

Summertime in the Belgrades

... Serving the Central Maine Lakes & Kennebec River Corridor

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 8



Community Events Make A Comeback

by Esther J. Perne

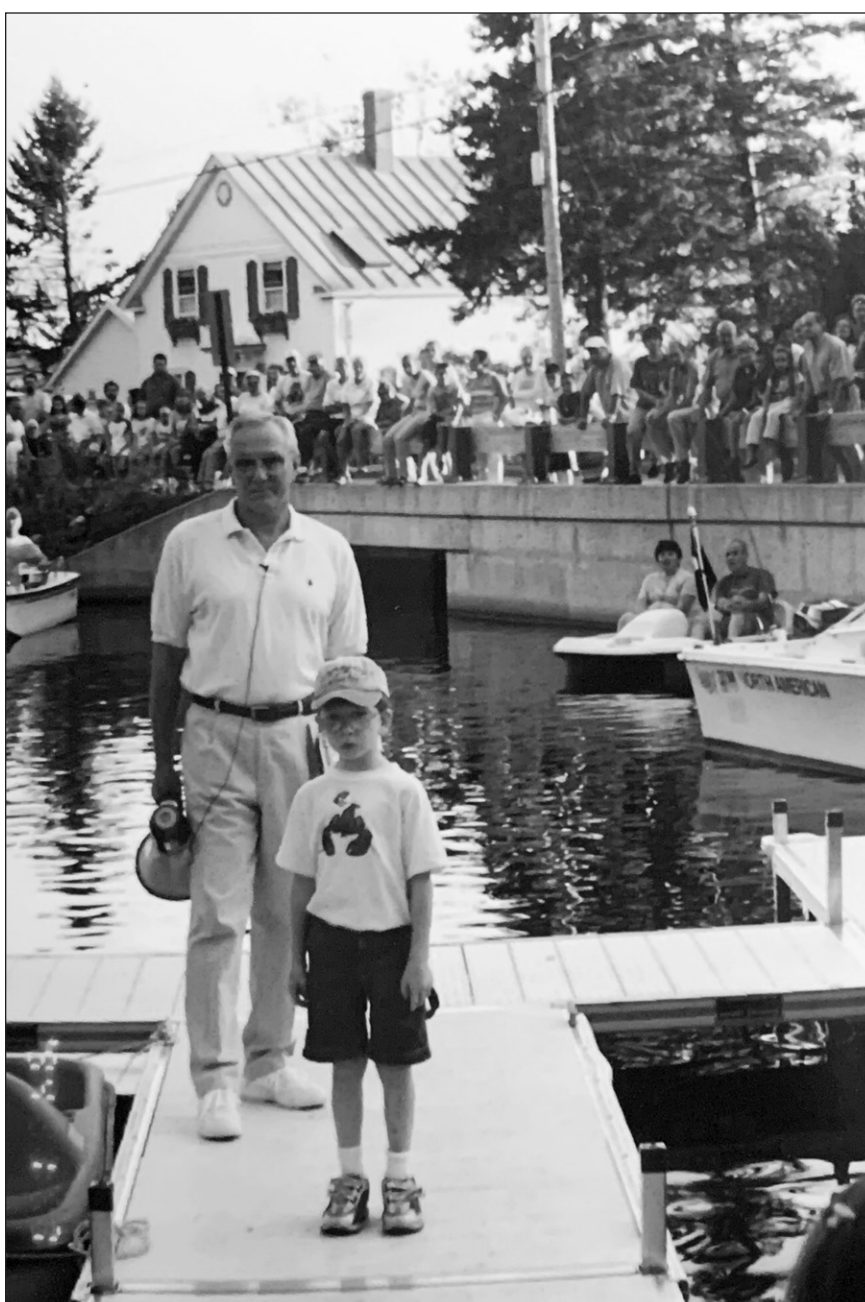
On Saturday, August 7, a large crowd (large for this area) will hang over the bridge between Belgrade Lakes and Rome, gather closely on Lakepoint Real Estate's shorefront on the stream and edge in by watercraft as one by one loon imitators stand on the dock and make various admirable loonly noises.

Their endeavors are very serious. For 4 decades the Belgrade Lakes Loon Calling Contest has brought oohs and aahs (but not loons) to the bridge area and this summer the tradition continues. Sign-up will be at 6:30 pm, calling, divided into 3 age groups, starts at 7 pm.

This year's contest will begin with a moment of silence for the late Horatio Castle of Castle Island Camps who founded the contest and for lifetime Belgrade summer resident and avid loon calling attendee, Stephanie Rothchild, who passed away from injuries sustained during Belgrade's recent microburst.

Other seasonal contests, festivals and gatherings that pivot around community traditions, from single to week-long events, are making a welcome comeback, too. Some, such as Old Halloween Day, have already taken place. Others are on the summer agenda:

On Saturday, July 31 at Farmington Summer Fest downtown Farmington




Horatio Castle with a young contestant circa 2000.

will be holding a day-long, family-centric series of events including live music, a craft fair, a talent show, sales, food and fireworks in a celebration that draws crowds from throughout the area.

On a longer schedule, August 1 through 8, Skowhegan River Fest provides many family-friendly and Kennebec River-themed activities from standup paddle boarding, to Moonlight Madness, bed races, lobster and chicken barbecues, Family Fun Day, a glow stick river run, a whole lot of live music and fireworks.

Waterville's signature celebration, Taste of Waterville, on Wednesday, August 4, will be held at Head of Falls on the Kennebec River. The Taste will include a variety of food from food truck and restaurant menus, cultural demonstrations, ethnic entertainment, beer/wine gardens and live entertainment including Downeast Brass, Borderline Express and Stolen Mojo.

And, the celebration with the theme that says it best, Madison-Anson Days, takes place August 20-22 with a return of the popular boat tour along the Kennebec River, pig scramble, petting zoo, dunk tank, parade, dynamite cookoff, music and food.

And the theme? After the crazy year we had it's time to get out and celebrate: "Why we love living in Maine!" 

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Play On! Comedy August 19, 20, 21

The Vienna Woods Players are preparing their second presentation, a play by Rick Abbot, "PLAY ON!!", for August 19-21 at the Vienna Union Hall. This three-act performance is about a small community theater group preparing and staging a play; Act I, Practice; Act II Dress Rehearsal; and Act III, the Performance. As they enact an amateur playwright's attempt at an Edwardian England murder (more or less) mystery, all kinds of things go wrong and the worst nightmares of a play director and cast should prove hilarious for the Vienna audiences.


