

# Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 2

## Just A Small Town In Central Maine

by Esther J. Perne



Photo by Ethan Perne

Just a small town in central Maine: pick-up trucks outside the local restaurant, cars passing through slowly, errand stoppers, kids on bikes, the occasional jogger...and so much more - adventure, history, a waterside setting and stories.

In the bygone days it was a huge undertaking to travel to another small town let alone move to one, and why do it? After all, small towns were complete. They had one of everything - church, school, post office, fire station, library, grange hall or meeting house, doctor and that all-purpose, supplied-with-everything general store.

Today, it is easy to visit a small town or several of them all in the same outing. There's a reason for that...it's called incredible scenery, back roads with rural character, fascinating yard art, a look at lifestyle, shopping along the way, for fresh eggs, home baked goodies, honey and maple syrup, vegetables, fruits and flowers and, absolutely, properties for sale.

Today, along the way are venues that once were in population centers, offering the occasional entertainment, history programs, bingo, food sales, library events, community coffee times and activities for varying ages. There are access points to lakes and streams. And, there are trailheads - to trails not on a map, or so it seems.


Want to know what's up, or where to find something or even directions? If there isn't any locals hangout - usually a table where coffee and tales flow, the post office will do, or the library, or the town office, or the general store if it hasn't disappeared or the community center or church or the local bulletin board. Now there's a story about life in a small town: read the notices.

Someone has lost a cat, someone else has found one (different color). Handyman available, call anytime except during fishing and hunting seasons. Could someone please help find a dock. Ditto for dog. Public supper coming up and, yes, it's ok to eat the pie first.


Read the posters: Take notes on a band concert, an old home day, hikes, paddles, volunteers needed, fairs and sales, once in a summer or all summer long, food donations desperately needed, puppies for sale.

When it's time to top off a good visit to the lakes, the hills, the outdoor recreation and the slower pace just add a small town with pick-up trucks outside the local restaurant, cars passing through slowly, errand stoppers, kids on bikes, the occasional jogger and simple, satisfying outings and events on the schedule.

Continued on page 2

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Photo by Ethan Perne





### 60<sup>th</sup> Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival

June 20, 21, 22 & 23, 2024  
Litchfield Fairgrounds - Litchfield, Maine

**The Gibson Brothers (NY) S**  
Country Gentlemen  
Tribute Band (MD) F, S

**Hemingway Brothers (ME) T, S**  
Katahdin Valley Boys (ME) F

**Emcee - Sandy Cormier**  
Sound - Blistered Fingers

**Nothin' Fancy (VA) T, F**  
Kevin Prater Band (KY) F, S  
High River F, S

**Blistered Fingers (ME) T**  
Robinson's Gospel (MA) Sun

**GPS DIRECTIONS:**  
Camping: 30 Plains Rd., Litchfield, ME  
Day Parking: 2422 Hallowell Rd, Litchfield, ME

Gate Opens 8:00AM (Sunday) June 16, 2024  
Daily Gate Times Are 8:00AM-10:00PM

**Ticket Prices Per Person:**  
Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before April 1st \$85  
Thurs - Sun 4 Day Advance: Before June 1st \$95  
Thurs - Sun 4 Day At Gate: \$100  
Children 16 & under Free with adult  
Camping Free Thurs Sun with Weekend Tickets  
Early Camping Sun-Wed \$10/day per camper  
Camping/Night Without Weekend Ticket - \$10  
Guest/Visiting Sun-Wed - \$10/Person per day  
Dogs \$10/Entire Stay  
All Tickets Are Non-Refundable

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Thurs. 4PM-9PM - \$25  
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Maine Student Art Awards



Photo courtesy of Titi de Baccarat

In an exciting series of competitions that are a testimony to Maine’s young artists, their teachers and their parents, the artwork of high school students is recognized annually in the state for three categories of awards and can qualify the students for scholarships toward the Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Maine College of Art & Design. Additionally, the Maine Arts Commission curates an annual students art exhibit from these entries which is featured throughout the Maine State House Complex.

The first of the competitions, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are the nation’s largest, longest-running (since 1923) and most prestigious scholarship and recognition program for teenage artists and writers. The program allows teenagers from across the country to join a legacy of celebrated artists and authors and leads to future opportunities in the arts. Some of the Scholastic Art Award winners in Maine are also chosen as the Congressional Art Award Winners, six from each district.

The Congressional Art Competition, established in 1982, is sponsored every spring by the Congressional Institute. Students submit entries to their United States Representative’s office (districts 1 and 2 in Maine) and panels of artists in that district select the winners who receive recognition in both their district and in Washington, D.C.

From the Scholastic Art Award winners a separate jury selects works for the Maine Excellence in Arts Education Awards which the Maine Arts Commission oversees for it Maine Excellence in Arts Education Exhibition in Augusta, which took place through May.

The 2024 awards ceremony, which was organized by the Maine College of Art and Design, the State’s Congressional offices and the Maine Arts Commission, the Maine Student Arts Awards, was held in March at the Portland Stage Company. The ceremony celebrated over 200 high school students. Gold and silver winners of the National Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards were honored as well as individual students whose artwork was selected to be displayed in the Maine Excellence in Arts Education Exhibition in Augusta.

For more information visit [artandwriting.org](http://artandwriting.org)

Sections of the above information are excerpted from the 2024 Maine Region Art Awards Ceremony program.



Summertime in the Belgrades

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## How Climate Change is Affecting the Belgrade Lakes Watershed

Recent extreme weather events in the Belgrade Lakes region are a very visible reminder of how climate change is affecting our watershed. More frequent, intense storms cause major tree damage, power outages, destruction of homes; these storms can also have a profoundly negative impact on the water quality of our lakes. Flooding and significant storm runoff from shorelines and upstream sources put dirt, pesticides and pollutants in our streams and lakes - including phosphorus, an essential nutrient driving algal blooms (which can be toxic). This erosion of sediments into our lakes is referred to as "external" nutrient loading. With extended warm weather in the summer and fall months, less oxygen is present in the lower waters, which can trigger the release of phosphorus from the lake bed. This is referred to as "internal" nutrient loading.

### Impact of Rising Temperatures

Rising air temperatures, in addition to directly affecting water temperatures, mean less snow, later ice-in and earlier ice-out. Less ice coverage during the winter means extended periods of open water, creating the potential for more shoreline erosion and a longer growing season for many invasive plants, such as variable-leaf milfoil. The warmer lake water temperatures also create ideal conditions for cyanobacteria ("bad" algae) to bloom. Cyanobacteria are better suited for warm water than many of the "good" types of algae that we need in the lakes to sustain the food chain. Cyanobacteria can also produce toxins, which can be harmful to humans and pets. While we haven't measured any toxins in the Belgrade lakes, it is likely only a matter of time.

According to Dr. Danielle Wain, 7 Lakes Alliance's Lake Science Director, all seven lakes in our watershed are under threat. Dr. Wain points out that "the combination of warmer air and water temperatures, increased internal and external nutrient loading, creates a perfect storm for unhealthy lakes that are at risk for sustained algal blooms."

**What Can Be Done to Reduce the Impact of Climate Change in Our**

### Watershed

A major focus of the year-round work at 7 lakes Alliance is to reduce run-off into our lakes. In addition to the **319 Program** at 7 Lakes Alliance, the **Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)** completes extensive projects throughout the watershed for homeowners who want to do their part to reduce erosion into our streams and lakes. Becoming **LakeSmart**-certified is another impactful way to ensure that your property has buffers and other measures to stop run-off. If you would like to discuss how you might partner with 7 Lakes with a YCC project or LakeSmart review, please call Stuart Cole at 207-495-6039.

### Save the Land to Save the Lakes

Recognizing that conserved land in our watershed plays a vital role in saving our waters, 7 Lakes Alliance is working to conserve 30% of our watershed, up from approximately 10% today. This goal, while ambitious, is in keeping with national standards for land conservation. Undeveloped land is 10x more protective of water quality as it filters and stops run-off from entering our streams and lakes. Highlands and wetlands are particularly effective in protecting water quality - in addition to shorefront land. Water quality protection is the #1 priority in selecting which land should be conserved. In addition, conserved land provides opportunities for recreation and connectivity with nature that fosters well-being in our community. Providing wildlife habitat, is yet another benefit. Not to be overlooked is the fact that having clear lakes and conserved land has a major economic impact that benefits our entire community.

