

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 4

Invasive Aquatic Plants: How Safe Is Any Lake?

by Esther J. Perne

In the fall of last year the worst case scenario of the war on invasive aquatic plants in Maine took place not too far from the Belgrades. When the courtesy boat inspector arrived for the day at the boat launch on Lake Wesserunsett in East Madison, four out-of-state bass boaters had already launched their uninspected boats, presumably before dawn.

To put Lake Wesserunsett into perspective, it is roughly a half hour's drive from Smithfield or Oakland where the two headwaters of the Belgrades are located.

Lake Wesserunsett is known for Lakewood Theater - the longest continuously run summer theater in the nation, the prestigious Skowhegan School of Art, "Lake Wesserunsett Sunset" - a photograph featured in Reader's Digest and, now, it may be the first lake in the state of Maine to be infested with the invasive aquatic plant fanwort.

Upon inspection of the four trailers, the Lake Wesserunsett Association (LWA) inspector, the local warden and volunteers from LWA found plants hanging off all four. After the boaters returned the plants would be photographed, recorded, collected and bagged, refrigerated over the weekend and mailed to Lake Stewards of Maine (formerly Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program). Unfortunately, one of the plants was fanwort, an invasive so far not found in Maine.

When the boaters returned at 4:30 pm they were, according to LWA description, blase but cooperative although uncertain where they had been previously, citing out-of-state lakes and possibly one near Augusta.

Shortly after the incident, the lake association alerted its members to the potential introduction of fanwort and sent out a flyer published by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Not unlike with other invasive aquatic plants, fanwort's impacts on a lake include displacing native species, reducing biodiversity, hampering recreation, reducing real estate values, diminishing aesthetic values and decreasing water quality - certainly something for which lake users should on the lookout.

At the beginning of this year, Warden Jeremy Kemp from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife traveled to Massachusetts and served summons on the four boaters. Hopefully, they will be fined. More hopefully, the word of the civil charge will deter other potential violators.

What next Wesserunsett? What next all the lakes and ponds that could be next? What next (fill in the blank with a favorite lake)?

On Saturday, July 6, the Lake Wesserunsett Association will hold its



A sign of the times in the Belgrades

annual meeting when an uptodate fanwort report will be featured on the agenda. All interested and possibly affected parties are encouraged to attend.

On Thursday, July 11, Lake Wesserunsett will hold a comprehensive Invasive Aquatic Plant survey of the lake under the direction of the Department of Environmental Protection and Lake Stewards of Maine to look for fanwort and other invasives. The survey will begin at 9 am at the East Madison boat launch. Many volunteers will be required to complete

Continued on page 2

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Continued from page 1



the survey in one day.

In October the lawsuit will go to court and is the first case in the state that will go through the fining process. The minimum fine is \$500; the maximum \$5,000. Publicity surrounding this first-ever case could be helpful to fight against invasive aquatic plants.

In the meantime, the Town of Madison has generously increased its contribution to the boat launch monitoring fund, the Wesserunsett Lake Association has increased the number of hours the boat launch is monitored and every lake lover who enjoys this beautiful, clear, unclogged lake - or perhaps attends a play at Lakewood and enjoys viewing the lake - can hope for the best case outcome.

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.



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Friends of Messalonskee Partners With Mid-Maine Adult Ed to Help Save Maine Lakes

Educational, fun, outdoors! In a unique collaboration RSU 18 Messalonskee Office of Mid-Maine Regional Adult and Community Education is partnering with the lake association Friends of Messalonskee to offer summer classes in Plant ID Paddles and in Milfoil Removal.

Plant Identification Paddles are scheduled for Monday, July 22 and Monday, August 12, 10 am-12 noon. Learn to kayak and explore the lake's ecology with Mike Guarino, Maine Wilderness Tours Instructor and Friends of Messalonskee member. Prerequisite: know the basics of how to swim, wear water shoes, a bathing suit or shorts, sunglasses or polarized glasses, sunscreen and hat and bring extra clothing. Limit 8 students; must be 17 years of age. A rain date will be announced. Fee \$6; all equipment will be provided. Meet at the State of Maine boat launch on Route 27 in Belgrade across from Loon Ridge Cottages and near Hammond Lumber.

After taking the course, participants are encouraged to join the Milfoil Management Citizen Network and help the Friends of Messalonskee Lake Survey Team by learning to use a cell phone to report milfoil locations on the lake and add milfoil "hot spots" to the database via a cell phone geolocation app. To become part of this program call 618-8763, email friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com or tell the Plant Paddle Instructor.

Milfoil Removal classes are scheduled for Saturday, July 13 and Saturday, August 10, 9 am to noon. Under the expert instruction of Danielle Boutin, Friends of Messalonskee Milfoil Program Coordinator, learn how to properly hand pull and dispose of the invasive aquatic species Variable Leaf Milfoil. The Friends of Messalonskee Watershed have been hard at work for many years keeping the lake clean and clear. Everyone can make a difference by learning how to remove milfoil. Limit 10 students; must be 17 years of age; no fee. Supply list and release form available on registration. Meet at Sidney Boat Launch, 451 Hosta Lane, Sidney.

On Friday, August 2, 9 am to noon, there will be a 3-hour tour of Messalonskee Lake offered through Adult Ed with Gary Benett of Snow Pond Cruises in his handicap accessible boat. Pre-register and read full course description on the Mid-Maine Adult Ed website.

To register for any of the classes, contact Joyce Anderson at 465-9134 or janderson@rsu18.org after 6 pm Monday-Friday or online at midmaine.maineadulted.org



Summertime in the Belgrades

PO Box 290, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918
 Editor: Esther J. Perne, 207-495-3777 • sumbelnews@gmail.com
 Layout Design: Michael Breault, 207-578-0226 • mo.breault@gmail.com
 Webmaster : Gregor Smith • gregor@roadrunner.com
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New Infestation of Curly-leaf Pondweed Found in North Pond

As the Belgrade Lakes Watershed prepares for its population to double from seasonal residents and visitors, there is one population that is rapidly decreasing—curly-leaf pondweed. Curly-leaf is an invasive aquatic plant native to parts of Europe and Asia that was unintentionally brought to North America by cargo ships. Unfortunately, this tenacious invasive plant has been found in two waterbodies in the Belgrade Lakes.

Like most invasive aquatic plants, curly-leaf lacks natural predators and competitors that keep it from spreading out of control. What sets curly-leaf pondweed apart from most aquatic plants is that it grows over winter and is dormant during the summer and early fall, when most water recreation is occurring. While many of our seasonal residents will never encounter curly-leaf due to its unusual growth cycle, native aquatic plants and wildlife suffer from the overabundance of curly-leaf growth due to competition over space, sunlight, and nutrients in the late spring, when native plants are just beginning to wake up from their winter dormancy. Native plants are important to lake health as they provide habitat, food, and oxygen to wildlife and aquatic plants absorb nutrients that would otherwise be used by algae. Curly-leaf pondweed reproduces primarily through turions, a type of winter bud that can remain dormant in lake sediments for up to five years and rhizomes, horizontal roots that send out “runners” like strawberry plants.