In the cast of Play On!, Rosemary Baker's character attempts to direct the play "Murder Most Foul", caught between the idiosyncrasies of its amateur playwright, played by Jan Collins, and its amateur cast in which: Jason Woofenden is the heroic and romantic lead who endeavors for the hand of ingenue actress, Allison Kuhns; Tim Davis and Joan Cook portray members of the wealthy nobility targeted with stealth by the allegedly murderous, (but charming) villain, Don Peterson; and (yet to be found actress) the house maid caught up in the drama of the Edwardian period, "What, on Saint Swithins Day"? While the playwright attempts to highlight the 'nuances' of the play, stage manager and prompter, Laura Church, struggles to just bring out the words and actions in each act; and sound, light, and set technician Janet Roderick tries chaotically to keep the set and sound effects



together. At the center of the plot is a gem with a curse that spells death, as enacted by the various players.

The V.W. Players are based at The Union Hall, Vienna's 133 year old cultural center (5 Vienna Road) and contribute to over a century's tradition of theater, music, dance in the Hall (also basketball, graduations, Grange meetings, etc.). The cast draws from Rome and Belgrade, as well as Vienna, and beyond to Mt Vernon, Fayette, Wilton, and Portland. After performing together for years with Cheryl Herr-Rains writing and/or directing, they organized in 2019 in order to provide some year-to-year continuity in planning,

and to enable her to share tasks with players and shift toward a producer role. She is joined by Karla Arceneaux, assistant director, June Cauldwell, who uses her 'Sewly For You' skills to collaborate in creating costumes and Greg Cauldwell, updating set construction.

Performances will be Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 7:00 with a Saturday matinee at 2:30. Current community COVID precautions will be respected. As seating is limited, reservations are recommended by emailing viennaplayers@gmail.com. This is a play in which you don't want to encourage the cast to "break a leg", as it might happen, and they'll just have to Play On! 

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Table of Contents

Community Events Making A Comeback..... 1

Play On! Vienna Players Comedy..... 2

Table of Contents: Another Awesome Issue 3

Drive the Family to a Family Movie Night..... 3

Calendar of Events: Concerts, Cruise-Ins, Community Fests and Much More..... 4

Take It Outside With Pete Kallin: Counting Loons 5

Loon Calls: Monitoring the Chicks..... 6

Invasive Plants by Dale Finseth, KCSWCD..... 7

The Belgrade Lakes Map: Maybe It’s Time To Explore..... 8-9

Thwarted Invasive: Stopped By A CBI..... 10

Dining Suggestions: Eat Well; Then Exercise 11

Notebook: Last Minute Notes, Thoughts and Additions 11

Business Directory: Getting Ready For Fall? Follow This List..... 12-13

Dams Keeper Report: Ponds Are All Full Nows..... 13

Books by Martha Barkley: Finding Freedom by Erin French..... 14

A Wake-Up Call 15

Drive Out To A Drive-In



New, small and nearby, the Narrow Gauge Drive-In in Farmington offers the perfect family movie night outing: a scenic drive, a small town setting, a good film and a unique experience. With roughly only 325 drive-in theaters left in the United States, out of 4,000 at their peak, and only 7 left in Maine, which peaked at 39, a drive-in outing is as much historic adventure as it is entertainment.

The name Narrow Gauge has historic connotations, too. Narrow gauge or two-footer trains (the tracks were two feet wide) networked throughout much of Franklin County, grandly transporting summer folks in luxury parlor cars from Farmington to the Rangeley Lakes resorts and hauling logs on flatbeds along the Carrabassett River route to the many mill towns, including Farmington.

Open since last summer, the drive-in is a popular attraction for the many families who want to maintain social distancing, stick to their family pod and have a get-out-of-the-house experience. With shows every evening except Tuesdays, the gates open at 8 pm, the movie begins at 8:30 pm. Tickets are \$15 per carload, \$10 on Mondays, a maximum of six persons per car, and may be purchased at the drive-in or online. Bring the confirmation to be scanned. A snack shack with restrooms is available.

Other entertainment options at the Narrow Gauge complex include an indoor cinema, the Big Sky Grill, monthly Craft Fairs, the Whistlestop Concert Series and camping in conjunction with the concerts. Future concerts include Maine Dead Project August 7 and Rustic Overtones August 14. Craft Fairs are scheduled for July 31, August 14 and September 11. For movie information go to narrowgaugecinema.net or call 778-4877.



Summertime in the Belgrades

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— Calendar —

Events, outings, places to go, things to do.

Check out the outings listed below....

Thursday 7/29 - 7 Lakes Alliance Adopt-A-Shoreline Plant Id Training, 12 pm, register at www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes Village.

Friday 7/30 through Sunday 8/1 - Eastern Maine Agility Dog Show, Fairgrounds, Route 201, Skowhegan.

Friday 7/30 and every Friday - Farmington Farmers' Market, 10 am-1 pm, parking lot near Better Living Center, Front Street, Farmington.

Friday 7/30 - Live Animals with Chewonki - Owls of Maine, 3 pm, 495-6039, www.7LakesAlliance.org, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Friday 7/30 - Waterville Rocks Free Concert, the Wolff Sisters, free, family friendly outdoor concert, all ages, 5:30 pm, music starts 6 pm, Head of Falls, Waterville.

Friday 7/30 and every Friday in July and August - Historic Johnson Hall's Free Waterfront Concerts, 7/30 Lauren Crosby, 6-7:30 pm, on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Saturday 7/31 - Maine Artisan Bread Fair, Maine Grain

Alliance, real bread and everything associated with it, workshops, samples, live music, over 60 vendors, 272-6844, 9 am-3 pm, admission free, parking \$5, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Route 201, Skowhegan.

Saturday 7/31 - Farmington Summer Fest, 9 am, fun all day, music craft fair, sales, food, Meetinghouse Park and Narrow Gauge Cinema, downtown Farmington.

Saturday 7/31 and every Saturday - Skowhegan Farmers' Market, 9 am-1 pm, Somerset Gristmill, corner of Court and High Streets, Skowhegan.

Saturday 7/31 - 7 Lakes Alliance Wild Mushrooms in Maine walk, 2 pm, register at www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes Village.

Sunday 8/1 through Sunday 8/8 - Skowhegan River Fest, celebrating Run of River, whitewater recreation area, events all week, runofriver.org/river-fest, downtown Skowhegan and greater Skowhegan area.

Sunday 8/1 and every Sunday - Belgrade Lakes Farmers Market, 9 am-2 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Tuesday 8/3 and every Tuesday - Early morning paddle on Great Pond, 7 am, canoes, kayaks and paddleboards available, no fee, The Center for All Seasons, Route 27, Belgrade Lakes.

Tuesday 8/3 - Tinkergarten - Outdoor Playtime, 495-3508,

10 am, Belgrade Public Library, Depot Road, Belgrade.

Wednesday 8/4 - Taste of Waterville, food and music festival, entertainment, bite booths/food trucks, restaurants, beer garden, informative walks, noon-11 pm, www.taste-ofwaterville.com, Head of Falls, downtown Waterville.