We are honored that many local landowners have entrusted 7 Lakes Alliance with conservation easements that forever protect land that protects the lakes. 7 Lakes Alliance also conserves land that is donated or purchased, through the support of many generous donors. Please contact Noah Pollock at 207-495-6039 if you would like to discuss the opportunity to donate land or an easement with 7 Lakes Alliance, a nationally accredited land trust.



## Memories and Tidbits from the Belgrade Historical Society

Submitted by BHS member Rod Johnson



Who knows for sure exactly what year the Annual Belgrade Boat Parade started? I really do not know, but can vouch for 1996 as a contender. That year my wife Doris, dog Oreo and I entered our craft, a Harold Webster built boat (cedar plank covered with fiberglass cloth) powered by 2 antique outboards. It was shaky going for us, as neither of the two outboards would pump water and stay cooled, so we alternated as needed when one gave up the ghost. Doris bailed steadily as I tinkered the old motors, and Oreo stood proudly on the deck. After finally getting into Mill Stream and back out, we headed straight for the landing where our pals Ralph Pope and Jim Sawyer were standing by with a truck and trailer. We drove the water laden boat right onto the semi-submerged trailer and



hailed it for the last time in history. That night at dusk in the field at Woodland Camps, we removed the motors and retired them, and politely saluted boat builder Harold Webster- then tossed the boat into the bonfire. Thar' she blows! Fortunately, there are a few of these jewels that were cared for and or restored, that still appear from time to time on the Belgrade Chain of Lakes. Three of our residents that I know of, have these glass over cedar relics today: Bill Redlevski, Frank and Kim Haggan and the Fuller family at Camp Markland. Harold built at least one boat each winter in his cellar, where Ernie Merkens lives now. His son David often helped and may have built a few himself after Harold's passing. [belgradehistoricalsociety.org](http://belgradehistoricalsociety.org)







— Take It Outside —

Father’s Day Fishing

By Peter and Barb Kallin

This has been an extremely busy summer for me. Recently, one of my daughters and I were comparing our busy schedules. I mentioned that I had a column due and would rather spend my time out fishing. She offered to write my column for me as a Father’s Day gift so that I would have more time to go out fishing. So, for the first time in the 10+ years I have been writing this column, I have a co-author in my byline. The next half dozen paragraphs are from my daughter, Barb.



Four-leaf clover

“In one of my earliest memories of my father, we were playing in the backyard, sometime in the late 1970’s, and he suddenly rolled over and plucked a four-leaf clover out of the grass, showed me, and stuck it in his shirt pocket to gift it to my mother, later. This wasn’t a one-time occurrence. Over the course of my childhood years, my dad was known to often reach down and pluck four leaf clovers out of thin air. It happened a lot on our walks, or when he was mowing the grass. It happened so often, my mother and I would sometimes beg him– separately or together– to find one and then point to the general area, to actually let one of us find it. This never worked, even if Dad did find one and try to just generally point to it.

Imagine my surprise, one day in my early forties, when I was out mowing my own grass and I looked down and found one... and then ten minutes later, found another four-leaf clover! When questioned about his spotting technique, Dad would demur, “They just pop out at me. They don’t look like the other three-leafers all around them.” Pressed further, he’d talk about his job, hunting for Russian submarines in the Atlantic, during the Cold War, and talk about “studying patterns.” I, too, concur “four-leafers” jump out at me now and it’s not unusual for me to find 4 or 5 in an afternoon if I’m outside near a clover patch somewhere. I don’t always find them if I purposely look for them, though.

My memories of “Taking it Outside” with my father span my whole lifetime. When we lived in Brunswick, ME, and I was about 7 or 8 years old, Dad camped outside in our backyard with me and my brother, David, in a small, two-person tent. Family lore has it, Dave and I started bickering about who had more stars on their side of the tent. Dad told us the only way to resolve the conflict was to count the stars on our respective sides of the tent. Needless to say, Dave and I both quickly fell asleep, counting stars. Since David’s a lawyer now (and I’m a special education teacher), I know I was simply, as my brother’s responsible elder, helping him hone his arguing skills while I sharpened my experiential teaching repertoire, but I have other memories, too.

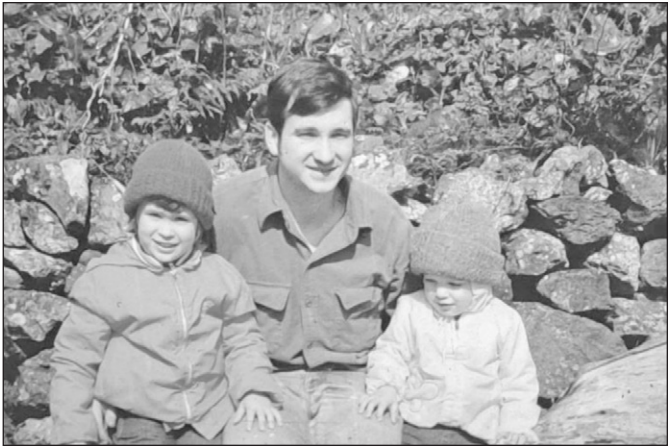
More recently, on a dark, clear night last October, here in the Belgrades, Dad and I took my 2 rescue dogs out for an evening walk, to look at a meteor shower. I may (or may not) have spotted some meteors, otherwise known as shooting stars, super subtly, in my peripheral vision. Then I saw something that looked like either an airplane or a satellite, moving resolutely against the dark sky, in a single direction; followed by another in its identical trajectory; and another; and another; and another.... I pointed them out to my father and he stared at them for a bit and said, “I think they’re military aircraft. Commercial airplanes don’t fly that close together, but the way those (15-plus planes) are going- they’re all headed Northeast. Probably out to the Middle East.” (Where a few days earlier the current Gaza conflict had begun).

It never ceases to amaze me how nature puts patterns together, as part of our human lives and outside activities. Dad’s told me of the importance, in identifying flora, for example, of knowing what something looks like in the spring; in the summer; in the winter....

Unofficially, summer’s already arrived. The mums are blooming. It’s strawberry season. The hummingbirds have returned. Finding our joy in the better weather seems like a common pursuit. But, as we find our joy, both individually and collectively, let’s also never stop learning about all the cool, natural stuff happening all around us. Look out for patterns; be open to the unexpected; and bring a parent (or child!) outside. You might find a four-leaf clover. Or something even more meaningful. My four-leaf clover streak hasn’t ended yet, and Dad and I regularly send pictures of our finds back and forth to each other- even as other family members roll their eyes in our direction. Happy Father’s Day! Happy summer!”

Check out the picture of Barb and Dave hiking in the Azores in 1982 with their much younger dad. Also, the four-leaf clover plucked and gifted to my wife on the morning walk we took the day I drafted my half of this column. I also managed to get out on the lake to fish a bit

Continued on page 14...



Barb and Dave hiking in the Azores, 1982.

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Calendar

...Through Sunday 6/23 - Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival, 873-6539, great bands, food, camping Litchfield Fairgrounds, 30 Plains Road Litchfield.

...Friday 6/21 - Birding Walk, 7 Lakes Alliance, led by Julia Hanauer-Milne, 7:30 am, 495-6039, Fogg Island Preserve, Spring Hill Road, Mt. Vernon.

...Friday 6/21 through Sunday 6/23 - Barn Sale, Winterberry Farm, Route 27, Belgrade.

...Friday 6/21 - The Mavericks, rock and country, doors open 5:30, concert 6:30 pm, 465-9648, Bowl in the Pines, Snow Pond Center for the Arts, Sidney.

...Saturday 6/22 and Sunday 6/23 - MHA Downeast Horse Congress Horse Show, 850-1773, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Route 201, Skowhegan.

...Saturday 6/22 and Sunday 6/23 - Garage Sale, Winthrop Lions Club, to donate 624-2971, will pick up in Kennebec County, Sale on Route 202 across from Fire Station, Winthrop.

...Saturday 6/22 - Guided Hike with Maine Master Naturalist Liz Koucky, 7 Lakes Alliance event, 495-6039, Quill Hill Trailhead, 25 Drury Lane, Rome.

...Sunday 6/23 - Concert for Robin: a fundraiser and celebra-

tion of life for musician Robin Worthley, 2-5 pm, 582-7144, Johnson Hall Opera House, Gardiner.

