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**FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS HELPS DISTRIBUTE 18,000 BOOKS
TO MAINE KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

Company's technicians help distribute books for *Read With ME.* literacy outreach program

PORTLAND, Maine (September 30, 2009) – School is back in session and FairPoint Communications technicians have been out on the road helping to deliver 18,000 book bags to every incoming kindergarten student in more than 400 schools. Joined by members of the Maine National Guard and over 100 community volunteers, the FairPoint technicians helped deliver the book bags to the schools throughout Maine.

All of the books and information are provided at no cost to the participating schools and students, thanks to the *Read With ME.* literacy program. Karen Baldacci, the First Lady of Maine, who is a former kindergarten teacher, spearheads *Maine Reads*, the umbrella organization for *Read With ME.*

Through *Read With ME.*, every kindergartner in the state has the opportunity to receive a book bag, which includes a copy of this year's featured book *A Place to Sleep*, which was written and illustrated by Holly Meade of Sedgwick, Maine. The book explores how and where different animals sleep. Meade's illustrations are collaged watercolor paintings. Meade has produced more than twenty-five books and is the recipient of several awards including a Caldecott Honor and a Charlotte Zolotow Award for Creative Writing.

A Place to Sleep has been specially-designed and reissued for *Read With ME.* to include activities for young readers. Each book bag also includes literacy information and a bookmark developed by the Maine Department of Education and illustrated by Meade. School libraries will be provided with DVDs produced by FairPoint Communications in collaboration with Maine Public Broadcasting. These DVD's offer tips about reading aloud.

Through their support of *Maine Reads*, FairPoint Communications awarded *Read with ME.* through a \$75,000 grant to help underwrite the program and provide all of the books and information at no cost to the schools and students. *Maine Reads* is one of the local community programs supported by FairPoint. For more information log onto www.mainereads.org.

About FairPoint

FairPoint Communications, Inc. is an industry leading provider of communications services to communities across the country. Today, FairPoint owns and operates 32 local exchange

companies in 18 states offering advanced communications with a personal touch including local and long distance voice, data, Internet, television and broadband services. FairPoint is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol FRP and FRP.BC. Learn more at www.FairPoint.com.

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