Just before Memorial Day weekend, the 7 Lakes Alliance’s Invasive Aquatics team discovered several large patches of curly-leaf pondweed near the public boat launch in North Pond, Smithfield, Maine. Removal efforts began immediately as the plants were already at the surface of the water and ready to drop dozens of turions per plant. By June 10th, the rooted curly-leaf in North Pond started to show signs of decay. At the same time, the algae that has been present in haunting North Pond since 2018 started to rise from the sediments, making the visibility for divers removing plant material particularly challenging. Despite the unfavorable diving conditions, 7 Lakes divers were able to remove all of the curly-leaf found. By June 18th, the entire perimeter and ~50 feet offshore of North Pond was surveyed.

Fortunately, it appears (for now) that the curly-leaf infestation is isolated to the north end of North Pond. Specifically, some scattered patches were found on the west side of Pomleau Island and several large patches were found East of Pomleau Island to Leech Brook Cove. Given the size of the patches and the abundance of turions attached to the rooted plants, this new infestation is not likely to ever be eradicated from North Pond. We will, however, be able to manage the invasive plants in North Pond by removing new shoots growing from turions in November. All plants missed during the fall cleanup will be removed in April, before the plants

Continued on page 14...

Memories and Tidbits from the Belgrade Historical Society

Submitted by BHS member Rod Johnson

BANG BANG BANG! Once again, it’s that time of year. The time for fireworks big and small, flags-a-flyin and parades in every town. Antique cars can be admired as they strut their chromed-up bumpers and spinner hub caps, and Girl Scouts line up for the walk. Firetrucks blast their sirens to the limit and the little kids hope for some candy being tossed from the vehicles

In pondering the past July 4 celebrations in Belgrade, the first time I recall a major fireworks display was in 1976, our country’s bicentennial. A fund drive was held two months ahead of the big day, and something around 3500 dollars was raised. Back then, it bought us a really bigtime show. The fireworks, held at the Belgrade Central School, were fired out over the railroad tracks towards Messalonskee Lake. This arrangement continued for several years. The move to display the fireworks over Long Pond came later.

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FAREWELL

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— Take It Outside —

Foraging and Educating

By Peter Kallin



Yellow chanterelles and cattail spikes.

There were some rainy days last week, which reduced usage on our hiking trails a bit. On the bright side, the wet weather in June has been good for mushrooms and berries. I have found quite a few yellow chanterelle mushrooms, wild strawberries, and some red raspberries are beginning to appear. I have also been harvesting cattail spikes, the immature male flowers of cattails (*Typha sp.*), which taste like little corn cobs when boiled for a few minutes and served with butter and salt. We had a nice dinner last night of sauteed chanterelles, onions, peppers and garlic with fresh asparagus and pork chops cooked in a milk gravy accompanied by boiled cattail spikes.



Camp Tracy Campers observing zooplankton.



Whitney and Charlie Wheeler with dog, Gunner.

The 7 Lakes Education and Outreach Team spent two days at Camp Tracy and used our new floating classroom to get about 100 campers, counselors, and staff from Camp Tracy out on McGrath Pond to learn about lakes and conduct some hands-on lake science. Additionally, there were some land-based programs about aquatic plants and invertebrates. Check out the picture below of campers looking over Lake Scientist Matt Farragher's shoulder to see a projection of the microscope magnifying the zooplankton the kids had just collected in a plankton net. You can see the excitement in their faces. For more information and pictures from this highly successful event, check out the 7 Lakes web site.

I did get out hiking at Mt Phillip for a bit and met Whitney and Charlie Wheeler hiking with their dog, Gunner. They are from the Keene, NH area but have a camp at Crystal Springs where they spend the summer, once school is out. Charlie is reading "Stranger in the Woods," about the North Pond Hermit. His mom says he was practicing walking the trail by stepping from rock to rock like the Hermit did to avoid leaving footprints.

Dick and Sue Greenan had their son, Jason, visiting from SC with his family, including their grandsons, Sean (12) and Ben (18). Grandma Sue organized a family hike up French Mountain.



Jason, Ben (18), Devon, Sean (12) and Grandma Sue Greenan.

This area offers some great outdoor recreation, whether you like to hike, bike, birdwatch, fish, sail, or paddle a canoe or kayak. I encourage all parents and grandparents to take advantage of opportunities to get your kids and grandkids (or even parents and grandparents) out on the lake for fishing or swimming or up in the hills for some hiking. Pick up a copy of the latest edition of 7 Lakes map of the local trails at Day's Store or from the 7 Lakes Alliance at the Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC). Individual trail maps can be downloaded from the 7-Lakes web site at: <https://www.7lakesalliance.org/trail-system>. Also, please check the 7-LA webpage for details on upcoming interesting events scheduled this summer (<https://www.7lakesalliance.org/>) and watch the sign out front as events are added. And make sure you take a kid along on your next outdoor adventure. Don't miss the 7 Lakes Summer Celebration on July 14th at 4 PM.

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Calendar

- **Thursday 7/4 - Sunday 7/7** - Moonlight Sinatra, also 7/10-7/13, 474-7176, Lakewood Theater, Route 201, Madison.
- **Friday 7/5** - Flyfishing Skills with Maine Guide Jeff Ireland, 7lakesalliance.org/allevnts, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Friday 7/5** - First Friday Downtown Waterville, see performances, meet artists, listen to live music, eat, shop, enjoy the arts, 5-7 pm, multiple locations, downtown Waterville.
- **Friday 7/5** - Muddy Ruckus, rock duo, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Summer Concerts, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.
- **Friday 7/5** - Chamber Music Series, Atlantic Music Festival, 7:30 pm, free admission, Colby College, Waterville.
- **Friday 7/5** - Souvenir, opening night 7:30 pm, 933-9999, Cumston Hall, The Theater at Monmouth.
- **Saturday 7/6** - Belgrade Public Library Book Sale and Bake Sale, over 5000 books to choose from, 9 am-1 pm, 649-4248, Center for All Seasons, 1 Center Drive, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Saturday 7/6** - Contemporary Ensemble, Atlantic Music Festival, 1 pm, free admission, Colby College, Waterville.
- **Saturday 7/6** - Weekend Concert, New England Music Camp, free, 3 pm. Bowl in the Pines, Goldenrod Road, Sidney.
- **Saturday 7/6** - Public Supper, 5:30 pm, suggested donation \$10, Smithfield Baptist Church, 25 Lakeview Drive,

Smithfield.