...Monday 6/24 through Friday 8/16 - Camp Golden Pond, weekly day camp for ages K-6th grade, 495-3481, Center for All Seasons, Belgrade.

...Monday 6/24 through Sunday 8/4 - Atlantic Music Festival, a series of concerts featuring world-class musicians, including emerging artists, (888) 704-1311, atlanticmusicfestival.org, Colby College, Waterville.

...Monday 6/24 through Friday 8/2 - Summer Day Camps, explore the outdoors with nature-themed weekly sessions, 238-4250, L.C. Bates Natural History Museum at Good Will-Hinckley.

...Monday 6/24 - Western Maine Foothills Band, 7-8:30 pm, Meetinghouse Square, Farmington.

...Tuesday 6/25 - Chewonki's Natural History: Vernal Ponds presentation, 3-4 pm, 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Tuesday 6/25 - The Blenders, stunning harmonies, great tunes, Rock on the River concert series, 7-8:30 pm, Bandstand, Hallowell.

...Wednesday 6/26 through Saturday 6/29 - Monmouth Fair, "a little fair with a lotta pull!" midway, exhibition hall, bicycle giveaways, pulling contest, stage show every night, free park-

ing, admission 12 and under free, 13 and over \$7, www.monmouthfair.com, off Route 202, Monmouth.

...Wednesday 6/26 - Invasive aquatic plant ID workshop, 10-11:30 am, 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Wednesday 6/26 - Dooryarders, rock and R&B, 6 pm, SummerFun Concerts @ Mill Park, Augusta.  
Thursday 6/29 - Invasive aquatic plant ID & Adopt-A-Shoreline workshop, 10-11:30 am, weekly all summer, <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/>, Fairview Grange, 826 Village Road, Smithfield.

...Thursday 6/27 - Art in the Park: Grab Bag Sculptures, craft your own masterpiece from a grab bag filled with mystery objects and recycled materials, free and open to the public, 3-5 pm, [www.watervillecreates.org](http://www.watervillecreates.org), Castonquay Square, Front and Main St, downtown Waterville.

...Thursday 6/27 - Cruise-In Night, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.

...Thursday 6/27 - Cliff Gelina Trio, free outdoor concert, 6-8 pm, Village Green, Belgrade Lakes.

...Thursday 6/27 - Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare, preview night, 7 pm, 933-9999, The Theater At Monmouth.



Weekly Directory

**Farmers' Markets:** breads, meats, baked goods, produce, preserves, flowers, fruit and vegetables in season.

**Tuesday** - Augusta Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Mill Park, Water Street.

**Wednesday** - Fairfield Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, 81 Main Street, Nazarene Church Parking Lot, 81 Main Street.

**Wednesday** - Gardiner Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, The Common

**Thursday** - Downtown Waterville Farmers Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls and Riverwalk.

**Friday** - Farmington Farmers' Market, 10 am-1 pm, parking lot near Better Living Center, Front Street.

**Saturday** - Farmington Farmers' Market, 9 am-12 noon, in front of Court House, Main Street.

**Saturday** - Hallowell Farmers' Market, 9 am-12 noon, Steven's Commons.

**Saturday** - New Sharon Farmers' Market, 9 am-1 pm, Douin's Market

**Saturday** - Skowhegan Farmers' Market, 9 am-1 pm, Somerset Grist Mill.

**Saturday** - Wayne Farmers' Market, 9 am-12 noon, on the Green at Mill Pond.

**Sunday** - Belgrade Lakes Farmers' Market, 9 am-2 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Outdoor Concerts

Enjoy a free, outdoor concert in central Maine's parks. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, arrive early

early to stroll around town, stay late at a local restaurant.

**Monday** - Farmington, Western Maine Foothills Band, 7-8:30 pm Meetinghouse Square

**Tuesday** - Hallowell, Rock on the River 2024, 7-8:30 pm, Hallowell Bandstand

**Wednesday** - Augusta, SummerFun Concerts @ Mill Park, 6 pm

**Thursday** - Belgrade Lakes, Village Green Music Series, 6:30-8 pm

**Thursday** - Oakland, Waterfront Music Series, Waterfront Park, 6-9 pm

**Friday** - Gardiner, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Summer Concerts, 6-7:30 pm, some Saturday concerts, some times var

**Friday** - Waterville, Waterville Rocks, Head of Falls, beer garden opens 6 pm, music begins 7 pm; in case of rain show held inside Waterville Opera House

**Saturday and Sunday** - Sidney, New England Music Camp, Bowl in the Pines concerts, 3 pm

**Sunday** - Skowhegan, Concerts in the Park, Coburn Part, 5-6:15 pm

**Sunday** - Winthrop, Norcross Point, 2-4 pm

Cruise-Ins

**Thursday** - Gardiner, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park

Classes, Camps and Programs for Students

Sailing:

**Belgrade Lakes** - SailMaine Youth Camp, ages 8-12 and 12-17, beginner and intermediate, Belgrade

Community Center for All Seasons; weekly sessions 7/8-8/16. \$235; scholarships available. [SailMaine.org](http://SailMaine.org) or 235-3173.

Nature and Science:

**Hinckley** - Summer Day Camps at the L.C. Bates Natural History Museum, 6/24 through 7/29, age groups vary, 9-11 am, 238-4250

**Winthrop** - Kids Summer Nature Day Camp, Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed, 4th, 5th and 6th graders, July 22-26 and August 5-9, \$250, YMCA Camp of Maine, Cobbossee Lake, [www.watershed-friends.com](http://www.watershed-friends.com)

Theater:

**Gardiner** - Spark Theater Camp, Johnson Hall Opera House, 3 different classes - beginner to advanced, 2-week sessions, \$200 to \$250, scholarships available, 582-7144

**Madison** - Young Performers Camp, Lakewood Theater, ages 6-17, 6/24 through 8/16, \$500 to \$700, 474-7176

**Monmouth** - Camp Shakes, The Theater at Monmouth, grades 4-8, 2 one-week sessions, 7/8 and 7/15, 933-9999

**Waterville** - Missoula Children's Theatre Camp, Waterville Opera House, grades 1-8, two 1-week sessions, \$240, Waterville Opera House, 873-7000

Additions? Changes? Corrections? Please let us know: [sumbelnews@gmail.com](mailto:sumbelnews@gmail.com)



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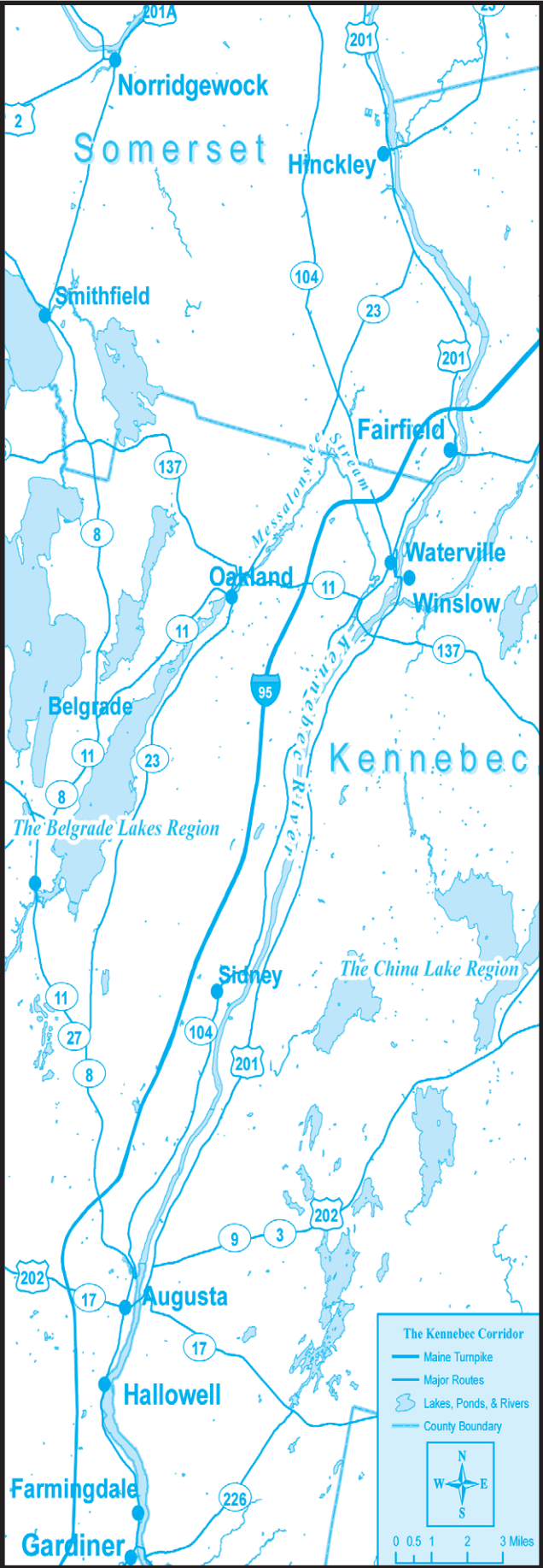
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Railroad Square Reimagined: An Old Cinema Becomes a New Playhouse