Wednesday 8/4 - 7 Lakes Alliance Native Bumblebees Talk, 3 pm, rsvp www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes Village.

Wednesday 8/4 and every Wednesday - Skowhegan Farmers' Market, 3-6 pm, Somerset Gristmill parking lot, downtown Skowhegan.

Wednesday 8/4 and every Wednesday - Weekly Cruise-In, 377-5550, 5-8 pm, live music, 50/50 raffle, food and ice cream specials, Fast Eddie's, Route 202, Winthrop.

Wednesday 8/4 and every Wednesday - Weekly Cruise-In, 645-2145, 5:30-7:30 pm, Dutch Treat, Route 2, Wilton.

Wednesday 8/4 - Waterfront Concert, Sugarbox, free, 6 pm-sunset, Mill Park, downtown Augusta.

Wednesday 8/4 - Book Discussion - The Overstory, registration required, 495-3508, 6:30 pm, Belgrade Public Library, Depot Street, Belgrade.

Wednesday 8/4 and every Wednesday in July - Music at the Gazebo, concerts by area youth, 7 pm, Meetinghouse Park, downtown Farmington.

Continued on page 7...



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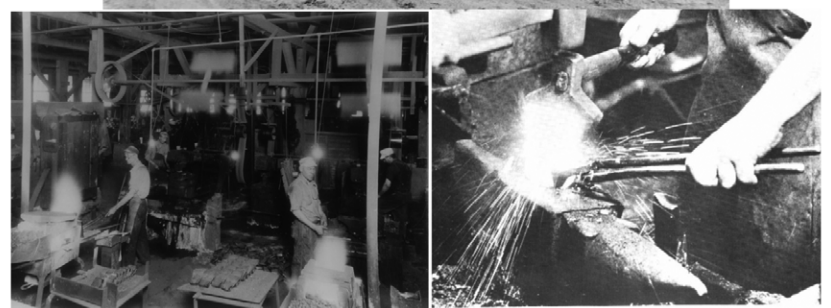
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— Take It Outside —

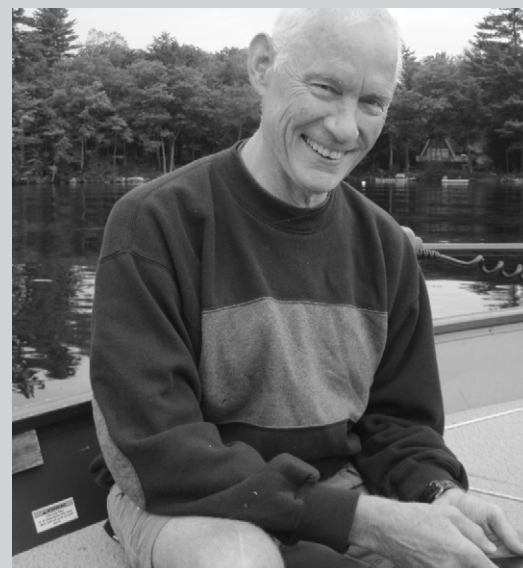
The third Saturday in July is the annual loon count in Maine, coordinated by Maine Audubon. See: (<https://www.maineaudubon.org/projects/loons/annual-loon-count/>). This year's count took place July 17th and was the 38th annual count in this important ongoing citizen-science project dedicated to better understanding one of Maine's most iconic birds. Every year over 1000 volunteers, of which I am one, attempt to count all the loons on over 300 Maine lakes at the same time. It's organized like a military operation, and I am the coordinator for the dozen or so volunteers on Long Pond, which is divided into 9 Survey Areas, with a 10th in Ingham Pond. Early in the morning all counters head for their assigned section of the lake to be in position to count all the adult loons and loon chicks in their area between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM. I left my dock around 6 AM, planning to fish for a bit before picking up my counting partner, Fred Knight, at his dock on the way to our Survey Area. It was overcast but with practically no wind, almost perfect conditions for spotting loons.

Our assigned area was a cove that has been used for many years by a pair of loons that typically nests on a secluded beach on a small peninsula. For several years, this pair was unsuccessful in raising very many chicks because land-based and avian predators have found the nest and eaten the loon eggs before they hatched. Two years ago, the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA), as part of their ongoing study of loons on Great and Long Pond (more information in Dick Greenan's loon articles), built and installed a floating raft nest with an avian guard (to prevent predation by eagles, ravens, and blue herons). The nest was moored about 20-feet offshore from the usual nesting site to provide the loons some protection from terrestrial predators such as raccoons, minks, et al.. When land-based predators have to cross water to reach the nest, the defensive advantage shifts strongly in the loons favor! For the second year in a row, the loons successfully used this nest and on the morning of the count, there were two brand new loon chicks in the cove. As of press time, I had not received results from all of my counters but it appears likely that both adult and chick numbers are up somewhat from last year (2020 Long Pond, including Ingham: 38 adults, 3 chicks). Already 5 chicks have been reported.

I also got a little hiking in and some foraging for raspberries and mushrooms, which are becoming more common after the recent rains. As the summer progresses and COVID pandemic restrictions continue to ease, more and more visitors are returning to our area. A young family from CT recently decid-

Counting Loons

by Pete Kallin



Left: Long Pond Survey Areas.
Above: Fred Knight, Loon Count Assistant.

Below: Loon parent feeding crayfish
to chick on other parent's back.
(Photo by Dick Greenan)



Continued on page 10...

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Call of the Loon

This is the season for loon chicks throughout the Northeast and, as we stated last week, it's been a good and productive summer here in the Belgrades, at least loon-wise! The weather has been another story! We are now monitoring eleven chicks between both Great and Long Ponds which is great compared to last year's total of just four that fledged. In other words, only four made it to twelve weeks of age or so and were able to adequately feed themselves and fly off with the fall's migration.

With eleven chicks this year, we're really able to observe some interesting feedings and sometimes, attempted feedings with adult crayfish that are just too large to swallow or a sunfish that's twice the size of the chick's head! These can be trying times for everybody.

A Reminder – we have our very own Lee Attix presenting the latest data on Belgrade's Loon population at this year's Belgrade Lakes Association Annual Meeting on August 8th from 4-6pm at the Belgrade Golf Course. You will want to make this program and can register via the below email.

If you have a particular question regarding our Belgrade loon population, please email your inquiry to: info@blamaine.org and we will try to answer your question either in this column or via email.

*Dick Greenan, Chairman,
BLA Loon Preservation Project*



A pair will ride on their parent's back for the first 2-3 weeks to rest and warm up.



This chick's sibling was napping underneath under the mother's wing.



A wide-eyed Long Pond two-day old chick.



Both parents feeding their chick with a crayfish and a golden shiner – at the same time!