- **Sunday 7/7** - Stone Quarry Band, Concerts at Norcross Point, 2-4 pm, downtown Winthrop.
- **Sunday 7/7** - Brian Richmond, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.
- **Monday 7/8 - Friday 7/12** - Eco Exploration! Day Camp, ages 11-14, 9 am-2 pm, \$100, L.C. Bates Museum, 238-4250, lcbates@gwh.org, Route 201, Hinckley.
- **Monday 7/8 through 8/16** - SailMaine Youth Camp, six one-week sessions, 971 235-3173, Center for All Seasons, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Monday 7/8** - Western Maine Foothills Band, selections from big band, marches and other eras, 7-8:30 pm, Meeting House Park, downtown Farmington.
- **Tuesday 7/9** - Mammals of Maine, Chewonki Natural History program, 3 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Tuesday 7/9** - 2nd Tuesday Book Group, The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon, at the library or on zoom, Belgrade Public Library, 495-3508, Depot Street, Belgrade.
- **Tuesday 7/9** - Scolded Dog, Rock on the River Concert, 7-8:30 pm, Bandstand, Hallowell.
- **Wednesday 7/10** - Invasive Aquatic Plant ID Workshop, 10-11:30 am, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Wednesday 7/10** - Maine Loons Presentation, 7lakesalliance.org/allevnts, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

- **Wednesday 7/10** - Magician Peter Bois, magic that will blow your mind, Belgrade Public Library program, 1 pm, Center for All Seasons, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Wednesday 7/10** - Tickle, SummerFun Concert, 6 pm, Mill Park, Augusta.
- **Thursday 7/11** - House and Garden Tour, Vaughn Woods and Historic Homestead, 10 am, \$10 per person, reservations recommended at vaughnhomestead.org, 2 Litchfield Road, Hallowell.
- **Thursday 7/11** - Leave No Trace Workshop, 7lakesalliance.org/allevnts, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.
- **Thursday 7/11** - Art in the Park, free, 3-5 pm, Castonguay Square, downtown Waterville.
- **Thursday 7/11** - Cruise In, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.
- **Thursday 7/11** - Random Ideas, punk rock band, Live at Lithgow, free summer concert series, 6 pm, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta.
- **Thursday 7/11** - 207 Rhythm Road, Oakland Waterfront Music Series, 6-8 pm, public boat launch and park, Oakland.
- **Thursday 7/11** - The Robby Coffin Combo, Village Green Concert Series, 6 pm, Village Green, downtown Belgrade Lakes.
- **Thursday 7/11** - Faculty Recital, New England Music Camp, free, 7:30 pm, Alumni Hall, Snow Pond Performing Arts Center, Sidney.

....Continued from page 4

A few memories of the parade in Belgrade Depot that year, are: Larry DiPetro's T-bucket Hot Rod boiled over and steam spewed high and wide. He pulled into Skip and Verna Hammond's driveway and sat it out until the buggy cooled off. Secondly, someone had a team of oxen in the parade, perhaps Beannie Strickland, and it was right behind Fred and Grace Saxton's Model A Ford. The Ford quit running along the way and the oxen ran into it. The oxen were moved in front of Model A and hooked onto it, thereby towing the car to the final destination. Later, Fred got the A fired up again and trooper Mike Heino told him to get it back to camp and leave it there! Turns out that Clayton Grant was in the back seat and mixing martinis for anyone that wanted one!! Note: Fred and Grace's granddaughters and their significant others have since restored the Model A to a fine specimen.

May the celebrations on the 4th of July go on



now and forever. The original purpose and reason to celebrate, was the independence of the United States from the British Empire some 248 years ago. As the centuries have passed, it has



morphed into a more general display of patriotism and pride. Let us not forget what this is all about!

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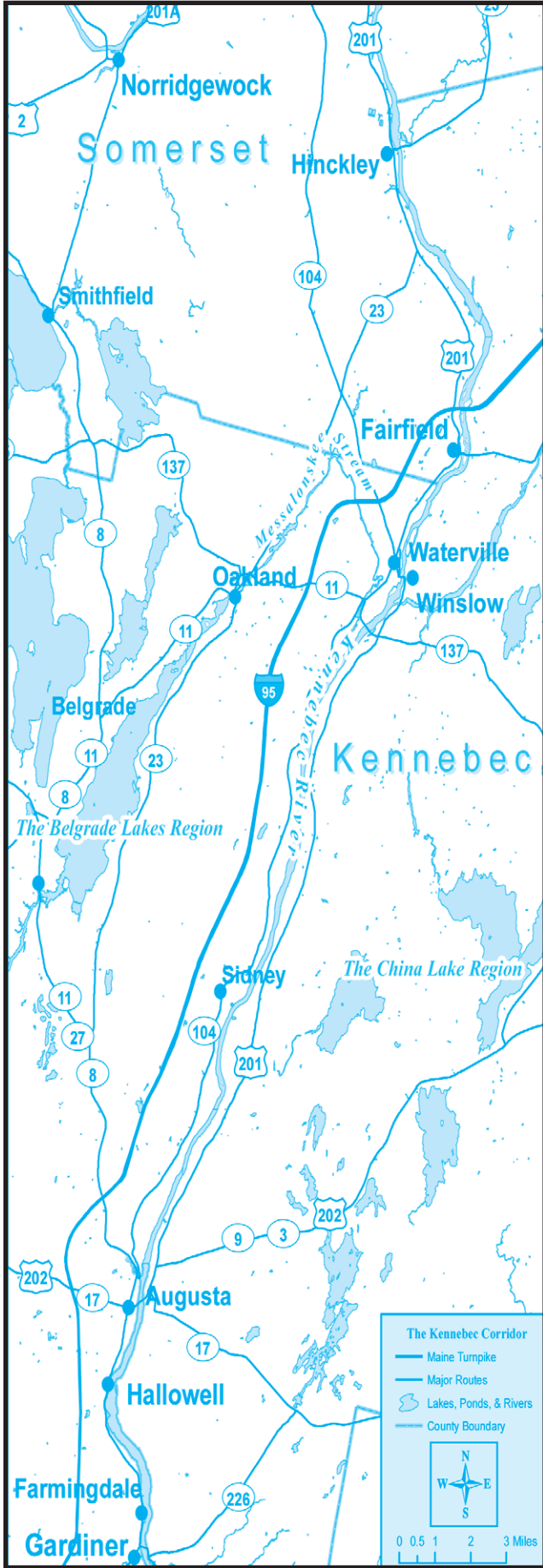
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— Along the Kennebec River Corridor —



MIFF Movies Preview

by Gregor Smith

Are you looking for a cool place — both literal-ly and figuratively — to escape July’s heat? Do you want to watch the finest in new foreign and domestic movies? Or maybe you just have a hankering for “the best popcorn in the known universe?”

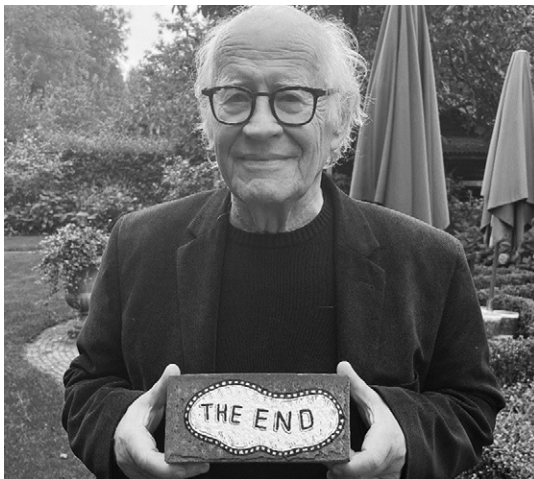
Look no further than the 27th annual Maine International Film Festival. Organized by the Maine Film Center, MIFF will present over 100 films (features + shorts) during its ten-day run, July 12–21, in downtown Waterville. This year’s MIFF will premiere a wide range of independent films from Maine, the rest of the United States, and beyond. The festival will also present films by its two Achievement Award winners, and a few select older classics from other directors.

