants, still stir the breeze.
I want to write a rhapsody—in green!
Here’s where Burroughs lived, painting nature with a rush of fresh bright words.
Yet inside his cabin I smell his stale, sour sweat as he serves

Autumn Leaf
By Will Nixon

You’ve settled your affairs.
You’ve painted yourself for your brief fall to earth. Your glory will become parchment, a curled shingle in the roof used by millipedes, chiggers, ants, the white threads that root mushrooms.
It is the way of the world you will be litter far longer than you held out your green palm.
Welcome, little one, to the ground I’ve walked on all my life.
You are not my beautiful death.
You are the tiny flag in my hand declaring victory for what was and what is to come.
Dear Members and Friends of the John Burroughs Association

As we write in early February, the winter is hurling everything at us—snow, ice, freezing rain, and snow again. Waiting for spring, we review the accomplishments and events of 2010, and put plans in place for 2011.

We are truly grateful for your generous support over the past year. It is through your commitment that we are able to continue our work to preserve John Burroughs’s iconic Slabsides and the surrounding Nature Sanctuary, and to promote his literary legacy.

Here are some highlights of the preceding year:

A Grant was awarded to the Association for the restoration of trails at Slabsides. This grant, from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, requires 20 percent in matching money, and will support the building of two new trails and the restoration of our two connecting trails. (See New Trails feature on page 10 in this issue.)

Restoration of the foundation of Slabsides was completed under grants from N.Y. State and the National Park Service.

Literary Awards for the best contemporary nature writing were given at the annual luncheon awards celebration, held on April 5 at the American Museum of Natural History. The John Burroughs Medal was awarded to Michael Welland for Sand: The Never-Ending Story. “Mind in the Forest,” by Scott Russell Sanders, was recognized as the best published nature essay. Awards were also given to the following books as the best nature writing for children: A Mirror to Nature, by Jane Yolen, with photographs by Jason Stemple; Cycle of Rice, by Jan Reynolds; The Riverbank, by Charles Darwin, with illustrations by Fabian Negrin; Whaling Season, by Peter Lourie; and What Bluebirds Do, by Pamela F. Kirby. Those titles will be added to the John Burroughs List of Nature Books for Young Readers

Slabsides Open House on May 16 and October 3 drew many visitors. Our featured speakers were: Eddie Walsh, manager of Tahawus Trails, LLC, the company selected to perform our trail work. In May, Walsh presented our plans for new and refurbished trails.

Poets of Slabsides were featured in October. This group of poets gathers once a month at Slabsides to write poetry grounded in nature and inspired by a given theme of the day. The group was led by Will Nixon. (See Poets of Slabsides feature beginning on page 1 of this issue.)

The Hudson River Ramble, held throughout the Hudson Valley over several weekends in September, brought hikers, birders, and those interested in John Burroughs to Slabsides and the trails of the Nature Sanctuary.

A Strategic Planning Grant was awarded to the Association by Museumwise (formerly Upstate History Alliance) under its Get Set grant program. The Board of Directors met with a facilitator in October to begin an assessment of the organization as part of the strategic planning process.

John Burroughs Association

The John Burroughs Association was formed in 1921 shortly after the naturalist-writer died. Among the Association’s aims are fostering a love of nature as exemplified by Burroughs’s life and work and preserving the places associated with his life. The Association publicly recognizes well written and illustrated nature essay publications with literary awards that are given after the annual meeting on the first Monday of April.

The Association owns and maintains Slabsides and the adjoining John Burroughs Sanctuary in West Park, New York. Open house at Slabsides is held the third Saturday in May and the first Saturday in October. A permanent exhibit about John Burroughs is in the American Museum of Natural History.

A Strategic Planning Grant was awarded to the Association by Museumwise (formerly Upstate History Alliance) under its Get Set grant program. The Board of Directors met with a facilitator in October to begin an assessment of the organization as part of the strategic planning process.

Wake-Robin is published in March, July, and November. Vittorio Maestro, Richard Milner, and Steve Thurston, editors. Send submissions and editorial inquiries to Secretary, John Burroughs Association, Inc., 15 West 77th Street, New York, NY 10024-5192 or e-mail vmaestro@nhmag.com.


We began sending Constant Contact e-mails to alert members and friends of timely news of the JBA.

Social networking was initiated with the launch of a JBA Facebook page (find our link at http://research.amnh.org/burroughs). Become a “friend” and watch for new features.