by Gregor Smith

The movie screens have gone dark and the scent of the “best popcorn in the known universe” no longer hangs in the air, but new life is coming to the former Railroad Square Cinema. Now rechristened The Playhouse at Waterville Station, the building is the new home for the Aqua City Actors Theatre (ACAT) and a venue for other arts and cultural events. The Playhouse will celebrate its grand opening on June 28, with an afternoon art and craft fair, concerts, and an evening of one-act plays.

Built in 1995 as a two-screen movie theater—the third screen was added seven year later—the building had seen little activity since December 2022, when the Maine Film Center relocated to the second floor of the new Paul J. Schupf Art Center.

But last fall, Randy and Lisa Jones of Augusta, bought the structure. Randy is a member of ACAT’s board of directors and longtime actor in various local theater groups. Lisa is not involved in theater herself, but she supports her husband’s passion. Their vision, as stated on The Playhouse’s website, is to create “a performance and event venue centered around the concept of artful ‘play’. Play can include acting, singing, comedy, music, recreation, education, or any other form of artistry or culture that makes our hearts joyful.”

Their purchase of the building fills a void in the Waterville theater scene, the need for black box theater to replace Studio 93, a 65-seat space in The Center. (A black box theater is small, no-frills performing space, typically with black walls, floor, and ceiling but without a raised stage.) The Center was torn down so that the Schupf Center could be built on the same spot.

Founded in 1994, ACAT is a community theater group that presents small-scale, thought-provoking comedies and dramas that appeal to theater buffs, but not necessarily to the masses. ACAT, which used to stage four plays per year, six performances per play, has not been able to hold regular performances since

its last show in Studio 93 in November 2018, when it staged the comedy You Can’t Take It With You—a fitting title for a theater’s company’s last production in its longtime performance space.

At The Playhouse, the largest theater, formerly known as Cinema 1, looks the same as it did when the last movie, Casablanca, was shown there on Thanksgiving Eve 2022. Now redubbed simply “The Theater,” the room will be retrofitted as a black box theater. Its principal tenant will be ACAT, but other theater groups will be able to use it when ACAT isn’t.

The Theater currently seats about 150 and has a simple platform two to three yards wide, which runs the length of the front of the room. In time, this platform will be replaced with a proper stage, and the first few rows of seats removed to accommodate that stage.

The former Cinema 2, now called “The Auditorium,” can hold around 90 people. According The Playhouse’s website, it is appropriate “for lectures, conferences, and performances by smaller groups” and will also be good “for community-participation events, such as open mic nights or karaoke parties.” It will keep its movie screen and will have a projector and sound system.

Plans for the smallest screening room, the 50-seat Cinema 3, and the former Buen Apetito restaurant space have not yet been finalized, but the seats have all been removed from the former and the kitchen of the latter is being renovated.

ACAT is now raising funds so that it can convert the former Cinema 1 from a theater for movies to one for plays. There are three main aspects to this conversion. First, ACAT wants to install state-of-the-art LED theater lights and associated infrastructure. For this phase of the project, ACAT will need around \$150,000.

Next, ACAT is seeking to build a dressing room and a stage. The latter will include curtains, rigging, and

Continued on page 14.....

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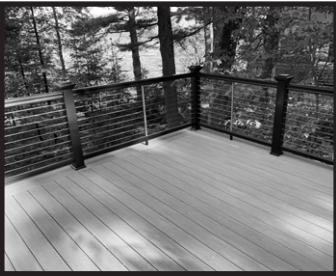

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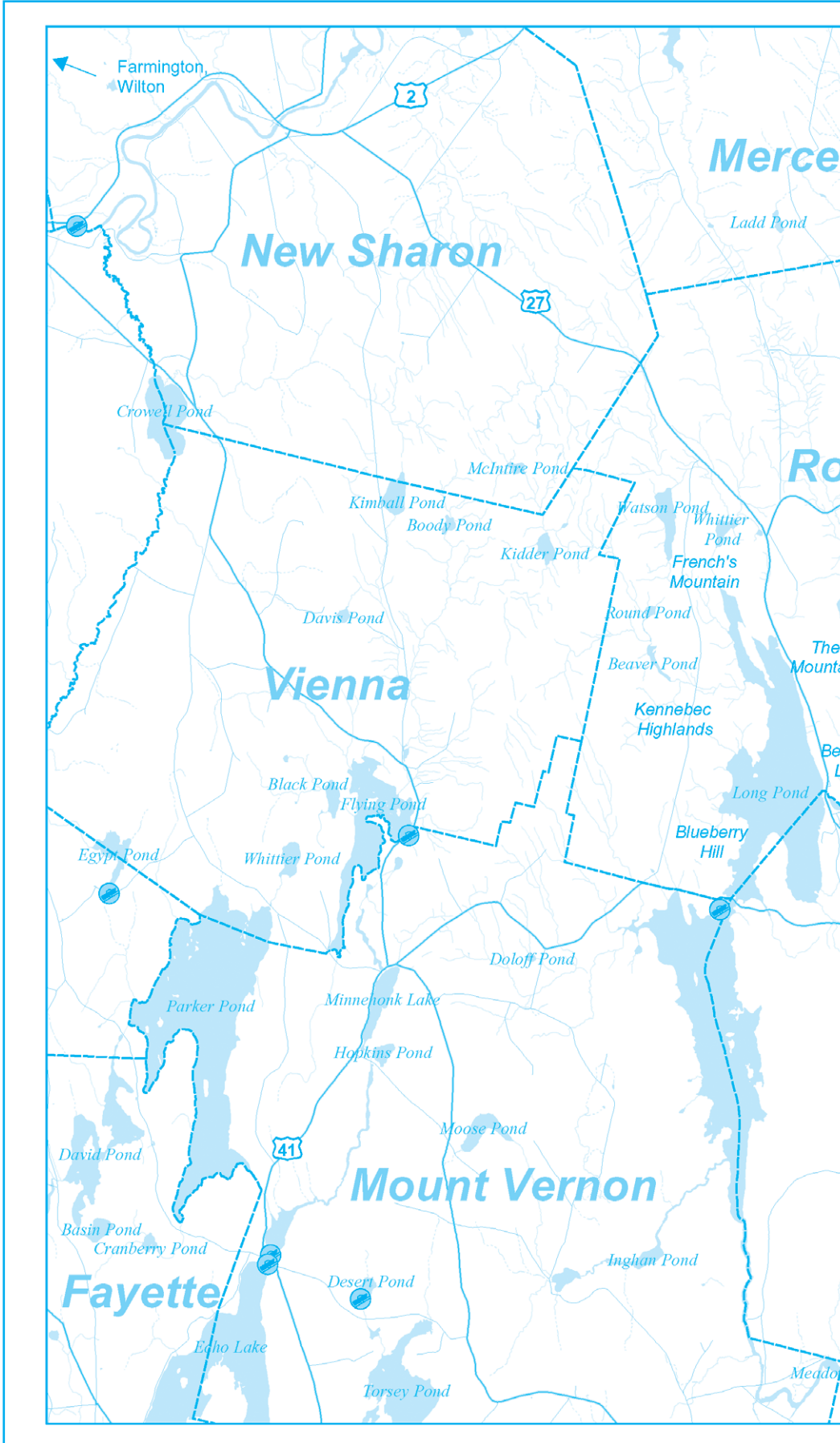
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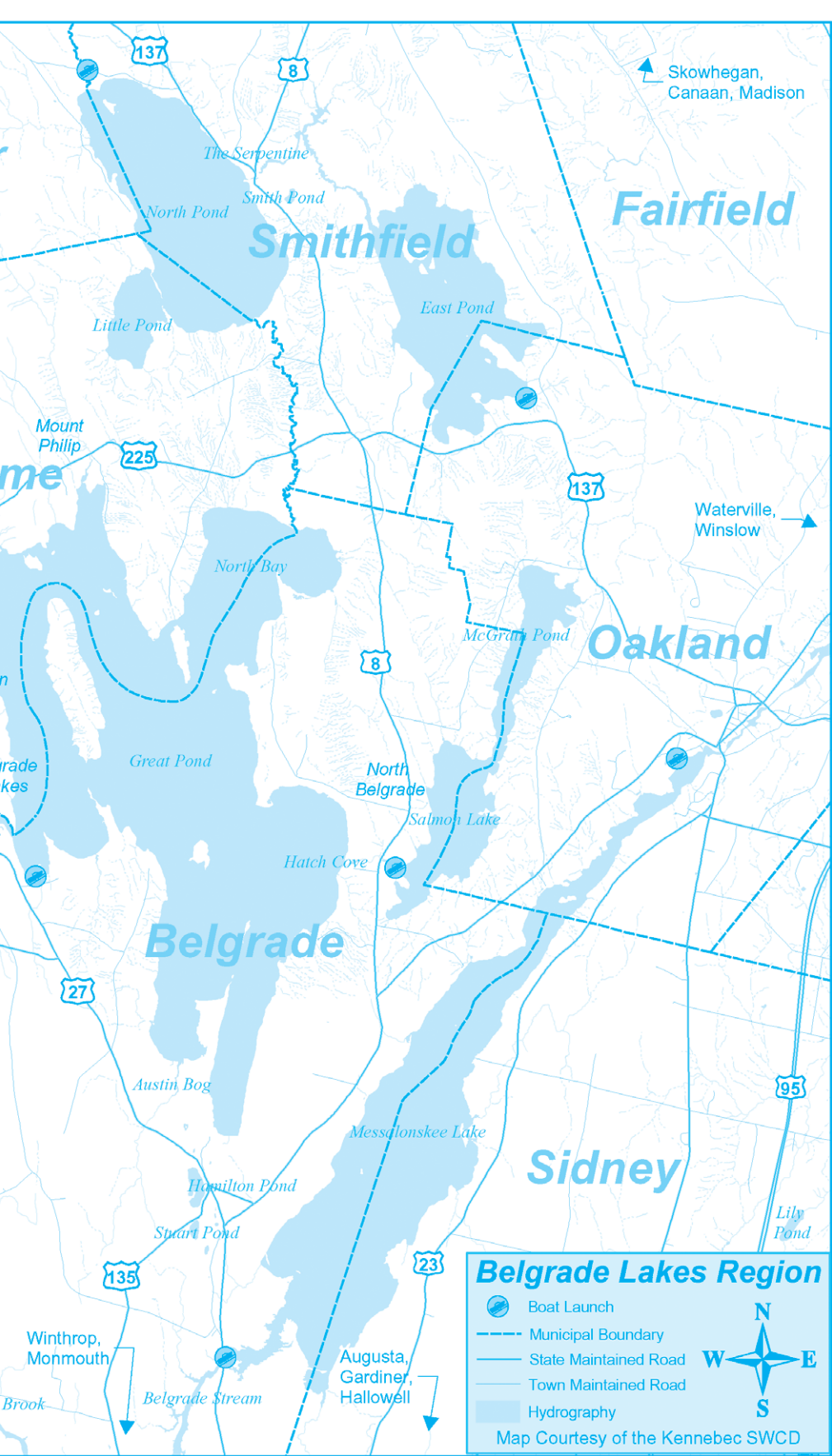
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## Chasing an Eclipse