The festival has always promoted Maine film-making and Maine filmmakers. This year, MIFF will present three feature-length films that were made right here in the Pine Tree State: *Carlo...and His Merry Band of Artists*, a documentary about the late painter Carlo Pittore, as remembered by his friends and colleagues; *The Ghost Trap*, a drama about a young lobsterman whose happy life is in danger of coming undone when his girlfriend suffers a severe head injury and a rival lobstering crew becomes more menacing; and *The Ruse*, a thriller about a young woman who takes a job as live-in caregiver for elderly woman in a secluded seaside manse that may be haunted.

In addition, MIFF will also offer the world premiere of a movie based on a true Maine story but produced elsewhere. *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* is a dramatization of 12-year-old Donn Fendler’s nine-day struggle for survival after getting lost on Mt. Katahdin, Maine’s highest mountain, in 1939. One of the producers on the film is Waterville native Ryan Cook.

Besides those four features, the festival will also screen three compilations of Maine-made short films — Narrative, Documentary, and Music — comprising 19 shorts altogether. Several of the shorts have a Central Maine connection. Read next week’s article for details.

This year, MIFF is pleased to present, not one, but two Achievement Awards: a Lifetime award to Dutch Jos Stelling and a Midlife award to Canadian director Mary Harron. This will actually be Stelling’s second “Lifetime” award from MIFF: when MIFF gave him his first award in 1999, he joked that it was really more of “midlife” honor — he was in his mid-50s at the time. Indeed, in most years since, the award has been presented as a “Midlife Achievement Award.” At the festival, Stelling will present the North American premiere of *Natasja’s Dance*, his self-proclaimed cinematic swan song in which a former ballerina persuades a lonely man to travel with her to her native Russia.



Jos Stelling

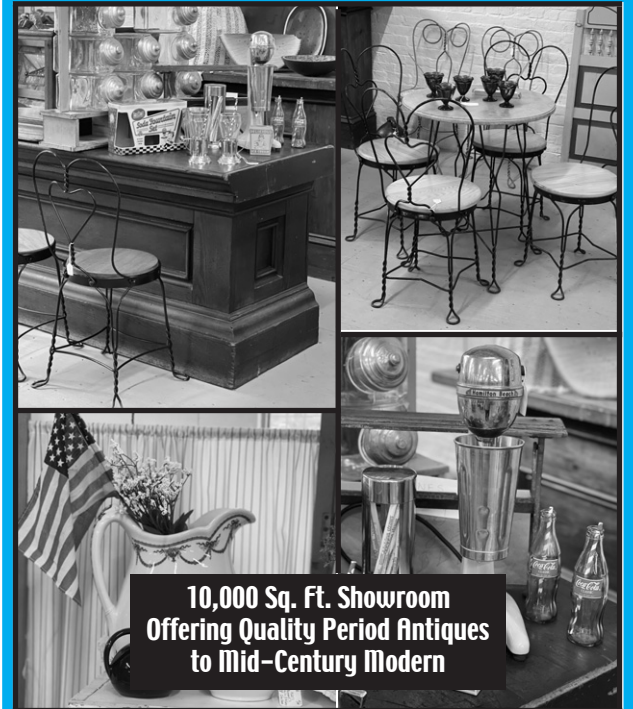
Mary Harron, called by festival programmer Ken Eisen “a distinctive and major voice in the American independent cinema world, whose films touch on characters, often from real life..., who live on the edge,” will receive her award at a screening of her latest film, *Daliland* (2022), which stars Ben



Mary Harron

Continued on page 10...

