

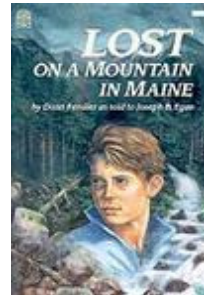
Donn Fendler

Maine author

Lost On A Mountain in Maine

Visits Grade 6

September 2003



Do you remember reading and enjoying Lost On A Mountain In Maine when you were younger? If you do, then you can appreciate how exciting it was for students and faculty to meet the author, Donn Fendler.

This fall, after my sixth grade reading classes had read the book, students met and interacted with Mr. Fendler. Thanks to the efforts of MJHS librarian, Mrs. Vital, we were able to meet with him in small groups in the library and had the opportunity to listen to Mr. Fendler's narration of his life changing experience on Mt. Katahdin in Baxter State Park. Following the narration, there was a Q. and A. period, in which many questions directed to Mr. Fendler began with, "Why did you...?" or "Why didn't you...?" Students eagerly touched the jacket that Donn had worn on the mountain, asked many questions having to do with the leeches and bugs, as well as obtaining his autograph on photocopies of the route he traveled while on the mountain. Stephanie Harsh made the observation that he was funny and when he told his story, she felt as though she was on the mountain with him.

I would like to share a few of the students' replies to the question, "Did you enjoy meeting Mr. Fendler?" Meagan Perry was anxious to finally meet him and to *hear* him tell his story. She also wanted to know what he looks like today. Jessica Willson wrote, "I like to hear the author's point of view, whether he was sad, upset, disgusted, or maybe just plain grossed out!" Coady Richardson responded with, "He wasn't boring and I like to hear people speak with emotion in their storytelling." Kylee Locke thoughts were that he was the *real* person that had been lost on the mountain, and that was cool!

It was a pleasure for me to have my parents, Leo and Betty Demchak, enjoy the presentation, as they both remember when Donn was lost. My father was a Boy Scout from Anson whose troop

participated in an honorary parade for Donn in Augusta after he had been found. My mother lived in a town closer to the mountain and recalls the headlines in the newspapers and the tremendous concern for Donn's safety.

Students and faculty also met Mrs. Fendler, who accompanied her husband to our school. A few years ago, Donn and his wife traveled to the Kathadin area and visited the area where Donn walked out of the woods and ultimately was rescued. The Fendlers live in Maine for part of the year and truly enjoy meeting students all over the state. We hope to have him return to MJHS next year.

Christine McQuarrie
MJHS Grade 6 Teacher

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