By Gregor Smith

They came from near and far. They gasped in wonder and delight as day turned into night and back into day. "They" were the eclipse chasers, from Maine and Florida, Texas, Alaska, and California. They had all come to experience 3½ minutes of mid-afternoon darkness during the "Great American Eclipse of 2024."

The April 8 event was the first total solar eclipse to pass through Maine since July 1963, and this time, Jackman was the place to be. As the Maine town closest to the center line of the eclipse — dead center was a few miles north in Moose River — the total phase, when the moon completely covered the sun, lasted 3 minutes, 28 seconds in Jackman, longer than in any other populated place in the Pine Tree State.

An estimated 10,000 people descended upon this hamlet of just under 800 souls. Ninety four miles from Belgrade, Jackman is the last village in Maine before the Canadian border. The influx of visitors offered an economic boost after a disappointing snowmobiling season — disappointing due to insufficient and unreliable snow.

Some solar tourists booked hotel rooms in Jackman a year in advance, an act of either great faith or great folly, as clear skies were far from guaranteed. Based on data compiled by the National Weather Service over nearly 4 decades, Jackman's skies have less than 20% cloud cover less than 10% of the time between 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. of the first fifteen days of April. Or, put more simply, afternoons in Jackman during the first half of April are mostly cloudy most of the time.

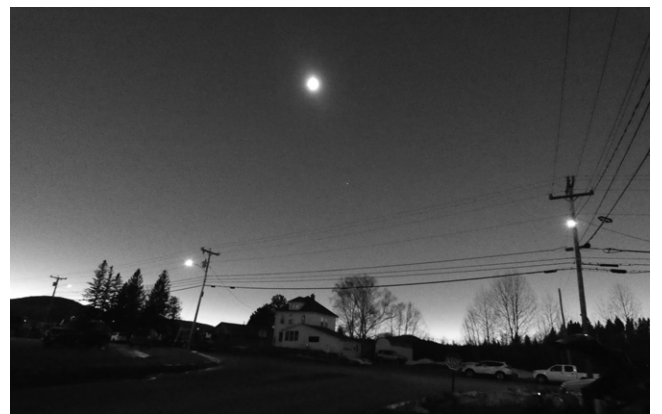
But this year, we got lucky. Although the eclipse was total along a curved line through thirteen states from Texas to Maine, northern New England turned out to be the best place to watch. The region was blessed with clear weather, while much of the eclipse's southern path, which is normally clear, had clouds.

Not everyone went to Jackman, but the eclipse likely brought more traffic to northern Maine than any other event since the last concert by Grateful Dead-inspired jam band Phish at the former Loring Air Force Base in Limestone in August 2003, when, according to Rolling Stone, "more than 60,000 Phish fans witnessed the end of Phish's summer tour." While there are no comprehensive figures on the number of people who came to Maine to view the eclipse or who traveled within Maine to see it better, the Maine Turnpike Authority estimated that around 30,000 motorists came through the York toll plaza the day before the eclipse, a traffic volume typical for Labor Day Weekend but not for a Sunday in April.

On eclipse day, the drive up Route 201 from Belgrade to Jackman took 2¼ hours, due to the



• The sun at totality: Even though the exposure time was only 1/125 of a second, the corona appears much bigger and brighter than it was to the naked eye



• A view of Jackman during totality from the parking area of the Moose River Congregational Church at the north edge of town: The length of the exposure, 1/30 of a second, makes the sun appear brighter than it was



• Like paparazzi waiting to film movie stars as the walk the red carpet at the Academy Awards, eclipse chasers with cameras and telescopes lined the east shore of Wood Pond in Jackman's Armand Pomerleau Park

excess northbound traffic. Normally, it's a little less than two hours. (Coming back after the eclipse took 5½ hours, as all the people who had been pouring into the region over the preceding few days ostensibly decided to leave all at once.) Starting in Solon, the southern edge of the zone of totality, cars were parked at rest stops, scenic turnouts, and any other place where people could safely pull off the road (and a few other places as well).

At the Attean Overlook at the height of land four miles south of Jackman, the northbound breakdown lane was lined with cars for at least a mile in either direction. This rest stop offers a stunning view of Attean Pond and Maine's western mountains. Many visitors arrived a day or two earlier to claim a prime spot for viewing the 3½ minute spectacle.

Contrary to popular belief, the sky does not get completely dark during totality. It gets only as dark as it does half an hour after sunset, but during a total eclipse, the "sunset" is visible in all directions, instead of just in the west. During this twilight, the brighter stars and planets will appear. On that April afternoon, Venus was clearly visible below and to the right of the eclipsed sun.