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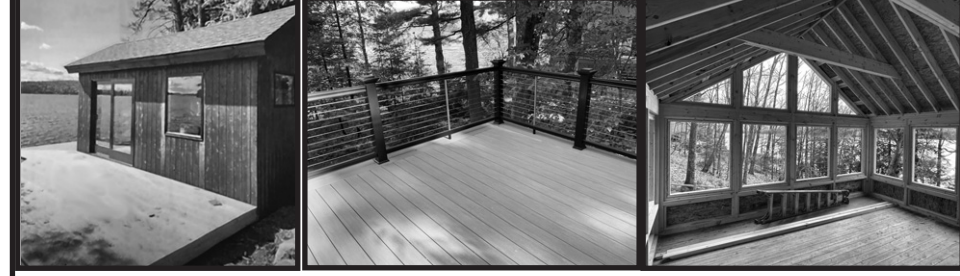
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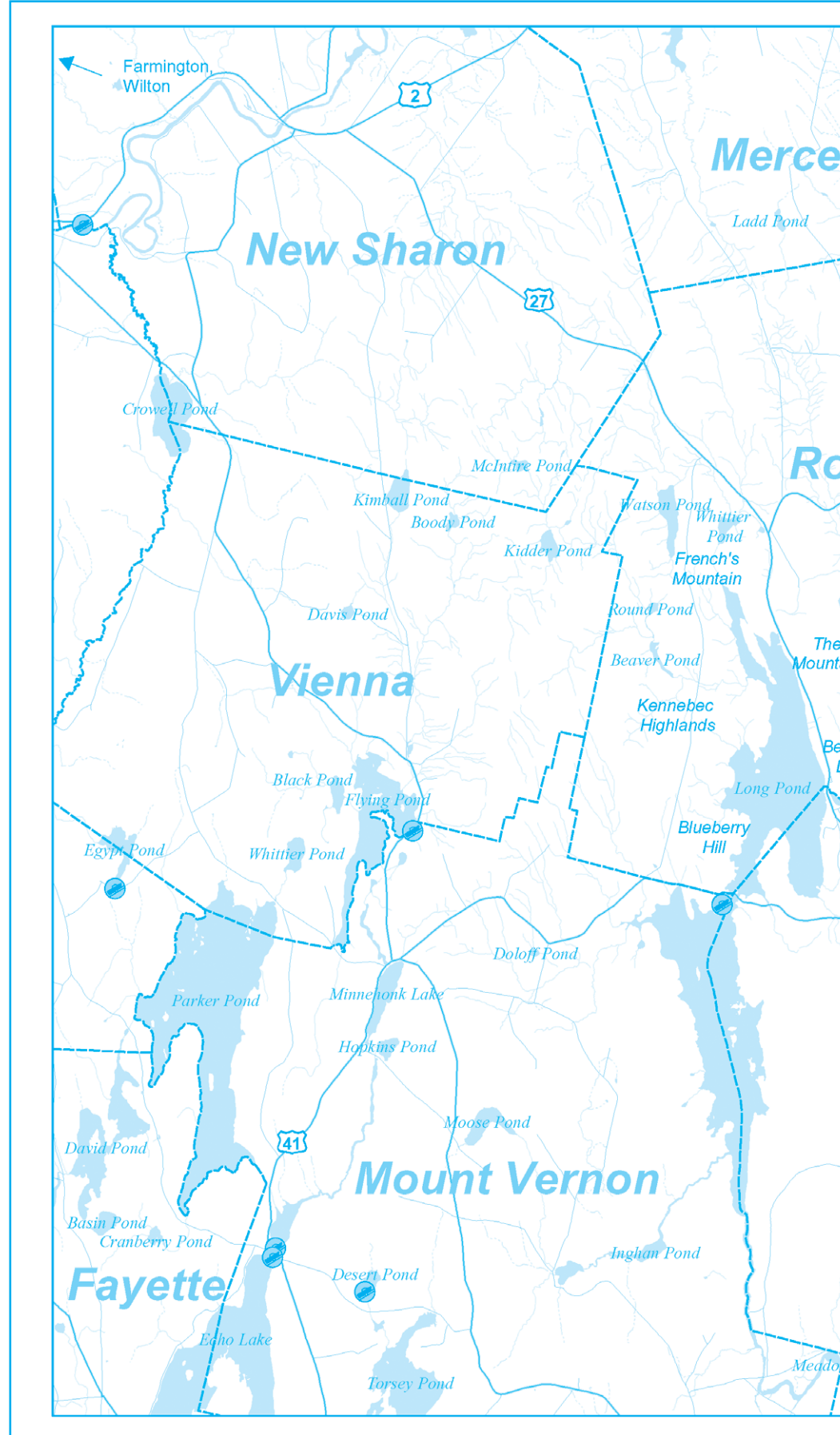
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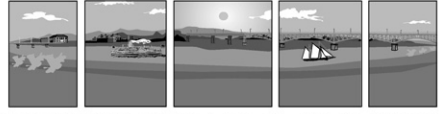
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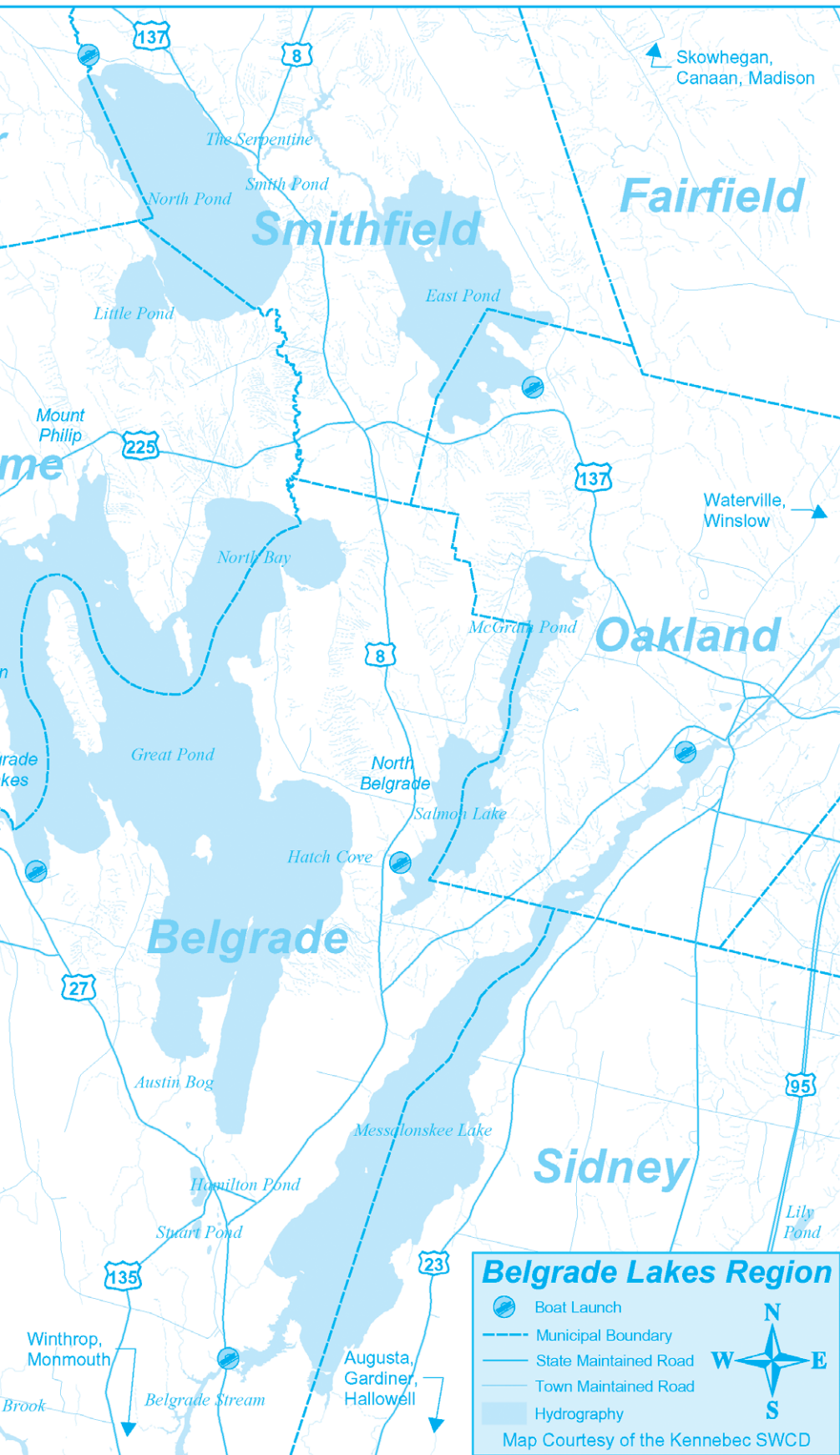
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Lake Associations of the Belgrades: 2024 Annual Meetings

- East Pond Association (EP), towns: Smithfield/Oakland, www.eastpond.org, founded 1946, 2024 Annual Meeting 7/20, 10 am, Brickett Point, East Pond Road, Oakland.
- North Pond Association (NP), towns: Smithfield/Rome/Mercer, www.northpondmaine.org, founded 1985, 2024 Annual Meeting 8/11, 6-8:30 pm, Pine Tree Camp, Rome.
- McGrath Pond/Salmon Lake Association (MP/SL), towns: Belgrade/Oakland, Box 576, Belgrade, 04917, 465-3983, www.mcgrathpond-salmonlake.org, founded 1989, 2024 Annual Meeting 7/29, 6 pm, Pleasant Point Park, Oakland.
- Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA) for Great Pond and Long Pond, towns: Belgrade/Rome/Mount Vernon, PO Box 551, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, 04918, 512-5150, www.belgradelakesassociation.org, founded 1909, 2024 Annual Meeting 8/11, 4-6 pm, Belgrade Lakes Golf Course.
- Friends of Messalonskee, towns: Oakland/Belgrade/Sidney, PO Box 532, Oakland, 04963, 618-8723, www.friendsofmessalonskee.com, founded 1990, 2024 Annual Meeting 7/17, 6-8 pm, Lakeside Lodge at Bangs Beach, 28 Marigold Dr, Sidney.