Joining the Esopus Business Alliance brings the Association into regular contact with community leaders. Slabsides is located in the Town of Esopus.

Rack Cards were designed and printed in collaboration with Woodchuck Lodge, Inc. They feature Slabsides on one side, and Woodchuck Lodge on the other. The cards have been distributed throughout the region to attract tourists and local residents, as well as students and educators.

John Burroughs continues to be in an occasional spotlight:

The Sixth John Burroughs Nature Writing Conference, “Old Lessons for a New Millennium: Nature Writing and Environmentalism in the 21st Century,” was organized by Dr. Daniel Payne, and sponsored by SUNY Oneonta. The four-day conference, which took place in June at the SUNY Oneonta conference site, included presentations of many thoughtful papers as well as field trips to Woodchuck Lodge and Kaaterskill Falls. Among the conference attendees were nearly fifty students who earned SUNY course credit.

Douglas Brinkley, in his latest book, The Quiet World: Saving Alaska’s Wilderness Kingdom (HarperCollins, 2011), includes references to Burroughs’s participation in the Harriman Expedition to Alaska in 1899. Brinkley cites Roosevelt, Muir, and Burroughs as “the popular actors in the early environmental movement.”

Ed Kanze, author of The World of John Burroughs (Abrams, 1993), was interviewed about Burroughs by Mountain Lake PBS (http://video.mountainlake.org/searchForm/?q=John+Burroughs)

Several documentaries featuring John Burroughs are in the works:

Elinor Burkett, Academy Award winner in 2009 for Best Documentary (Short Subject), is developing a Burroughs documentary and is doing some filming.

A film documenting the famous camping trips of Burroughs, Ford, Edison, and Firestone is being produced by Lynne Frazier for WGCU Public Media, southwest Florida’s PBS station.

Silver Films is producing “How the Catskills Changed America,” in which Burroughs is profiled. The crew has already been out to Slabsides.

Changes in Association personnel include:

Ev and Bob Rifenburg are preparing to retire from active participation in the Association. We want to extend our thanks to them for their tireless efforts, through many decades of service, caring for and interpreting Slabsides and maintaining its surroundings for visitors. Ev’s attentive care of the cabin and Bob’s critical maintenance will be greatly missed. We wish them well in their retirement.

Robert Abrams, Paul Huth, David Lane, Jack Padalino, H.R. Stoneback, Timothy Walsh, and Ann Zwinger are retiring from the Board of Directors, and moving to Emeritus status. We want to thank them for their many years of generous service and for their numerous contributions to the Association.

Regina Kelly, long-time member of the Board of Directors, was welcomed as a new member of the executive committee.

Plans for 2011 include our hallmark events. Our Annual Literary Awards celebration luncheon will be held April 4 at the American Museum of Natural History, and Slabsides Open Houses are scheduled for May 21 and October 1.

The activities in this newsletter make it apparent that much of our planning for 2011 involves strengthening the organization’s infrastructure as we develop a strong base for our ongoing projects and programs. Our attention for the year will be focused on both the planning and the practical. As we continue the strategic planning process, we will be asking for your input in our assessment of the strengths of the Association, and of its many opportunities for growth. On the practical side, trail work will begin as soon as spring will allow us, and we’ll be asking for your help because we hope to have all the work completed by the fall. When these projects are finished, we will begin to design a new trail map and guide, and a new
On the elegant tilt-top table
a glass box with a large brown bat inside,
ears pricked, wings splayed wide and menacing
from the furred trunk, mouth a snarl revealing
two jagged rows of thorn-sharp teeth like a cat’s.
A hissing cat’s. The five skeletal fingers
ribbing the wings make me spread my own
in a shiver of recognition. His evolved for flight,
ours, among other things, for rendering
flights of imagination: this harmless creature here,
for example, made to look like something evil
skirring towards my face. The table’s round
mahogany surface gleams above a tripod
of sinuous legs on smooth pad feet. So shiny
it invites me to study my own reflection
and wonder what you’d make of me.