If you missed the total solar eclipse your next chance to see one in Maine won't come until May Day 2079.



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Kennebec County Trails Guide

• Indoor and outdoor walking trails, hiking trails, rail trails and storywalk trails throughout Kennebec County are listed by town and name in this convenient Kennebec County Trails guide and classified by distance, time, level of difficulty and pet-friendly. The guide is compiled by Healthy Communities of the Capital Area, Healthy Eating and Active Living division. 588-5012.

Farmington

• Longfellow Young Writers' Camp for high school students who love to write or want to learn will be held July 7-14 at the University of Maine at Farmington. The week-long, residential Creative Writing camp focuses on improving writing skills in various genres, getting feedback from award-winning authors and having fun. Registration is closed for this year; for information about future camps contact 778-7419 or [lewis.robinson@maine.edu](mailto:lewis.robinson@maine.edu).

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• The Great Race is coming. Finish Line Gardiner is Sunday, June 30, 1 to 5 pm, for up to 135 antique and classic cars that have completed the 9-day, 2,300-mile, 19-city, 11-state race. The cars will finish on historic Water Street in downtown Gardiner where spectators are invited to view the cars, meet the drivers from all over the country and the world and enjoy the shops, restaurants, galleries and scenic waterfront area. 582-3100.

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Hinckley

• "Transitions" is the theme of the L.C. Bates Museum 2024 summer art exhibit which opened on May 11 and runs through October. The result of a collaboration between the museum staff and two Colby College students, Sofia Escobar Amaya and Lee Trombly under the supervision of Professor Veronique Plesch, the exhibit explores natural processes of change and transformations such as between night and day, seed and plant, egg and animal or the passing of seasons. It includes more than 20 artists who live in Maine or have connections to the state and represents a range of media including painting, printmaking, photography and digital media. The museum and the exhibit are open Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am-4:30 pm. 238-4250, [lcbates@gwh.org](mailto:lcbates@gwh.org)

Monmouth

• First fair of the season! Monmouth Fair 2024, 113th annual, sponsored by the Cochnewagan Agricultural Association is scheduled for Wednesday, June 26 through Saturday, June 29. Activities include a midway - bracelets \$25, exhibition hall, horse pull, steer and oxen pulling, woodsman's day, veterans day, bicycle giveaways, food, children's activities and nightly stage show. [www.monmouthfair.com](http://www.monmouthfair.com)

Farmington

• A week of jazz concerts! The University of Maine at Farmington, UMF Jazz Camp for middle and high school students offers a solid week of jazz concerts July 7 through 13. Faculty concerts will be at 8 pm, July 7-11; student concerts at 6:30 pm, Friday 7/12 and 10 am, Saturday 7/13. 718-499-9051, [mainejazzcamp@earthlink.net](mailto:mainejazzcamp@earthlink.net)

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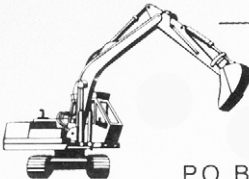
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**Thayer Engineering**, septic design, storm water mitigation, permitting, 17 Hasson Street, Farmingdale, 582-7762, [www.thayereng.com](http://www.thayereng.com)

COMPUTER CONSULTANTS

Macintosh Solutions Consultant Michael Breault, 24 Welch Road, Wilton, 578-0226, [www.michaelbreault.net](http://www.michaelbreault.net)

DINING

**Alden Camps**, lunch or dinner by reservation, Saturday-Wednesday space permitting, 3 Alden Camps Cove, Oakland, 465-7703, [www.aldencamps.com](http://www.aldencamps.com)  
**H.J. Blake's for Goodness Sake's**, fresh, homemade, tasty tak out, signature lobster rolls, hot dogs, burgers, scenic outdoor seating, 945 West Road, Belgrade, 465-2280  
**Riverfront Barbecue & Grille and Gin Mill Lounge**, world class barbecue, seafood, pasta and vegetarian entrees, full service dining, catering, bulk take out, 300 Water Street, Augusta, 622-8899, [www.riverfrontbbq.com](http://www.riverfrontbbq.com)  
**Sadie's Boathouse Restaurant** at Great Pond Marina, hearty contemporary American fare, 25 Marina Drive, Belgrade Lakes, 495-4045, 242-1273

DOCKS

**G&L Contracting**, installation only, 116 Lakeshore Drive, Belgrade Lakes, 495-9009, 215-7951, 233-7408, [gandlcontractingmaine.com](http://gandlcontractingmaine.com)  
**Hammond Lumber Company**, at 21 locations: Auburn, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Belgrade, Blue Hill, Boothbay Harbor, Brunswick, Bucksport, Calais, Camden, Cherryfield, Damariscotta, Ellsworth, Fairfield, Farmington, Greenville, Machias, Portland, Rockland, Skowhegan, 866-HAMMOND, [www.hammondlumber.com](http://www.hammondlumber.com)

DOG CARE AND TRAINING

**White Willow Retreat for Dogs**, including daycare, boarding, training and grooming, 24/7 services year round, training offered through Empathy Over Ego with Katie Powers, 495-3596, [www.whitewillowretreat.com](http://www.whitewillowretreat.com)

ELDER CARE

**Assistance Plus**, home care services, personal care, homemaking, companionship, 1-800-781-0070, [www.assistanceplus.com](http://www.assistanceplus.com)  
**Maine-ly Elder Care**, 28 Center Street, Oakland, 465-3249, [www.maine-lyeldercare.com](http://www.maine-lyeldercare.com)

EXCAVATING

**David Stevens**, Belgrade, 465-3815, cell 314-0314

EYE CARE

**Eye Care of Maine**, 325A Kennedy Memorial Drive, Waterville, 873-2731, 1-800-660-3403, [www.Maine2020.com](http://www.Maine2020.com)

FINANCIAL PLANNING

**Golden Pond Wealth Management**, 129 Silver Street, Waterville, 873-2200, [www.goldenpondwealth.com](http://www.goldenpondwealth.com)

FILMS

**Maine Film Center, Maine International Film Festival**, 861-8138, [miff.org](http://miff.org), [miff@mainefilmcenter.org](mailto:miff@mainefilmcenter.org)

FIREWOOD

**J & M Logging, Inc.**, 853 Civic Center Drive, (Rte. 27), Augusta, 622-6353, [www.jmlogginginc.com](http://www.jmlogginginc.com)

FLOORING

**Hammond Lumber Company**, at 21 locations: Auburn, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Belgrade, Blue Hill, Boothbay Harbor, Brunswick, Bucksport, Calais, Camden, Cherryfield, Damariscotta, Ellsworth, Fairfield, Farmington, Greenville, Machias, Portland, Rockland, Skowhegan, 866-HAMMOND, [www.hammondlumber.com](http://www.hammondlumber.com)

GENERATORS

**Generators of Maine**, 262 Augusta Road (Rte. 27), Belgrade, 495-2285, [www.generatorsofmaine.com](http://www.generatorsofmaine.com)

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

**Belgrade Historical Society**, history room open by appointment at Belgrade Center for All Seasons, monthly meeting presentations, 548-3569, [info@belgradehistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@belgradehistoricalsociety.org)

HOME CARE

**Assistance Plus**, home care services, personal care, homemaking, companionship, 1-800-781-0070, [www.assistanceplus.com](http://www.assistanceplus.com)  
**Maine-ly Elder Care**, 28 Center Street, Oakland, 465-3249, 866-430-3249, [www.maine-lyeldercare.com](http://www.maine-lyeldercare.com)

HOME SECURITY CHECK

**Bob, Check It 4 Me**, Home Check Service. Are you away? Traveling? Storm Concerns? Just contact Bob - a year-round, waterfront Belgrade Lakes resident. Video text provided. 610-585-1996, [bobcheckit4me@gmail.com](mailto:bobcheckit4me@gmail.com)

INSURANCE

**Allen Insurance and Financial**, 51 Main Street, Waterville, 1-800-244-9046, [AllenIF.com/Waterville](http://AllenIF.com/Waterville)

KITCHENS

**Hammond Lumber Company**, at 21 locations: Auburn, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast Belgrade, Blue Hill, Boothbay Harbor, Brunswick, Bucksport, Calais, Camden, Cherryfield, Damariscotta, Elllsworth, Fairfield, Farmington, Greenville, Machias, Portland, Rockland, Skowhegan, 866-HAMMOND, [www.hammondlumber.com](http://www.hammondlumber.com)