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— Conservation Too —

More on Invasive Plants

By Dale Finseth

An invasive plant is defined as a plant that 1] is not native to a particular ecosystem/area, 2] causes economic or environmental harm or may cause harm to human health and 3] which can establish and spread in natural areas.

They are called “invasive” for a reason. While only a small fraction of our “non native” plants are considered “invasive” once you can recognize a few of them, “invasives” seem to be everywhere. This week I’ll discuss a few of those that seem more prevalent or seem to be on the increase. Those we readily identify are Japanese Knotweed [some people refer to it as bamboo]; Multiflora Rose [those large clumps of white flowers often seen in abandoned fields. See photo.]; Honeysuckle [often taking over at the woods edge]; Autumn Olive [a very fragrant shrub often found along roads edges]. Another we have recently seen spread is Japanese Barberry [a thorn covered shrub with groups of leaves along the twig] and Asiatic Bittersweet vine with its tree choking habit and you begin to get the picture. Most of these I’ve mentioned are already established in parts of Kennebec County. Management can best be done by knowing what they look like and limiting their spread. That is an ongoing effort since we are unlikely to completely eradicate them.

However, there are other “invasives” that we still have a chance to control and limit their spread. The Tree of Heaven, Giant Hogweed [also a dangerous health hazard] and the Pale Swallowwort vine are examples of these. These plants are not widely established in this part of the State yet. If you identify them and carefully remove them you can help to limit their spread. The goal for these is total eradication from the site. Check the Maine Natural Areas Program list of fact sheets to determine if a particular species is considered invasive in Maine and which may be an ‘early detection’ variety. The Maine Natural Area Program is the ‘go to’ State agency in Maine for answering questions and getting information about invasive plants. http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive_plants/inv sheets.htm There is also a generic State website for all types of invasives i.e. animals, forest pests, aquatic plants, and terrestrial plants http://www.maine.gov/portal/about_me/invasives.html These websites have ‘gallery views’ available which provide good photos to use in identification.

There is also a new, publication, the Maine Invasive Plant Field Guide. It is a handy 3.75 x 8”



Multiflora Rose in full bloom.

field guide mounted on rings so that it is easy to flip through. To order one with credit card (Master Card or Visa), please phone 207-287-2801. Or call 207-287-8044 or email maine.nap@maine.gov with questions. Locally we need to come to grips with the invasive plants that are damaging our natural areas, habitat and native plants. These invasive plants can become established by our own actions if we plant them by mistake i.e. Burning Bush and Autumn Olive were often planted by homeowners. Or we could mistakenly allow an “invasive” to become established in our back yard. Check the edge of the woods on your property and any overgrown areas. That is often the area where the invasive plants can become established.

Check the Maine Lakes Center or Cooperative Extension, or our office and pick up some of the handouts.

Our natural landscape is part of what Maine is all about. Maine just won't be Maine if the plants dominating our landscape are all from away.

- When buying plants for your yard. Select native plants.
- Replace invasive plants in your garden with non-invasive alternatives.
- Monitor your property in order to identify and eradicate invasives before they become established.
- DO NOT attack the problem with indiscriminant herbicide use. They may have a place in your management plan but they are NOT a magic bullet. Be careful with their use.

- Check out the Maine Natural Areas IMapInvasive program and become a citizen scientist.

Managing invasive plants in the landscape is part of our effort to protect our Maine landscape.

For information about any of our conservation projects please contact Dale Finseth at 622-7847, x 3 or check our website at www.kcswwd.org

theme every week, 3-5 pm, Head of Falls, Waterville.

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday - Waterville Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, Front Street, Waterville.

Thursday 8/5 - 7 Lakes Alliance Water Quality Update, 3 pm, rsvp www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes Village.

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday through 9/2 - Music on the Village Green hosted by Chris Poulson, 8/5 Rick Roy performing, 6:30-8 pm, Route 27, Belgrade Lakes.

Continued on page 11...



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...Continued from page 4

Wednesday 8/4 through Saturday 8/7 - Drinking Alone, 474-7176, Lakewood Theater, Route 201, Madison.

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday - Outdoor Storytime 495-3508, 11 am, Belgrade Public Library, Depot Road, Belgrade.

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday - Gardiner Classic Car Cruise-In, 592-7019, 3-7 pm, music, demonstrations, giveaways, 50/50, local foods, www.gardinermainstreet.org, Waterfront Park.

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday - Art in the Park, new



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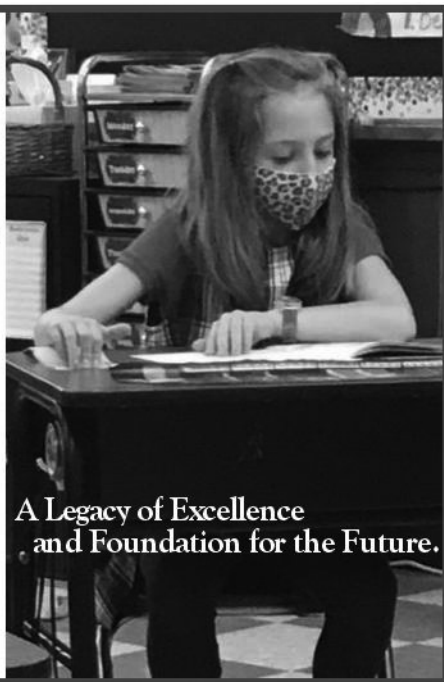