Abraham was a rooster. He’d been made to fight.
He was not a fighter.
He ended up in a basement with a
“No one touch the killer!”
We brought him to the sanctuary.
He loved peanut butter and jelly.
He loved laps and Linda’s pillow. He was not a fighter. He wanted
to be held by toddlers, phi beta kappas, griever and socialists and pop stars. He wanted you to gentle
his comb
between your forefinger and thumb. It was a smooth, warm piece of a smooth, warm Abe, and it blushed bliss. It was tender
like someone who had been as unloved as a chicken
and then as loved as a chicken could be.
He grew old and full of love and died,
rubbing his head back
and forth, back and forth against Linda’s arm.
We planted
coxcomb, a wound and a growing glow.
Drinking with John Burroughs
By Richard Parisio

I came here in storm
to find the cabin looking
just the way you left it:
your straw hat on its peg
hiding a mouse nest, tin pans
hung from their nails
the thick brown Webster’s word hoard
still anchoring your desk.
But you had cleared out.

Well I tried to warn you off
in the robot voice
of the Emergency Broadcast System
but I see you didn’t heed
What brought you out here anyway
to wreck an old man’s solitude?

I hoped you’d grant me sanctuary
if only for an hour from a life
you couldn’t know, the screaming
haste of men and women revving engines.
Your Model T was just the start.
So I came here to breathe and guess
your secret: I’ll stay awhile
anyway to watch the storm hang beaded
curtains from your porch roof.
I almost see you in your rocker
contemplate the embers pulsing
in the big stone hearth
while the forest howls around.
I feel the wicker chair
still rocking, sprung
from your lifted weight.

Feels like I just stepped out.
Now you’re another visitor
too cozy in my place.
You might as well just taste
the spell of calm sweet
lonesomeness I knew
before swarms of the curious
buzzed like flies around me.

Before I go I’ll raise a glass
saluting you. Let’s drink to both
our solitudes. May they survive
the rages of this century. Remember
the swamp you drained and cleared
to raise a celery crop? Red maple,
skunk cabbages again

So be it. Swamp goes back to swamp,
Quiet’s blasted out but floods
back in again. Tell me,
after ninety years
what else did you expect?

In The Woods
By Victoria Sullivan

A task was set: Find something disgusting in nature.
But on this grey chill day, everything is beautiful
in a kind of Japanese painted scroll way:
the brown corrupting leaves, dry twigs and deep
chocolate muck. Look at the moss
in several shades of green, like a color chart
from pale jade to deep emerald.

Somewhere a duck squawks, and the dank swamp
glistens, even without sunlight, clear water
over brown decaying leaves.
Nothing is hideous today… perhaps because spring
is starting to burble up, even amidst
the utterly leafless trees.
All that my eyes see is fierce and lovely.
Some might sense the ugly here, those who cultivate
precise gardens and prefer their nature tame.

This mountainside with its rocky boulders
tumbled hither and yon might scare
a timid soul. But as I stare at this strange
destructive chaos, all I feel is the perfection
in its random stone disorder. A palette
of browns and greens and grays . . . pocked
and marked and split . . . discarded, bent, awry
. . . topple-down branches, rocks. Everywhere
muck and mud and moss on the path, and the swamp
a graveyard of fallen limbs. Yet these subdued hues
proclaim a mystery in their muted glory . . .
like at birth when the bloody crowning skull
appears, the moment of new life.

So today in wet cold March life itself struggles
to begin again its slow secret emergence
from the hibernating earth. No crocuses yet.
Don’t even think of crocuses or other early flowers.
Nor obvious buds on bare tree branches. Rather
a kind of quick melting, the softly squishy soil
after the snow is newly gone . . . bubbles in the water, as if the earth is waiting still, but almost breathing again the very smallest hint of renewal.

And something is stirring in the water, as if the spring will step forth like a goddess from the swamp. A quiet ceremony has begun and if you stand absolutely still, boots buried in mucky leaves, and say nothing, and do nothing, then you might be present for the unobtrusive arrival of this yearly miracle.

Is That A Wood Thrush?
By Kathryn Paulsen

Is that a wood thrush sharing my enthusiasm for this perfect day, sparkling green gentle and comforting?

Today I remembered to accept every gift: the warmth of another heart meshing with mine in passing, sweet scent of sunning berries a shared glimpse of blue heron kind words and confidences.

I know the wind can change, but the thrush will always have good news for me.

On Not Finding a Deer Skeleton
By Jo Pitkin

(after Nancy Willard)

In fall’s falling forest, I fail to find a single deer skull with its map of mOTTled bone and light, not rooted antler, not crusted haunch or hoof, neither a ragged pelt nor rusted marrow of heart, not even a yellowed, wary, moon-slit, marbled eye.