LAKE ASSOCIATIONS

**Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA)**, Long Pond and Great Pond, PO Box 551, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, 512-5150, [www.belgradelakesassociation.org](http://www.belgradelakesassociation.org)  
**McGrath Pond - Salmon Lake Association**, Stewards of Our Belgrade Lakes, <https://www.mcgrathpond-salmonlake.org>

LAND AND LAKE CONSERVATION

**7 Lakes Alliance**, PO Box 250, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, 931-7710, [www.7lakesalliance.org](http://www.7lakesalliance.org)





LANDSCAPING

**Gagne & Son Concrete Products**, patio setups, stone, masonry products, complimentary outdoor heating, lighting, furniture, 1583 Augusta Road, Belgrade, 495-3313, [gagneandson.com](http://gagneandson.com)  
**G&L Contracting**, 116 Lakeshore Drive, Belgrade Lakes, 215-7951, 495-9009, 233-7408, [gandlcontractingmaine.com](http://gandlcontractingmaine.com)  
**Lynch Landscaping**, 78 Maple Street, Norridgewock, 474-2420, 405-0880, [www.lynchlandscaping.com](http://www.lynchlandscaping.com)

LODGING

**Alden Camps**, American Plan cottages, boat rentals, 3 Alden Camps Cove, Oakland, 465-7703, [www.aldencamps.com](http://www.aldencamps.com)

MAILBOAT RIDES

**Great Pond Mailboat Rides**, calm days are the best, maximum number of riders is 4 small adults, \$20 each, 2-hour ride, leave 9:20-9:40 am Belgrade Lakes Post Office, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, to reserve text 592-1537

PATIO SETUPS

**Gagne & Son Concrete Products**, stone, masonry, outdoor lighting, furniture, 1583 Augusta Road, Belgrade, 495-3313, [gagneandson.com](http://gagneandson.com)

PHOTOGRAPHY

**Kevin Couture Photography**, HS Seniors, Weddings, Families, Aerial drone images, 474-0754, 858-5382, [www.kevincouturephotography.com](http://www.kevincouturephotography.com)

PHYSICAL THERAPY

**Dockside Physical Therapy**, 47 Main Street (Route 27), Belgrade Lakes, 495-3195, 512-2544, Fax 512-2545

PIANO LESSONS

**Dianne Gorman**, 191B Bartlett Road, Belgrade, 495-3222, [Gorman3366@roadrunner.com](mailto:Gorman3366@roadrunner.com)

REALTORS

**Coldwell Banker Plourde Real Estate**, 143 Silver Street, Waterville, 660-4001, 872-7650, [www.coldwellbanker.com](http://www.coldwellbanker.com)  
**Ellen Wells**, Coldwell Banker Plourde Real Estate, 649-147, [cbplourde.com](http://cbplourde.com)  
**Lakepoint Real Estate**, 221 Main Street (Rte. 27), Belgrade Lakes, 495-3700, 888-495-3711, [www.belgradelakepoint.com](http://www.belgradelakepoint.com)  
**Amy Bernatchez**, Lakepoint Real Estate, 314-2353, [amy@belgradelakepoint.com](mailto:amy@belgradelakepoint.com)  
**Trisha Cheney**, Lakepoint Real Estate, 716-6494, [trisha@belgradelakepoint.com](mailto:trisha@belgradelakepoint.com)  
**Stephanie Yeaton**, Lakepoint Real Estate, 495-4046, 592-5577, [stephanie@belgradelakepoint.com](mailto:stephanie@belgradelakepoint.com)

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE AND TRAILER STORAGE

**Belgrade Lakes Marine & Storage**, 366 Augusta Road (Rte. 27), Belgrade, 495-2378, [www.belgradelakesmarine.com](http://www.belgradelakesmarine.com)

RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

**Granite Hill Estates**, 60 Balsam Drive, Hallowell, 626-7786, 1-888-321-1119, [www.granitehillestates.com](http://www.granitehillestates.com)

SURVEYING

**Acme Land Surveying**, 108 Fairbanks Road, Suite 5, Farmington, 778-4081, 800-778-408, [www.acmelandsurveying.com](http://www.acmelandsurveying.com)

WINDOWS

**Hammond Lumber Company**, at 21 locations: Auburn, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Belgrade, Blue Hill, Boothbay Harbor, Brunswick, Bucksport, Calais, Camden, Cherryfield, Damariscotta, Ellsworth, Fairfield, Farmington, Greenville, Machias, Portland, Rockland, Skowhegan, 1-800-HAMMOND, [www.hammondlumber.com](http://www.hammondlumber.com)

Call of the Loon

A Very Interesting Week



Our first nesting loon in the Belgrades

really know what it takes nowadays to make it all ‘happen’ but we are getting tired of watching and waiting without results!!! If what you think we are talking about, you’re probably correct!

With that being said, we have seven nesting loon pairs on Great Pond and six on Long Pond as of this writing. With our early ice out by a month, we would have expected an earlier than normal nesting calendar but that did not happen. Regular readers of this column will recall that our chicks normally open their eyes to their new world on or around the fourth of July which hopefully will be the case again this summer.

We still have several territories on both Great and Long Ponds that have not nested and the



A 2024 Great Pond adult showing what he’s made of!

less than a well-deserved home coming!!

We are seeing more and more aggressive loon behavior with unfortunately, its cumulative effect on loon territorial fidelity. When you’re out on the lake and see what you think is a loon in distress, it is so often just a loon preening and/or bathing. But when you see three or more loons diving up and down in unison, you are seeing the aggressive “Circle Dance” which usually ends up in no good!

If you have a particular questions regarding our Belgrade loon population, please email your inquiry to: [info@blamaine.org](mailto:info@blamaine.org) and we will try to answer your question either in this column or via email. Have a great Summer enjoying the “Call of the Loon”! Aren’t we are so fortunate to summer here in the Belgrades!



An early nester on Long Pond’s Ingham Stream whose nest with its two eggs unfortunately got flooded out by a boat wake. What happened to the 200’ No Wake Zone?

banded pairs from last summer have not ‘reconnected’ due to our Number One Concern – Intruding adult loons!! We have observed so many pairs that have actively been distracted and threatened by intruders. So, what is an intruder? It could be another adult loon, male or female, from another lake but most likely it is a returning adult that had previously nested in that territory or even a chick that, after three to four years on the ocean, is back for something



Two Great Pond loons posturing with duel “Penguins”!







# Stephen King

*by Martha F. Barkley*

Even Super Champ May 1, 2024 Jeopardy had the clue Castle Rock, Maine. It seems like every weekend newspaper I buy Stephen King is featured in the BOOK section. His long writing career is a phenomenon since 1974 Carrie fame. Movie versions of his work, too: Carrie in 1976, amazing speed.

I must admit my reading of King kept me far from the frightening movies. Maybe only one on tv where I could snap off the scare.

C-SPAN featured his 2003 National Book Award where King credited his wife Tabitha. Mosley welcomed the many Bangor friends attending and gave a very exceptional speech honoring Stephen King.

Controversial pop lit vs literary books was hit "spot on" by King, praising many bestseller authors like Piccoult and Grisham. He spoke eloquently about bestsellers perhaps having some great writing. I fell in love with his humble acceptance speech, so beautifully delivered.

In that archived speech by C-SPAN, Stephen King alluded to his horrible accident by Kezar Lake along side the road four years prior. Our family often drove those bumpy, pothole roads back then many summers after our stay at Little Sebago. King's leg was not amputated and he gradually gained strength from this mishap with a van as he walked.

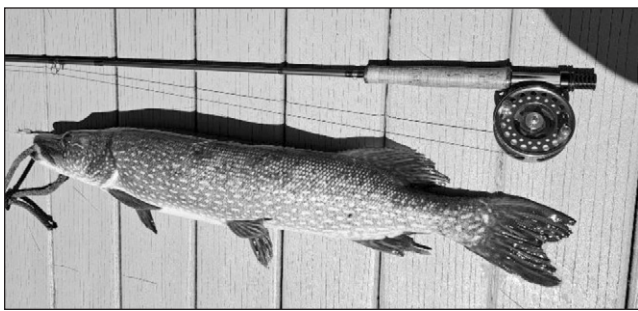
Behind the scenes, both Kings, Tabitha and Stephen, give generously to ... Continued from page 7

access from the dressing room. ACAT expects the stage and dressing room to cost around \$20,00 each.