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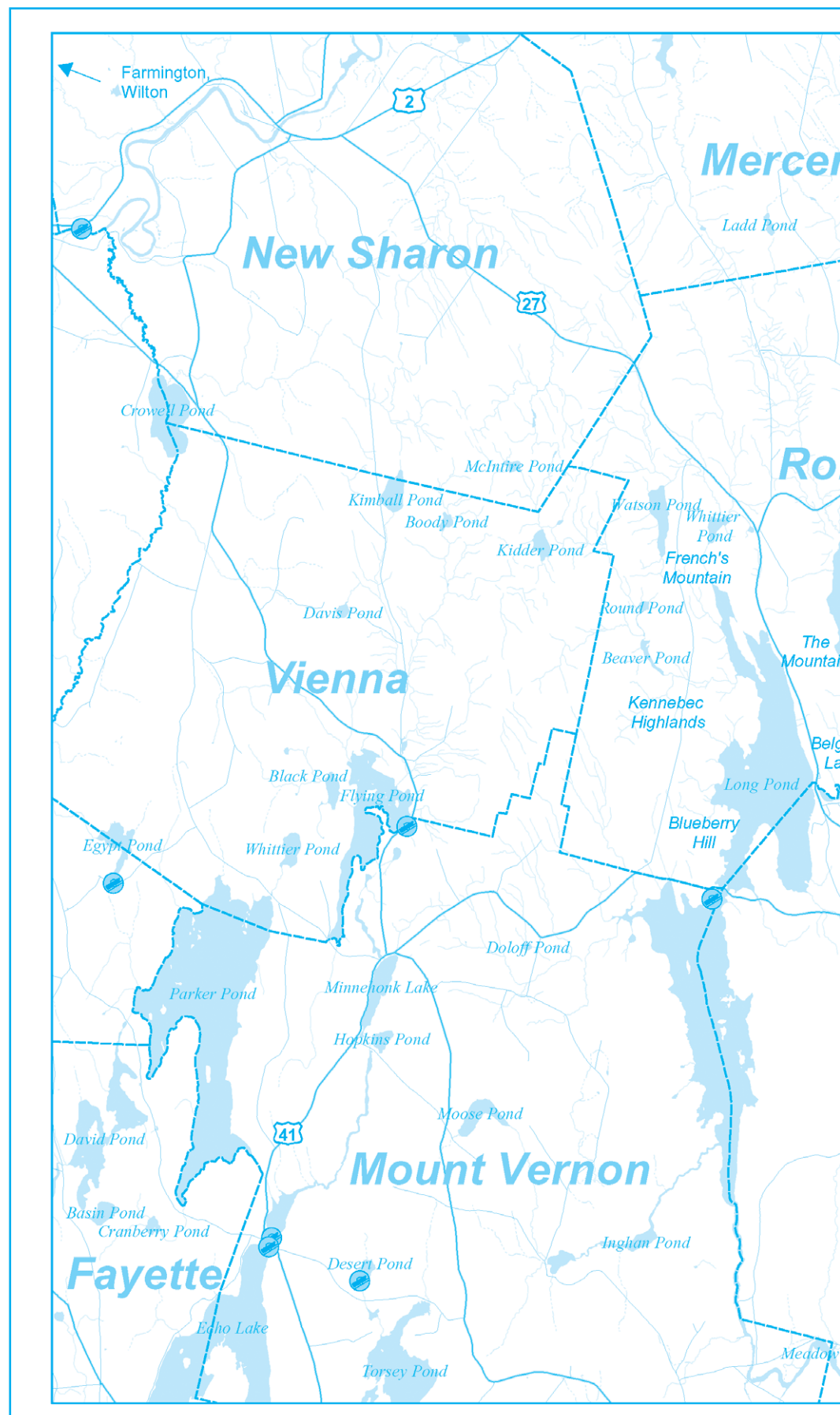
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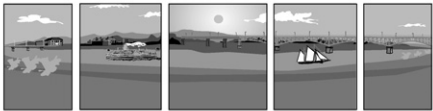


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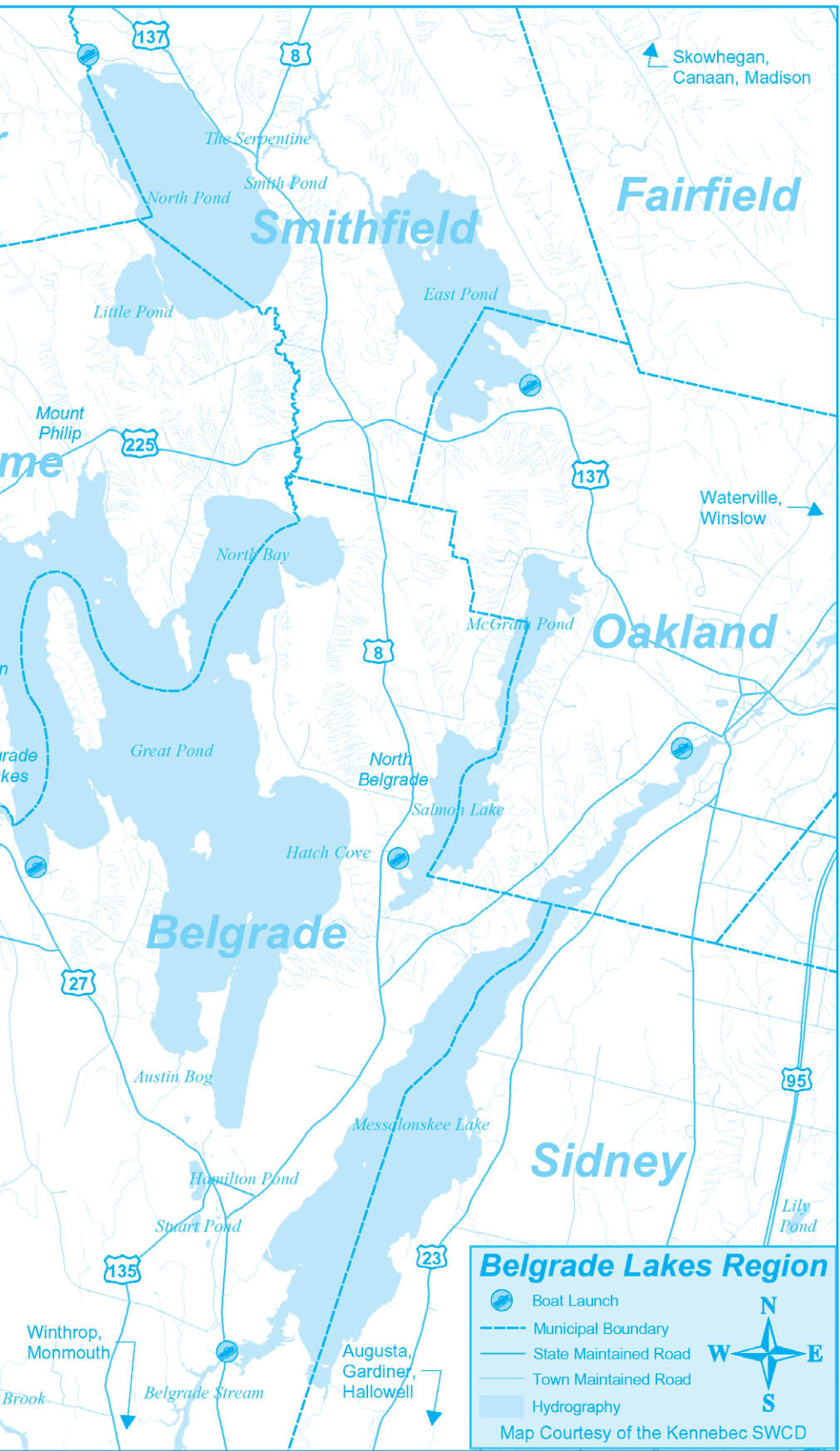
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7 Lakes Courtesy Boat Inspector Thwarts Milfoil from Entering Long Pond



CBI Javin DeHaven inspecting a boat.

A routine shift at the Long Pond boat launch took an unexpected turn recently for 7 Lakes Alliance Courtesy Boat Inspector Jarvin DeHaven, a lecturer of English at Perdue University.