Instead, I hear wind’s chatter, the footsteps of dry leaves pooled at the foot of a spiral of flat, stone stairs. Where porous lichen spreads itself like a green rug over the floor of a bog pokes up a salmon-pink, speckled lung of mushroom. Trees exhale. Cliffs breathe.

Snow Music Under (Fantasy in C Major K475)
By Frank Boyer

Snow music under gesso sky.

Distance-disappearing trees brown and grey through heavy frost.

Tangled weed-straw rustles in the wind of my walking.

A blackbird leaps up and paints a moving hole in the sky.

The Animal of Blazing Stars
By Alison Koffler

Where is the animal of blazing stars, O granite teeth of the higher summits? Relentless beast, too old and essential to be jaded, padding on dark silent paws through the forests of frost.

Your heart pumps its familiar and ancient message. The belly of the house is warm, rumbling, but a path leads outside, over ice, razor’s edge of evening on a horizon of dark trees.

Black oak, hemlock and yew, trees of death and winter. The beast leaps weightless among the branches, red smoke with jaws. Where are the eyeteeth that can drill the skull’s bone, lifting you from the earth?

Strong stink of ferrous metals in the branches, animal tracks in snow below. Put me down, soft mouth, gentle catcher’s mitt of fangs. Only the cold will burn, I tell you, fabulous animal of blazing night.
The Art of Fishing  
Steve Thurston’s Gyotaku Prints  
By Margaret Hart  

[Adapted from “Catch and Release: Long Island’s striped bass are an ageless lure,” story by Margaret Hart, gyotaku prints and woodcuts by Steve Thurston, Natural History, October 2009]

We reach out from the edge of our element to the fish in theirs; that, in a nutshell, is surfcasting. The object of our pursuit is the striped bass, *Morone saxatilis*, native to the eastern seaboard of North America. The species’ intelligence, beauty, and power stir our admiration and challenge our skill and determination. Just when we think we have a handle on its movement, some nuance of nature—the heave of a powerful storm, a bitterly cold winter, an offshore shift of bait, the new curve and set of a sandbar—alters the balance. This is as it should be.

Inclement weather that defeats the heartiest of mammals and birds seems to invigorate the striped bass. When most people take shelter, the leading edge of a storm draws anglers to the surf like a powerful magnet. Setting out in the dark, my surfcasting friends and I rush to Montauk to meet the onslaught of a powerful nor’easter. The barometric pressure drops like a stone as the storm makes landfall. Fishermen, like song- and seabird alike, are staging in flocks. When the waters draw back, surfcasters inch forward. In this wild surge and vaulting sea, the fish are biting. A friend, up to his shoulders in white water alongside me, heaves in a large bass on the end of his line.

Steve Thurston, whose prints you see here, is also fishing on this day, outside of town. He packs a handful of favorite lures into a small bag that clips around his waist, which makes his surfside journey efficient and easy going. In contrast with his streamlined approach, many of us pack our surf bags with every size, shape, and color of lure conceivable until the weight of it becomes prohibitive. We also carry pliers, to remove our hooks, a waterproof flashlight, to see in the dark of night, and a length of thin rope called a stringer that we can slip through the mouth and a gill in the event we want to carry a fish back from the beach. (Most often, we release them.)

Steve started fishing as a small child, on the freshwater ponds and rocky beaches of coastal Rhode Island. In recent years, he began to follow fish along eastern Long Island, many miles from his home and work as a scientific illustrator at the American Museum of Natural History, in New York City. Steve’s grandfather Ben Thurston spent decades surfcasting on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. An enigmatic man, he camped along the outer beaches with a self-styled beach buggy

A 32-inch-long weakfish, also known as squeteague, from Montauk in June, 2004.
converted from a U.S. Army pickup truck. He was not alone: by the late 1950s an entire subculture of traveling surfcasters had evolved. Today, from Gloucester, Massachusetts, down along every rip line and inlet to the Outer Banks of the Carolinas, that pilgrimage continues.

I grew up on the Great South Bay of Long Island, where my own paternal grandfather fished all season long in his jersey skiff. The first time I saw a striped bass, I was nine years old. Uncle Pete had caught a twenty-pounder, and it was laid out whole for dinner in the backyard while he built a fire under the grill. I studied the deep shades of maroon and chestnut along each gilded stripe and noticed that the colors changed hue depending on the angle you took to view them. I had never seen a fish so large or so striking.