...Continued from page 7



Goodfellas

Kingsley as iconoclastic painter Salvador Dali. MIFF will also present her *Charlie Says* (2018), which presents "an unflinching profile of the women under Charles Manson's sway;" *The Moth Diaries* (2011), which offers "an unorthodox twist on a vampire story set in a girls' boarding school;" and cult classic *American Psycho* (2000), which stars "an unhinged Christian Bale in a tour de force role." (The

quotes in the preceding sentence all come from a MIFF press release.)

Each festival includes a selection of "rediscoveries," critically acclaimed films — some enduringly popular, others largely forgotten — from cinema's storied past. All are worthy of a fresh look, and some have been newly restored. By far the best known of this year's rediscoveries is Martin

Scorsese's 1990 gangster flick, *Goodfellas*, which is widely considered his greatest film. Among the other rediscoveries are *America - Everything You Ever Dreamed Of*, a compilation of documentary shorts from the early 1970s by Rhody Streeter and Tony Ganz; Jean-Pierre Melville's *Le Samourai* (France, 1967), a French *film noir* shot in color; and *Victims of Sin* (Mexico, 1951), a colorful spectacle shot in black and white about a cabaret dancer who takes in an abandoned child and then has to protect him when his murderous father is released from prison.



The Ghost Trap

Finally, This year's festival includes a special focus on new films from Rwanda. The international reputation of MIFF and the Maine Film Center has grown steadily over the years, such that in 2023, MFC Executive Director Mike Perreault was chosen a juror at the Mashariki African Film Festival in Kigali, Rwanda. As a result of the contacts he made there, MIFF will welcome Rwandan filmmakers Yuhi Amuli and Myriam Birara to give the Maine premieres of their films *Citizen Kwame* and *The Bride*, respectively, each of those films complemented by a short from a different director.

We will describe many of the abovementioned films in greater detail in next week's article, but for now, we encourage you to visit the MIFF website, www.miff.org, to learn more about them, get screening times, and buy tickets and festival passes. You can also pick up a copy of the festival's glossy, 68-page program book, at the festival's primary venue, the Paul J. Schupf Art Center at 93 Main Street in Waterville, and at various other locations around Central Maine.

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Notebook

Kennebec Historical Society

• The Kennebec Historical Society and the Maine State Library are co-sponsoring "The Maine Roadshow, a roadside tour of the State's History, Culture, Food, Funk & Oddities" on Wednesday, July 17 at 6:30 by author Tim O'Brien. The presentation, which is the KHS July monthly program, will be held at the Maine State Library, 242 State Street, Augusta.

Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed

• New! Junior Watershed Scientist Day Camp. This camp is for youth who are entering grades 7 through 9. The program will combine regular camp activities like swimming and archery with interaction with the environment through hand-on opportunities and presentations from scientist in the community. The two sessions, July 8-12 and July 29 through August 2 will be held at the Y Camp of Maine on Cobbossee Lake in Winthrop. For more information contact 395-5239.

Augusta

• Volunteers are needed for the Ironman competition to be held on July 28. Opportunities range from Information Booth to Penalty Tent, from Athlete Check-In to Trash Pick-Up, from Kayaker to Cross Walk Security and many more. No experience is necessary. Ironman Foundation Grants are available to groups (nonprofits, sports teams, scouts, etc.) who volunteer together. 623-4559

Belgrade

• Senior Water Aerobics. Belgrade Recreation and the Senior Resource Committee are offering a program in Senior Water Aerobics from July 8 through August 12, 2:15-3:15 pm, at the swimming pool at the Belgrade Center for All Seasons. To register please contact Belgrade Recreation at communitycenter@townofbelgrade.com or 495-3481.

Chesterville

• Hildaland, with Louise Bichan and Ethan Setieman, will perform on Saturday, July 13, at 7 pm at the Chesterville Center Union Meeting House. The presentation will include Scottish, old time, Swedish-inspired and contemporary music. A donation of \$20

per adult is recommended. Children are free. 779-0660, www.chestervillemeetinghouse.org

Farmington

• A week of jazz concerts will be presented at the University of Maine at Farmington Jazz Camp for middle and high school students, July 7-13. 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

Madison

• Art School Lecture Series: free and open to the public. The Skowhegan School of Art on Lake Wesserunsett in Madison since 1946, a residency program for emerging visual artists, is offering the 2024 Barbara Lee Lecture Series of visiting and resident artists. The campus is at 1 Art School Road in Madison.

For days, dates, times and topics call 474-9345 or visit www.showheganart.org.

Monmouth

• Camp Shakes for grades 4-8 is holding 2 one-week day camp sessions starting July 8. Explore Shakespeare with the Theater at Monmouth, learn voice, movement and acting. Camp includes a final performance for family and friends. 9 am-4 pm with breaks for lunch and snacks. 933-9999

Vienna

• The Vienna Historical Society will present its annual play, "Romance in Vienny," at the Vienna Union Hall, 5 Vienna Mtn Rd at 7 pm, Thursday and Friday, July 25 and 26 and at 2 and 7 pm, Saturday, July 27. After a short sing-a-long of old-time music to get in the mood, cast members from neighboring towns will bring small town living in the 1920s to life with all its personalities, eccentricities, shenanigans, activities and affairs of the heart in days gone by. The play is written by local playwright, Beverly Wight Smith, and is presented in a lighthearted, somewhat slapstick fashion for an hour or two of fun and relaxation. Admission: \$10/adult, \$5/kids 12 and under. Handicapped Accessible. Refreshments will be provided.

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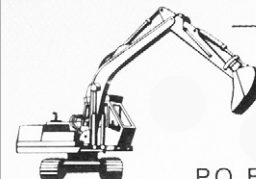
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High Peaks Artisan Guild, art gallery open Friday, Saturday, Sunday 11 am-5 pm, other times by chance or appointment, 245 Main Street, Kingfield, 340-1045, highpeaksartisanguild.homestead.com

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

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Oliver and Friends Bookshop, 150 Main Street, Waterville, 707-2123

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Call of the Loon



How Personable These Birds Are



Guest Columnist,
Barlow Herbst

Over the last month the loons on the Belgrades have nearly finished their courting period and we are even witnessing some of our first chick's hatch! My name is Barlow Herbst, and I am a rising sophomore from Colby College, working as a summer intern for the Belgrade Lakes Association's loon monitoring project. Together with Jodie Tsih, a fellow Colby student, we've been wrangling and untangling the many mysteries held by the loons on both Long and Great Pond.

At Colby I am majoring in Environmental Science focusing on conservation and field biology.

I'm captivated by birds of all shapes and sizes, with my primary attention to songbirds and owls—nothing on the water. I learned about this project from Colby's Buck Lab, and it stuck out as a way to finally experience the world of field biology while continuing expanding my knowledge of birds. In a sense, it was also my bridge to finally explore the world of waterfowl and these unreal creatures known as loons.



A Great Pond adult preening while relaxing.



A beautiful example of Nature's Iridescence!