Upon inspecting a boat about to enter Long Pond, DeHaven quickly identified two, one-foot long sections of a suspicious plant that he thought likely to be invasive milfoil. According to 7 Lakes CBI Coordinator, Cody Pajic, "DeHaven followed milfoil inspection protocol to a T. His trained eye identified the plant as suspicious but invasive milfoils are almost impossible to distinguish from native milfoils without DNA analysis. Dr. Bernacki, professor of biology and invasive species ecology at Saint Joseph's College of Maine, ultimately confirmed what we suspected – the large plants were indeed invasive variable milfoil."

Sharon Mann, who heads 7 Lakes Alliance's invasive aquatics program, noted that one "very small fragment can root quickly and eventually lead to serious problems, so preventing two very large intact sections from going into Long Pond was a great save." Mann has overseen milfoil remediation efforts since 2018. This includes removing boatloads of milfoil from May to October by hand and diver assisted suction harvesting. She also oversees the very labor-intensive effort to put down burlap barriers over the milfoil plants in an ongoing battle to fight of spread of a "very aggressive invasive plant that survives in a wide range of climate conditions, including under ice." Mann noted that the thought of this aggressive plant spreading into another one of our Belgrade Lakes keeps her up at night. On a positive note, she pointed out that "our relentless efforts have contained the existing infestation and kept it from spreading further into Great Pond."

The success of our invasive aquatics program to date is only possible with the support of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the towns of Rome and Belgrade, Belgrade Lakes Association and 7 Lakes Alliance supporters.

7 Lakes leads workshops on Invasive aquatic plants identification for citizens to adopt their shoreline and coordinates invasive plant paddles for volunteers in collaboration with our lake association partners. Please call 207-495-6039 or visit 7lakesalliance.org for more information or volunteer opportunities, including those relating to milfoil.

...continued from page 5

ed to "take it outside" and mom, dad, son, and daughter went fishing with Mike Guarino on Great Pond. Lake and had a great time, as daughter, Doina caught her first bass. Her smile is almost as big as her fish! Recently my daughter took my youngest grandson on a hike up The Mountain, where he practiced his "bouldering" skills, getting ready for the 2032 Olympics, which will take place in Australia! These young families are definitely in the "Take it Outside" mode for their vacations and helping to make memories that will last a lifetime

for their young children.

Take advantage of the rest of the summer and get out on the lakes or hike or bike in the hills. And take a kid along. You will be creating memories that will last. Check out the events at the 7-LA web site and the sign in front of the MLRC. Events are being presented as conditions allow and the schedule is fluid. There is a live animal presentation on Friday, July 30th and a Mushroom Walk on the 31st. Check the web site for more information and to register (<https://www.7lakesalliance.org/>).



Left: Tim and daughter, Doina, having a great time on Great Pond with Mike Guarino.

Right: Grandson, Bayard, hiking The Mountain early in the morning with his mom.





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• **Riverfront Barbeque & Grille and Gin Mill Lounge**, world class barbeque, seafood, pasta and vegetarian entrees, full service dining, catering, bulk take out, 300 Water Street, Augusta, www.riverfrontbbq.com, 622-8899

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• **H.J Blake's for Goodness Sake's**, fresh, homemade, tasty take out, signature lobster rolls, hot dogs, burgers, scenic outdoor seating, 945 West Road, Belgrade, 462-2280

• **Sadie's Boathouse Restaurant** at Great Pond Marine, hearty contemporary American fare, 25 Marina Drive, Belgrade Lakes, 495-4045, 242-1273

• **Winterberry Farm Café**, homemade treats, pie, cookies, granola bars, grilled organic cheese sandwiches, veggies, drinks, 538 Augusta Rd, (Route 27), Belgrade, 649-3331

Mount Vernon

• **Old Post Office Café**, fresh-baked goods and quiches, omelets, homemade soups, specialty sandwiches and salads, 293-4978

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• **Engine 5 Bakehouse**, fresh, from-scratch baked goods including pies, cookies, bars, and gluten free items, *take-out only*, 140 Western Ave, Waterville, engine5bakehouse.com, 616-3772

• **Pete's Pig**, barbecue, catering, carry out, limited dining, 35 Water Street, Waterville, www.petespig.com, 616-0969

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Notebook

Annual Lake Association Meetings Coming Up

• Find out the latest lake news, meet lake community members, connect to best water protection and preservation practices:

• **Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA)**: Sunday, August 8, 4-6 pm, Belgrade Lakes Golf Course, keynote speaker Lee Attix, Loon Conservation Associates, register at info@blamaine.org

• **North Pond Association**: Tuesday, August 10, 7-8 pm, virtual, www.NorthPondMaine.org

• **McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association**, Thursday, August 12, 7:30 pm, Pleasant Point Park, McGrath Pond Road, Oakland, mpslassociation@gmail.com

Volunteers Needed for Taste of Waterville

• Help the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce

...Continued from page 7

Thursday 8/5 and every Thursday through 8/26 - Oakland Waterfront Park free concerts, 6-8 pm, Waterfront Park, Old Belgrade Road, Oakland.

Friday 8/6 - 7 Lakes Alliance Milfoil Stream Support at Robbin's Mill Stream, 8 am, www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, Robbin's Mill Stream, Hoyt's Land, Rome.

major fundraiser. Volunteers are desperately needed to assist with the Taste of Waterville, Wednesday, August 4 in downtown Waterville. Assignments may include setting up of tables and chairs, entrance check-in, clearing and cleaning tables, parking monitoring, breakdown and pre-loading or emptying of transport trailers. Many time slots available starting at 7 am through midnight. To sign up visit <https://signup.com/go/LaKQHku>

Free Weeklong Camp for Middle-Schoolers

• **Camp Brilliance**, a Waterville-area summer camp for girls and gender-expansive youth that focuses on art, activism, coalition building and celebrating youth brilliance is open free of charge to grades 5-8 in Central Maine. Camp will be held August 16-20, 9 am-3 pm. No geographic requirements; attendees must be dropped off and picked up from camp each day in Waterville. hghw.org/camp-brilliance.

Friday 8/6 - Skowhegan Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Tournament, 474-3621, 1 pm, 18-hole scramble, \$400/team, Lakewood Golf Course, Route 201, Madison.

Friday 8/6 - 7 Lakes Alliance Live Animals with Chewonki - Predators, 3 o, www.7LakesAlliance.org, 495-6039, 137 Main Street Belgrade Lakes Village.