Then, one early July morning, my father took me to Moriches Inlet in our Cape Dory. When I looked over the gunwale, I could see clear to the sandy bottom, nearly twenty-five feet below. A large striped bass was pointing into a fierce outgoing current. The torch was lit.

Steve and I have inherited this deep passion for the sea and fishing. He can hear the condition of the surf even before he steps out the door of his rented bungalow in Montauk. He sets off down the beach well before dawn, rod and reel in hand. If he is lucky, and he often is, he catches a bluefish, fluke, scup, sea robin, skate, weakfish—or striped bass. He rinses it in the wash and carries it home. There he places the fish on its side, paints it with India ink, lays down a piece of rice paper, and gently presses so that each of its scales will be imprinted. After a moment, he carefully peels off the paper and leaves it to dry. That technique, which is known as gyotaku (fish rubbing), originated in Japan as a means of recording a prized catch—a much less cumbersome method than taxidermy. Steve takes it further as an art form, later carving a woodcut to add an element of the local land- or seascape.

Once the fish print is made, dinner can be prepared. Steve relishes a freshly filleted striped bass or bluefish, splashed with lemon juice and olive oil and baked over a driftwood fire on the beach. That’s one of the finest meals that can be enjoyed on any seaboard.

Back in the 1960s, when I was growing up, Long Island’s local bays and inlets still teemed with winter flounders, American eels, and horseshoe crabs. Pollutants such as the pesticide DDT, however, were devastating the local populations of osprey, great blue heron, and many other bird species. A decade later, further environmental contamination combined with overharvesting of commercial fish, pushed the striped bass population into a steep decline. It took strict changes in state and federal regulation—and an emergency fishing moratorium in some states—to bring the striped bass fishery back into balance. It was a close call and only a temporary reprieve for the striped bass, as their populations are declining once again. Accordingly, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission recently rejected a proposal to increase the commercial harvest of the species.

The fierce lobbying from commercial and large-scale recreational fishing interests continues. New environmental pressures and disease combine to pose a serious threat. Current regulations and management plans are outdated and poorly designed; changes are needed to save not only the striped bass, but other important fisheries in our region. We are working with conservation organizations and regulatory agencies to help bring about the necessary changes. Many surfcasters, as Steve and I do, also practice catch and release, so the fish can return, alive, to the sea. This act of stewardship is one of many that can yield sustainable rewards for all.

When conditions push the fish out of reach, we stop to appreciate the remarkable diversity of nature, the rushing tide, the boundless, blue ocean. This is as it should be.

Margaret Hart is a biologist who lives on Long Island. Steve Thurston, who earned a Master of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute, is a scientific illustrator in the Division of Invertebrate Zoology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. See more of his work at www.fishprintsite.com.

Montauk Point, northside.
Striped bass is rendered as a gyotaku (fish rubbing) print. The craft, of Japanese origin, involves painting a fish with India ink and pressing a sheet of rice paper against it (the eyes, left blank, are then inked in by hand). This fish, caught at Montauk in May, 2004, was forty inches long in life.

Below: Hickory shad from Montauk, May, 2005. Left: Menhaden, collected by the author at Fire Island National Seashore in October, 2008, was beached by blitzing stripers.
Planning Completed for New Trails at Slabsides

Planning and field inspection for the new trails at the John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary progressed on schedule into November.

Archaeological Assessment: Dr. Christopher Lindner, at Bard College, conducted the archaeological Survey, which was required under our $50,000 grant from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). Lindner’s job was to report the presence of artifacts from earlier times. To do this he studied maps from the 1800s, consulted with local historians, read early soil evaluations, and researched other references. His work brought him to the Sanctuary six times to carefully advise the design and placement of the new trails. No prehistoric evidence was found, and although there are several intriguing rock overhangs, none were determined to be historically significant. His opinion is that it is likely Native Americans would not have been drawn to this rugged terrain. Lindner identified several nineteenth-century structures, including stone walls and a culvert. These were likely part of a small commercial center located along the nearby Old Woods Road, in the far southwestern corner of the Nature Sanctuary.