I had little to no knowledge about loons when entering this project, but I always admired their beautiful iridescence and the adults' signature blood-red eyes. I was excited to work so closely alongside these birds and figure out how they reveal the true condition of the lakes they reside on. Nothing could have prepared me with just how personable these birds are! Each one has its own personality and social life, and they don't just fly away like other birds. It was also really surprising how they aren't treated as just statistics, but instead we observe their behavior and

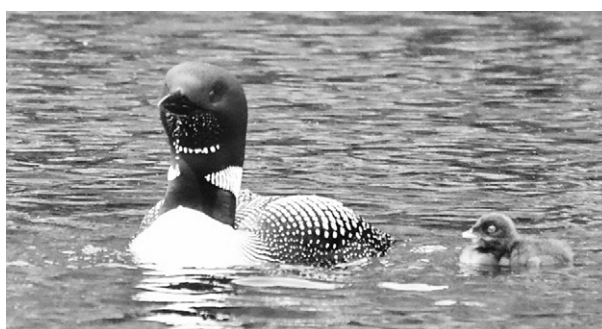
positions and then later work out the nuances and reasoning to track possible nesting pairs. Even when we think everything is under control, they like to deviate and seem to turn everything we thought upside down!

Over the course of my time here, I've learned how to approach and observe these birds safely, decipher what a majority of their behaviors mean, and what distinguishes individual loons from pairs or intruders. Additionally, I've become more familiar with the situations on both Great and Long Ponds, and hopefully, my assistance with this research can uncover the reasoning behind the relatively low productivity rates and pair retention on these lakes.



A new Long Pond chick staying warm!

Over the past week three chicks have hatched: two chicks on Great Pond near Robbins Mill Stream and one chick in the cove just north of the entrance to Ingham Stream. Overall we have a majority (12/14) of our territories on Great Pond housing nesting loons, but unfortunately, only territory on Long Pond has a nesting bird. Hopefully more will be nested and more chicks will hatch and survive in the coming weeks.



Another Little Miracle!

Thank you Barlow! If you have a particular questions 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. Have a great Summer enjoying the "Call of the Loon"! We are so fortunate to summer here in the Belgrades!

Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project





Community Read The Frozen River

by Martha F. Barkley

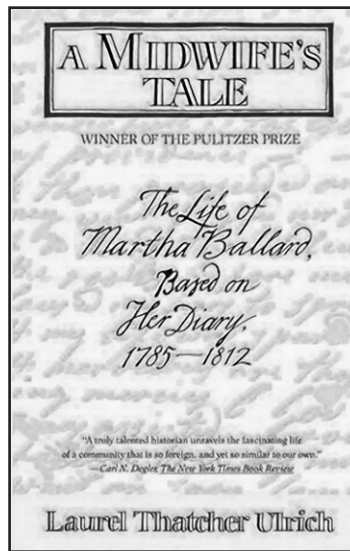
How fun to read an historic fiction murder mystery about the frozen Kennebec River during our hot summertime in the Belgrades. Right away I thought of Martha Ballard's Mid-Wife Tales that won a Pulitzer by Laurel Ulrich. My old copy is on our camp bookshelf from many years ago. History author Ulrich presented her Mid-Wife Tales in Augusta at the University of Maine campus. Many Belgrade readers attended that crowded event.

The detailed diaries are quoted at the beginning of each chapter and then translated and explained by Ulrich. The Frozen River offers an historic fiction rendition of the importance of Ballard's Diary as detailed evidence of a possible murder on the icy Kennebec.

My most vivid memory of the Pulitzer history is when Martha Ballard would cross the frozen Kennebec to help deliver a baby, even in the middle of the night. Her closely kept diary of healthy deliveries in the Hallowell area and beyond, better live birth statistics than Boston doctors at the time, made Martha Ballard's achievements to be unforgettable.

The Frozen River involves a death of a man on the Kennebec. Martha's accurate daily records are dismissed by certain men and she does not give up. She carefully surmised murder from her complete examination of the body before an outsider doctor arrived to take over. Dr. Cony was the local doctor in Hallowell who usually worked with Martha Ballard when required. (Cony High School is now located across the Kennebec from Augusta.) Her evidence of daily birthing's along with community happenings point to murder on the ice and not an accidental death.

How this all works out makes for fascinating summer reading. Remember our murder mystery last summer on Great Pond? That author had a packed audience, standing room only, at our large All Seasons Community Center. Many readers had penetrating questions and personal



comments for the very talented author of so many mysteries around Maine.

Hoping our community read this summer brings out your curiosity about local, real life historic figure Martha Ballard. She is portrayed by Ariel Lawhon as an authentic character of strength and intellect. Her husband and children all ring true to the history in Ulrich's Pulitzer.

As you drive to Augusta, look for the Ballard Stables on the right: same family. At Sam's in Augusta look for the Ballard barn up on the hill behind...The cemetery of Ballards is fenced in black near Barnes & Noble, Martha's remains unknown however. Jonathan Ballard kept his mother Martha at a lovely home not far from the Key Bank...On my many hospital visits a few summers ago I still saw Ballard Lane along the way. Perhaps you remember the Manchester Ballard Meat Store from awhile back?

Fort Western has a Martha Ballard tour on occasions. Apparently the Ballard family reunion also happens around here somewhere near Great Pond.

The historic Pownalborough Courthouse in Dresden had Martha Ballard there more than once to testify, right on the Kennebec. John Adams even tried a case there back in his lawyer days according to David McCullough's John Adams, another Pulitzer. The marvelous model of winter ice cutting caught my eye when we found this stunning courthouse one summer day on our way to the coast. Imagine Kennebec ice packed in sawdust reaching India.

History surrounds us here in the Belgrades and so do good books about Martha Ballard. Visit our Belgrade Public Library for directions, news, monthly book group discussions, special programs for kids and everyone, all ages.



...continued from page 4

mature and produce new turions. Since curly-leaf primary spreads through turions, depleting the cache of turions in lake sediments and preventing the generation of new turions is the best way to control the infestation. 7 Lakes has been using these strategic methods to manage curly-leaf in The Serpentine, the stream that connects East Pond to North Pond, since 2021.

Since curly-leaf removal efforts began in The Serpentine, we have seen an 89% decrease in curly-leaf growth. This impressive decrease in the original infestation has been achieved by continuously weeding the infested area via SCUBA before the plants are able to produce new turions, excellent outreach and communication efforts by our partners at East Pond and North Pond Associations, and the financial support of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. These fundamental tools for success will be used to control the curly-leaf in North Pond going forwards. Unlike the infestation in The Serpentine, the curly-leaf in North Pond has been found in areas of high motorboat traffic which makes this infestation

at high risk of spreading throughout North Pond and the watershed. While our divers can minimize the spread by removing plants before they grow tall enough to reach the water's surface, the best way to prevent the spread of all invasive species between waterbodies is to follow Clean, Drain, Dry practices. Clean off all boating and fishing equipment that contacts lake water before using the equipment in another waterbody. Drain your bilge in the tie-down area as you exit a boat launch, and if possible, allow your equipment to fully dry between trips.