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www.hathawaymillantiques.com

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The Apple Farm, 104 Back Road, Fairfield,
453-7656, www.applefarm.us

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Waterville Creates, 10 Water Street, Suite 106, Waterville,
616-0292, www.watervillecreates.org

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www.belgradelakesmarine.com

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27, Augusta, 1-800-303-9511, 623-2300, www.skowsavings.com

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gandlcontractingmaine.com
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See Directory on page 11

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LakeHome Group, 75 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, 495-2500, www.lakehomegroup.com

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Pat Donahue, Lakepoint Real Estate, 730-2331, pldcamp@msn.com

Stephanie Yeaton, Lakepoint Real Estate, 495-4046, 592-5577, stephanie@belgradelakepoint.com

Trisha Cheney, Lakepoint Real Estate, 716-6494, trisha@belgradelakepoint.com

Amy Bernatchez, Lakepoint Real Estate, 314-2353, amy@belgradelakepoint.com

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RESTAURANTS

See Dining Directory on page 11



The Dams Keeper Report

We are all experiencing a free, all expenses paid, trip to England this month. Hope you're enjoying yourself! Think WEATHER!!

The ponds are all full now. You can turn off the spigots! So much for the drought – at least here in the Belgrades.

Long Pond is presently 3" ABOVE full pond which means that the water going over the 100' spillway/walkway at the Wings Mill Dam is 3" deep. Great Pond is 3.72" also above full. Messalonskee is 3.6" below full pond with their electricity generation and Salmon/McGrath is now 1" above full pond. With 2.28" of rain in just the past ten days, it looks as if the water table is beginning to stabilize and the ponds are responding accordingly by filling back up.

As I write this week's column, they are now forecasting just .34" of precipitation for the next ten days which may imply that this cold, soggy weather pattern has finally blown itself out and we can get back to the Chamber of Commerce weather for which the Belgrades are known. I sure hope so. I wish I had invested in umbrellas instead of Dams!

RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Granite Hill Estates, 60 Balsam Drive, Hallowell, 626-7786, 1-888-321-1119, www.granitehillestates.com

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WINE AND SPIRITS

Tree Spirits, 152 Fairfield Street, Route 23, Oakland, 861-2723 or 465-3007, www.treespiritsofmaine.com

Enjoy the family, your vacation and just maybe, you might be able to put those umbrellas and rain coats away!

Dick Greenan

Chairman, Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



Pulitzer Prize-winning Author Richard Powers to Appear at Community Read Event

Richard Powers, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Overstory*, will join readers virtually for an author's talk on August 26. This fascinating book explores the many dimensions of relationships between people's lives and trees. Powers will share his perspectives and answer questions for readers. Community members can also join other Community Read activities including a Book Group discussion of the *Overstory* on August 4 at 6:30.

The Community Read, sponsored by The Belgrade Library, Belgrade Historical Society and 7 Lakes Alliance, is open to everyone. Participants can join in person with via zoom. For information on locations and other activities, see www.townofbelgrade.com/library.



Changes?
Updates?
New contact information?
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Finding Freedom by Erin French

by Martha F. Barkley

"The ability to touch a complete stranger with a plate of food, to feed them and awaken their senses while filling them up with joy--it's an intimacy that you can't help craving. It's an intimacy that can only be made with food--a reason why restaurants can be so enchantingly addictive."

The Lost Kitchen is a thriving small restaurant, seating 40 guests only, in nearby Freedom, Maine in the middle of nowhere yet known around the world. Talk to anyone who has had a meal cooked by Erin French, author of this autobiography, and you will be envious of her dinner delights.

At first I thought this book was all about food and recipes, but I kept reading.

Reservations for meals became so very problematic because of the volume of telephone calls that Erin French tried an original idea, just like every recipe she has developed through a lifetime of loving cooking for family and friends. "Postmarking a postcard on April 1 and sending it off to Freedom," was the simple idea where the lottery-style drawing of post card winners for a phone call scheduling of dinner seating. "It felt personal and honest...no redial, no exhaustion, no rushing." It also revived the little post office in Freedom.

I am surprised how open and personal the author is about her problems she experienced beginning as early as age five. Eating that warm crunchy donut at her dad's restaurant revealed a world where her father seemed happy and her grandpa whistled in the kitchen. Prior to that her dad was not happy at home, during those all important formative years.

The daily struggles of her mom to dance around her dad's drinking and the differences with her sister are portrayed in great detail. Her story is so very extraordinary, that sometimes I read almost too much about the intricate difficulties. I Neve Promised You a Rose Garden is the dark classic which came to mind.

With every turn there were problems except when she began to experience the joy in her dad's small, greasy spoon restaurant. Erin French learned quickly but had scars on her arms from kitchen burns. She helped in the long hours of early morning prep for breakfast until late at night cleaning and driving the drunks home, including her dad. One drunk was over thirty miles of driving after her long hours of labor.

Her dad took advantage of her. She escaped his rule by attending college in

Boston even though she had earned a complete scholarship at the Orono campus of the University of Maine. I loved that her mother supported this decision by tearing up the Orono offer and not telling her husband. "He was brutally honest that the cost of tuition for a year at Northeastern was as much as a brand new Harley-Davidson..." and Erin would drive the Harley drunks home week after week from her dad's restaurant.

A pregnancy without the town boyfriend marrying her drove Erin's dad nuts. Dropping out of college after two years. The family loving her son Jaime, such a beautiful name for her son, I love you in French. Marrying later, with her husband adopting Jaime and running a restaurant in Belfast with full capacity seating. Living over the restaurant gave Erin the stairway she wanted to give her son Jaime attentions anytime in spite of tension with her husband.

A heart wrenching divorce with two days of incarceration due to medications prescribed by a doctor for years of anxiety. Erin's aunt taking her to the airport for rehab somewhere. Separation from her son Jaime and the pain of her husband keeping her son from her, even preventing phone calls.

Amidst all the trauma, I was struck by her one phone call allowed did not go to her mother at one point of her treatment for doctor prescribed drugs. Instead of calling the one person who probably saved her life, she called the Belfast restaurant to make sure the staff was running her successful business smoothly without her. She had trained them well and cooked ahead for her weeks of rehab.

I will not spill the beans about the rest of the story of desperately missing her son. Throughout she constantly refers to foods and the warmth provided. Even that delicious meatloaf the family enjoyed at home despite the drunkenness of her dad. He lovingly shares his secret meatloaf concoction, so look for his recipe revealed in Finding Freedom. Yes, lots of cooking ideas in these chapters, even from her dad's business.

Many freshly picked herbs and flowers from the field provide beauty and taste at her table. Making homes for her husband and Jaime, creating restaurant warmth and beauty are delved into with lots of labor, love and creativity. I wonder if the cover and back photo of a flowery table are a bit over the top? What do you think?

Continued on page 15....