Trail Design: Trail designer and builder Eddie Walsh of Tahawus Trails LLC worked closely with Lindner to relocate the northern trailhead of the new Southern Trail and to design a method of crossing the stone culvert that would leave it undisturbed. The interest value and beauty of the trails remain unaffected by these modifications. Walsh also added an interesting new connecting trail at the point where the new Southern Trail ends. The route of this new leg doubles back below the Southern Trail in a southeasterly direction to join the new Highlands Trail. The trail will have a twelve-foot ladder to traverse a steep rock ridge. This ladder trail will offer modest challenges to hikers while adding a unique element. Walsh finalized the design and entered the routes on his GPS, as a basis of the new trail map. Watch for a rough map in the next issue of Wake-Robin. With the design work completed, the project was coming together as winter began. We look forward to beginning trail work as soon as spring will let us.

Volunteer Work Plan: An important component of the Trails Restoration Project is the opportunity for volunteers to contribute. Some of the work for which we need help includes trail clearing/trail definition, sidehill construction, sidehill finishing, rock removing and harvesting, highline assistance, material moving, and assisting with stone step installation. There is a lot to do at every skill level. Some tasks sound easy, while some sound like very heavy lifting. Are you handy with clippers? Do you carry work gloves and maybe boots around in your car? Or, perhaps you simply enjoy being outdoors. This is the project for you! We expect to get underway in April and will keep a close eye on winter’s retreat. How many of Walsh’s trail flags will still be standing? If you would like to join us and see the trails take shape let us know. We need your help even if you only have a morning or an afternoon to spare. If you have not already signed up, please e-mail Joan Burroughs at jjjburroughs@yahoo.com.

Funding: Building the trails is one way you can help. Another is to help us match our state grant. We need to raise $12,500 as the financial match required under our 80/20 grant from OPRHP. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Lisa Breslof at breslof@amnh.org or mail your gift directly to The Secretary, John Burroughs Association, 15 West 77th Street, New York, NY 10024. Your support is fully tax deductible. Your gift will help open the woods surrounding Slabsides and open to visitors the paths that Burroughs walked.

For a fuller description of the Trails Restoration Project and its routes, please refer to your Spring and Summer 2010 issues of Wake-Robin, which are also available on-line in the Wake-Robin archive section of the JBA website (the direct links are as follows): http://research.amnh.org/burroughs/wakerobin_pdfs/WR-42-3-spring-10-9.pdf and http://research.amnh.org/burroughs/wakerobin_pdfs/WR-43-1-summer-10.pdf
Annual Dues

Please assist in supporting the mission of the John Burroughs Association by becoming a member. Becoming a Patron or Benefactor will reflect an even greater interest and help in the goals of the organization. **Tax-deductible dues for the membership year April 1, 2011, through March 31, 2012**

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Gift Membership of $_____ for (name and address):

Name____________________________________________ Email_________________________
Address________________________________________________________________________________

Make checks payable to the John Burroughs Association and mail to: John Burroughs Association, Inc., American Museum of Natural History, 15 West 77 Street, New York, NY 10024-5192. Alternatively you can pay by credit card online through NYCharities.org. Start at our Web site http://research.amnh.org/burroughs. Scroll down to “Now You Can Contribute to the JBA online!” and click on the New York Charities link given there. We are a 501 (3)c tax exempt organization.

*Save the Date*

Monday, April 4, 2011

Annual Meeting of Members, 10:30 a.m.

Annual Literary Awards Celebration Luncheon, 12 Noon

At the American Museum of Natural History

We look forward to seeing you there.

A Note from Our Naturalist Jason Dempsey

In early February Jason called in a report from the Nature Sanctuary. He decided that winter this year is as intense as he has ever experienced since he grew up there in Ulster County. It feels as if snow falls every three days, and the snow now nearly covers the waist-high registration box in front of Slabsides. Jason described the spectacular beauty of the hoarfrost forming large crystals on the tips of tree branches. As the morning rays angle on to the crystals, they shatter, scattering sparkling ice into space. A special entertainment of nature provided in deep winter. —Joan Burroughs
Wake-Robin
John Burroughs Association, Inc.
American Museum of Natural History
15 West 77 Street
New York, NY 10024

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The John Burroughs Association informs members through Wake-Robin and the Web site http://research.amnh.org/burroughs. Occasionally, we reach out via e-mail with news alerts and timely news. Please send your e-mail address to the Secretary (breslof@amnh.org) so that we can better serve you. Members are encouraged to submit articles or news items for publication. Deadline for submissions to the Spring 2011 issue of Wake-Robin is March 11. Direct inquiries to the editors.