ACAT has already held two fundraisers at The Playhouse: a voice workshop by Shannon Thurston and concert by singer/songwriter Stan Davis, who was last month's headliner at the Union Coffeehouse in Belgrade Lakes. In addition, an anonymous donor has pledged to match the first \$50,000 raised, and you may be able to deduct your donation from your income taxes. (Check with a tax professional first.) For more information on giving, you may call Stephanie Irwin, ACAT's fundraising chair, at 319-2656.

The Playhouse had a soft opening on Saturday, February 24, when the Recycled Shakespeare Company performed the Bard's *Richard III*, but the official grand opening will take place at noon on Friday, June 28, with a ribbon cutting ceremony sponsored by the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce.

Continued from page 5...



10# Pike on 6-wt flyrod

and spent an exciting 20-30 minutes landing a 10-pound pike on my 6-wt fly-rod while trolling for trout with a white zonker streamer fly. 



## Chewed up White Zonker

Maybe you, dear reader, would like to try King's briefer books for summer reading?

Also the newly published book about his life story and publishing career of fifty years should be entertaining as well as not as scary as his super charged novels. Look for the brand new book asap, I will even before jumping into the lake.

\*April Wall Street Journal published photos of Fryeburg Fair and a Bangor sign from History Press book published soon! Can't wait! 

Following the ribbon cutting, there will be an art and craft fair in the parking lot from 1:00 to 6:30, along with concerts by local performers Bella Ann at 1:00, Brian Richmond at 3:00, and the Elm City Strugglers at 5:00. The day's festivities will conclude with ACAT's performance of three, short, one-act plays in The Theater at 7:00. For further details, go to [www.theplayhouse.me](http://www.theplayhouse.me).

# White Willow Grand Opening

White Willow Retreat for Dogs will be holding an Open House/Grand Opening on June 29th at 12:00-3:00PM. We are a newly-opened dog daycare and boarding facility offering individual and group training sessions. We offer Meet and Greet sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays to become established as new clients.

White Willow Retreat for Dogs will be collecting food and other items for our pet pantry, which will then be distributed to the Kennebec Valley Humane Society. Anyone who brings donated items will be entered into a raffle for a chance to win one of multiple prizes.

Katie Powers of Empathy Over Ego will be providing free consultations for dog training. Katie is a Fear Free Certified Professional and is providing individual and group lessons here at White Willow Retreat for Dogs.

White Willow Retreat for Dogs is located at 1761 Augusta Road in Belgrade (the former home of Willow Run). For more information we can be reached at 207.495.3596 or [info@whitewillowretreat.com](mailto:info@whitewillowretreat.com) or please find us on Facebook or Instagram

Please join us on June 29th! All are welcome to tour our facility and meet our staff. We kindly ask that no dogs attend this event. We look forward to meeting you!

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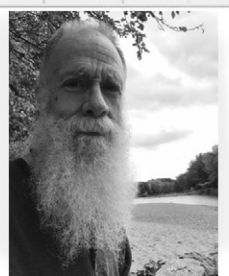


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— Real Estate Update —

How’s the Real Estate Market?

As visitors return for the summer season, everyone wants to know, “How’s the real estate market?” We can answer this through statistical trends, but it’s equally important to consider how people feel about the market.

In the Belgrade Lakes region, there have been 87 home sales so far in 2024, the same as last year. Surprisingly, the average sale price has declined to \$409,000 from 2023. This decline isn’t likely due to a slowing market but fewer lakefront homes being sold. Only 21 lakefront homes have sold this year, 10 fewer than last year, leading to a lower average sale price. Despite high demand for lakefront properties, the number of these homes on the market remains historically low, resulting in fewer sales. People still want

to live in Maine! Statewide, sales volume and average prices continue to rise, and it’s likely our local trends will follow.

Sentiments about local activity provide a non-statistical measure of the market. The village is bustling, the weather is nice, and visitors are here. These factors are crucial because more visitors typically lead to a busier real estate market. Buyers are still contacting local real estate offices, and the number of listings is beginning to increase with summer upon us.

Overall, the feeling is that this summer will continue the trend of the past few years, with a strong local economy, robust tourism, and a strong real estate market. Contact your local real estate professional to understand your place in the market.



The Dams Keeper Report

As of this writing, we are happy to report that all of our pond water levels are in great shape, if you like water! Actually, with these unrelenting showers we have still been able to maintain our early summer objectives. Considering the uncertainty of Mother Nature’s whims, do we hold all of our ponds at the full pond standard or gamble that we might just very well end up with another drought of sorts and be wondering what happened to our water levels? Which is the mode that we have been in for the past five years – trying to keep all our ponds at 3” above full to give us a little breathing room in the event of a drought of any proportion. We have found that at just 3” above full pond we are not flooding out any native hummock loon nests nor are we floating anyone’s docks away!

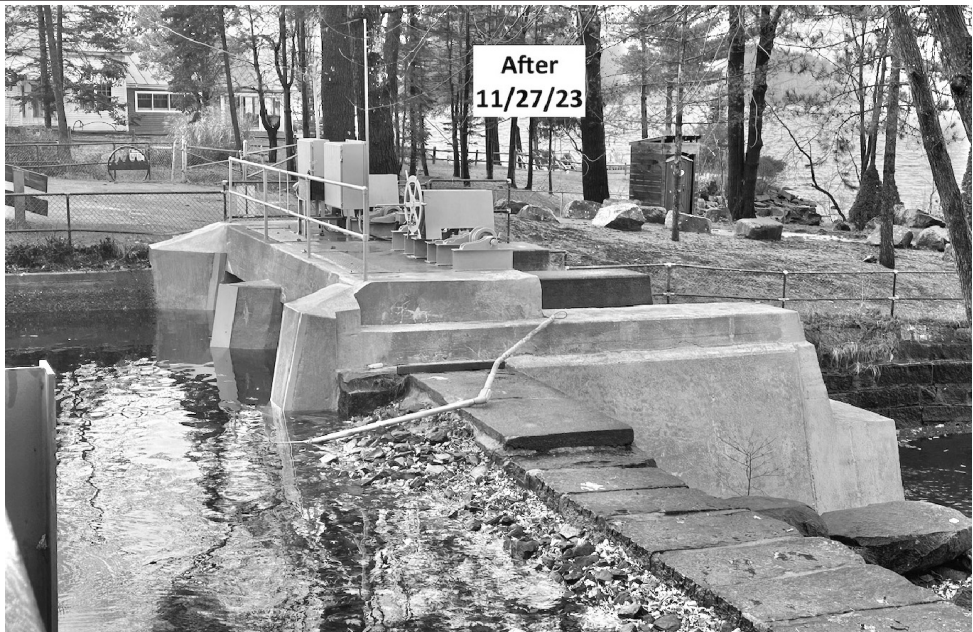
The long term forecast still calls for 26% less precipitation through July whereafter it drops down to 16% less precipitation. We’ll continue to remain vigilant in our “save the water” mode with all of our gates being closed whenever possible. The bottom line is that ‘they’ are not forecasting a wet summer but a Chamber of Commerce summer that we all live for! What is that old Maine saying, “Summer in Maine is nothing but two weeks of bad sledding”! Soooo true!

Great Pond’s Village dam is currently 3.48” above full pond with both gates closed. Long Pond’s Wings Mill dam is right at 2.04”, also above full pond with both gates also completely closed. Salmon/McGrath is 2.16” above full pond with its calibrated valve set to the mandated 1 cfs. flow. Our neighbors on Messalonskee are actually down 2.16” below full which is a necessary fact of life with their electricity generation needs.

Precipitation for the past 10 days was only .87” despite what we all thought – with showers practically every day! We are looking at paltry .62” for the next 10 days, which is still way below average, hence our decision to start “saving the water” we’ve got. FYI, our normal weekly precipitation during the summer is supposed to be around .86”/wk, 3.43”/mo.

If you have a particular questions regarding our Dams and/or water levels, please email your inquiry to: [dickgreenan@outlook.com](mailto:dickgreenan@outlook.com) and we will try to answer your question either in this column or via email.

Enjoy your summer! It should be beautiful (famous last words!). But I’d still keep the umbrellas handy if I were you!



Dick Greenan  
Chairman, Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



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