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A Belgrade Lakes Association Educational Seminar

Tuesday, August 10th @ 4 to 6 pm

The 7 Lakes Alliance Headquarters (formerly the MLRC)

Our featured speaker is Mr. David Rocque, retired State of Maine Certified Soil Scientist, Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources. *Mr. Rocque has 35 years of experience and this workshop is a great opportunity to get free, common-sense advice on improving your septic resources for enhanced water quality.*



- How does a septic system work?
- How do you maintain it?
- How do you determine whether you are in an area of sensitive soils that can cause a "short circuit" where effluent goes into the lake?
- How do you find and inspect the biomat?

There will be time for your questions and answers. Please RSVP to Info@BlaMaine.org.
We look forward to seeing you there!

Belgrade Lakes Association
137 Main Street, PO Box 551
Belgrade Lakes, Maine 04918
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A Wake Up Call

What do you notice after you drink coffee? Are you more alert? Awake? Able to process information? Is it possible that those living with memory impairment might benefit from a morning serving of caffeine? A study by Johns Hopkins University was able to provide information that caffeine may boost memory consolidation, the ability to strengthen memory and make memories more permanent. In the study participants were shown various photos and given caffeine after; they then came back the next day and were tested. Participants that were given caffeine after being shown the images were better able to identify the images from the previous day. This process implies not only does caffeine provide more alertness but may also play a role in memory.

As with most things: moderation is important. Too much caffeine for someone living with memory impairment may exacerbate some symptoms like paranoia and anxiety, so be cautious of how much caffeine is being consumed and when it is being consumed. Try going for a nice early morning walk that finishes with a cinnamon iced coffee! Check out a recipe from the Northbridge Eat Fresh, Eat Local kitchen:

Cinnamon Iced Coffee

- 1 oz Cinnamon Bun Syrup
- 4oz Strong double brewed coffee chilled
- 3oz half and half cream
- Garnish with cinnamon Powder
- Whipped Cream (optional)

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...continued from page 14

The poison ivy chapter is a riot. Made me itch my brown moth rash. Trailing a streamline renovated trailer around Maine for catered suppers was intriguing. I wish she still did that and we could have a community meal at the gazebo area. Read this heartbreaking story with victory in her world famous restaurant not too far from here.

I saw a television segment this summer on PBS showing the small cottages her husband built for pandemic servings offering social distancing last year. What a great innovation as Erin French also added more local products to her business, yet keeping it small.

I googled the distance from Belgrade to Freedom, about 35 miles and gas may cost \$35. The meal is expensive, with wine from her mother's advice in the cellar added, so be prepared for a feast that apparently is worth every ten dollars. Walking from the parking lot to the renovated old mill is charming with the rushing waters nearby as music for your sit down meal of only 40 special dinner guests. Women rule this business with the exception of one husband who is the dependable dish washer. Bless his heart!

Erin French even thanks her estranged dad at the end of this memoir. "You may never read this, but without you I'm not sure who I would be. Thank you for introducing me to the kitchen. I found my life's passion standing at the stove, and it's all because of you."

The dedication means a lot to me. "For the women of the Lost Kitchen...my lost sisters. Your grace, grit, and everlasting love keep lifting me up."

They are a happy bunch and waltz around you as you eat, serving gracefully. No rushing the meal since the guests have all evening together, course after unique course and toasts to each other's pure enjoyment.

How far she has come from "I would inch forward to live because I had one small, sweet, kind, and gentle ten-year-old reason to, and that one reason alone was more than enough." Bravo Erin French for sharing her life decisions and battle with doctor prescribed drugs. Maybe one reader will find solace in her story.

Give this book as a gift to the special cook in your life. Share this memoir with a troubled friend. Read it for your own enlightenment about how incarcerated people are treated and how rehab can make a difference.

Erin French does not claim to be a chef because she never went to school to learn gourmet cooking. Instead she learned from an early age in her dad's restaurant, working in the grill line to put out plate after plate to a hungry bunch in Freedom. Now she serves different dishes, developed over her lifetime, back home once again in Freedom, Maine.



Mid-Maine Global Forum – Inaugural Linda Cotter Speaker Event

What is the Biden administration facing in the Middle East? Will there be a deal with Iran? Can the next blow-up between Israel and Hamas in Gaza be prevented? Are there any positive developments in a region that seems to know only conflict?

Ambassador Dennis Ross will discuss these and other issues. The Mid-Maine Global forum is pleased to host Ambassador Dennis Ross as the speaker for our inaugural Linda Cotter Lecture. Ambassador Ross is a leading expert on the Middle East, former Middle East peace envoy, former senior U.S. diplomat, and currently counselor and distinguished fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. The Mid-Maine Global Forum is thrilled to be able to host our distinguished guest this summer.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to follow Colby College protocols. This will be a fully vaccinated event. Registration will be handled by SchoolDoc.com (CampDoc), a leading electronic health record system that is HIPPA approved. Registrants will upload their vaccination card, indicate their meal choice, and make their payment all through this web service.

Please join us as Ambassador Ross shares his perceptions on the current situation in the Middle East.

Date: WEDNESDAY, August 11th, 2021
Place: Schair-Swenson-Watson Alumni Center, Colby College
(See campus map at <http://www.colby.edu>) Park at rear of building.
Time: 6:15 Reception and Cash Bar
7:00 Dinner followed by Keynote Address and Q & A

Choice of Entree:

- Grilled Vegetable Milhojas: grilled summer vegetable with a chiffonade of fresh basil and olive and balsamic drizzle (vegan, made without gluten-containing ingredients)
- or: Roasted Frenched Chicken: free range frenched roasted chicken breast served with blistered green beans garnished with fried shallots, and a red lentil ratatouille pilaf (made without gluten-containing ingredients)
- or: Grilled Salmon: grilled wild salmon with tamari sesame ginger glaze, pan-roasted bok choy, and lemongrass scented rice (made without gluten-containing ingredients) Wine will be served with dinner.

Price: \$45 per person As seating is limited, please RSVP as soon as possible and before the deadline of August 1st to:

app.schooldoc.com/register/midmeglobalforum

You will create an account, find instructions to register for the event, make your credit card payment, indicate who you would like to sit with, choose your dinner, and upload your vaccination card. If you need assistance, the SchoolDoc (CampDoc) Support Team can be reached Monday - Friday from 8am-5pm at 734-619-8300

We look forward to seeing you in person, honoring MMGF Founder Linda Cotter together, and gaining insight on the Middle East from our esteemed speaker, Ambassador Dennis Ross. Thank you so much!

The Mid-Maine Global Forum Board: Steve Ball (President), Mary Benziger, Margy BurnsKnight (Vice-President), David Greenham, Michael Griffin (Treasurer), Sylvia Jadcak, Steve Knight (Secretary), Bill Lee, David Richards, Joan Sanzenbacher, Crystal Shamas-Douglas, Jerry Tipper

For more information on Ambassador Ross go to: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/experts/dennis-ross>
For more information on the MMGF go to: <https://midmaineglobalforum.org>

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