If you are concerned about curly-leaf pondweed and all invasive aquatic plants, please join our team! Volunteers are always welcome to cover Courtesy Boat Inspector shifts at the public launches, survey for invasive plants (group paddles and independently), and donate to the cause. Weekly aquatic plant identification workshops will resume June 26th, every Wednesday 10-11 AM at 7 Lake's headquarters. Please email sharon@7lakes.org to get involved!



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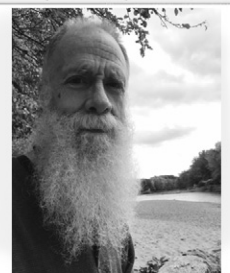
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Waterville Opera House to Produce World Premiere for NewPlayFest 2026

The Waterville Opera House (WOH) is thrilled to announce its selection as a Producing Theatre for the American Association of Community Theatre's (AACT) NewPlayFest 2026.

WOH is one of only six theatres in the nation to receive this prestigious honor. Each cycle, hundreds of playwrights submit original scripts for consideration. Following a rigorous three-tier review process, the Producing Theatres will select one finalist to produce, and the six plays are then announced as AACT NewPlayFest 2026 award winners.

Aligned with AACT's mission of providing support and resources to community theatres, NewPlayFest addresses the critical need for new, high-quality plays for community theatre audiences worldwide. This unique playwriting competition guarantees that each winning play will be produced as a world premiere by an established theatre and published by Dramatic Publishing Company in an AACT NewPlayFest anthology. The winning plays will receive a full production by the Producing Theatres between June 2025 and December 2026.

"Theatres rarely have a chance to work hand-in-glove with a show's playwright during the rehearsal process," said Debra Susi, WOH's long-serving stage and intimacy director and theatre

educator, who will direct the NewPlayFest world premiere. "This award provides the Waterville Opera House with the rare opportunity for all creatives—designers, directors, and most importantly our talented Central Maine actors—to work directly with the playwright and play a significant role in the premiere of an award-winning play. It is a unique and exciting experience for our theatre community."

Since its construction in 1902 to celebrate the city of Waterville's centennial, the Waterville Opera House has hosted countless events, including plays, musicians, vaudeville acts, dancers, poets, circuses, and more. In 1973, the Waterville Opera House Improvement Association was founded with the mission of maintaining and preserving the space. The association raised millions of dollars for the theatre and eventually oversaw a massive renovation in 2012.

Today, as a division of Waterville Creates, the Waterville Opera House has a thriving community theatre program that produces four mainstage productions, offers three weeks of theatre camp for students, and presents four touring productions for school-aged children. In addition to their theatre programming, WOH also presents nationally touring musicians, comedians, authors, and other live performances, and hosts major screenings during the Maine International Film Festival, a project of the Maine Film Center.

"I am thrilled that the Waterville Opera House has

been selected to be one of only six theatres nationwide to take part in the 2026 NewPlayFest through the American Association of Community Theatres," said WOH Executive Director Michelle Sweet. "This is a tremendous honor and an exceptional opportunity for our volunteer performers, our Creative Team, and our community as a whole. I look forward to welcoming the playwright and many others to Central Maine and spotlighting our topnotch theatrical productions."

In addition to Waterville Opera House, the selected Producing Theatres for AACT NewPlayFest 2026 are Westchester Collaborative Theater in Ossining, New York; Players de Noc, Inc. in Escanaba, Michigan; Theatre Salina in Salina, Kansas; Vortex Theatre in Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Kenai Performers, Inc. in Soldotna, Alaska. Theatre33 in Bellevue, Washington serves as an alternate.

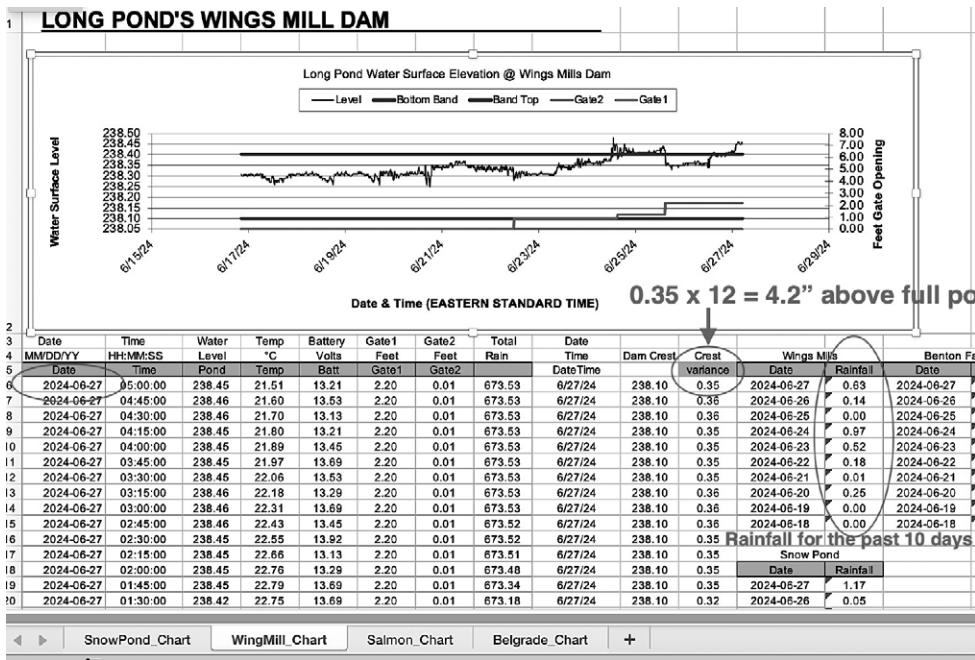
AACT NewPlayFest produces six original plays as world premieres across the country every two years. To date, more than 40 original scripts have been published, with productions licensed globally and receiving international acclaim. Visit aact.org/newplayfest for information on past winning plays and their productions. These plays are available to be produced through Dramatic Publishing Company. Visit dramaticpublishing.com for information on producing these new works.



The Dams Keeper Report

els, please email your inquiry to: dickgreenan@outlook.com and we will try to answer your question either in this column or via email.

Dick Greenan
Chairman, Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



Daily data logger report

With the Summer of 2024 in full swing, our pond water levels are slightly above where we would ideally like them to be. As I pen this week's column, we had another downpour this afternoon – so what else is new?! According to our daily data logger reports (attached), the Village spillway dam is 3" above full pond with one gate opened 3'. With Long Pond, at least at the Wings Mill Dam, is 4.2" also above full with Gate one opened 2'6" as you can see on the datalogger below. Whereas at my dock, 9 miles north, we are 5" above full due to the recent deluges and Long Pond's steep watershed. Salmon/McGrath is doing well at 2.16", also above full and with its calibrated valve set at the minimum 1cfs mandate. Messalonskee, aka. Snow Pond is, as of this writing, 3.12" below full, due to their electricity generation needs and the fact that they can fortunately handle a ton of water!

If the weather forecasters are at least close, we are looking at only .82" for the next ten days – finally some Chamber of Commerce weather! It's about time and I think we all deserve it!

If you have a particular question regarding our Dams and/or water lev-

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