

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 3

Maine's Great Indoor Outing

by Esther J. Perne



It's a treasure chase, a trek into nostalgia, an answer to a not-so-outdoors weather day, a family adventure, a refreshing distraction from the frustrations of the world and a discovery of how awesome Maine can be.

Follow any winding, wooded, scenic road. Head to a village or town to stop and walk. Enter wherever great finds beckon and find out that they beckon everywhere from malls and mills and shops to quiet corner shelves and obscure back rooms in almost any type of store.

What's going on here? Call it thrifting, retro, reproto, second hand, vintage, antique, recycled, historic, campy, repurposed, trendy. The names have no limit, nor does the find of the day, but in an era of economic disturbance, in a state where wealth is counted in hours spent fishing and in a region where the real deal is the strategic eating of a melting ice cream cone, it's the pursuit of thrift that has withstood the test of time.

And now? Call the quest a great solution to a day too hot, too cold, too windy, too calm, too solitary, too jammed with houseguests.

Call it a great formula to keep all ages engaged from the youngest who like small tradeables to the teens who revel in vintage clothes and eclectic furnishings for college dorm rooms to the many adult visitors, vacationers and residents, too, in search of practical household items or campy collections and decor that match the unique mid-Maine lifestyle.



Photos from Hathaway Mill Antiques by Ethan Perne
Continued on page 2

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Continued from page 1



Hathaway Mill Antiques: photo by Ethan Perne

Need more motives to enjoy the adventure? Where there is thrifting, think gifting. Don't underestimate what makes a great old gift be it a memory of good times spent, an enticement to return to spend more good times, a thank you to someone who hosted, a goodbye to someone who was a guest or a little something to unwrap during the winter holidays that speaks of a great indoor outing during summer in Maine when it was too hot, too cold, too windy, too calm, too solitary, too crowded, too nothing to do, too much to do.

Don't wait, don't debate, just opt for Maine's great trendy, tempting, timely indoor outing.

History Matters by David McCullough

by Martha F. Barkley

As we celebrate our country's 250th all year long, let us enjoy more history from Maine's summer resident in Camden. His daughter Dorie and Michael Hill selected speeches and essays compiled posthumously. Dorie McCullough Lawson worked with her father for thirty years and also wrote a novel and some nonfiction, too. Michael Hill was a long time researcher and even accompanied David and wife Rosalee on some Paris, France trips for The Greater Journey.

I must say I finally bought this new, special book after looking at it for several months, noticing especially McCullough's paintings on the front and back endpapers: his Tisbury, Mass. home and small writing shed nearby where he typed away on the used Royal typewriter that clicked and "clinged" its rhythmic sounds.

Every chapter is worth a read, but I must say that Harriett Beecher Stowe in Paris got my immediate attention. Her Brunswick, Maine broadsheet publications of each chapter to Uncle Tom's Cabin were a find for me at the

Bowdoin College Library. Just imagine her writing and reading out loud to Bowdoin students before publishing each week in the newspaper.

McCullough tells the story of Harriet Beecher Stowe's book tour to London.

"In Britain, Uncle Tom's Cabin was acclaimed...Over half a million British women had signed a petition against slavery. In Paris...publishers were still scrambling to finish translations, but the novelist George Sand, writing in La Presse, had already called Mrs. Stowe "a Saint. Yes—a Saint!"

It was such a frenzy of crowds everywhere, Harriet's husband decided to return home early to their six children. Fortunately Harriet's brother stayed with her through the ordeal and they went on to Paris for a reprieve. It turned out to be a special time.

Paris offered Stowe some privacy and inner exploration of the many museums and quiet streets to stroll and breathe in peacefully with some

Continued on page 10...

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Remembering Ellie the Elm, ca. 1876 – 2026

by Gregor Smith



Waterville is known as the Elm City, after the tall, graceful trees resembling giant, up-turned flower vases, which once lined the city’s downtown streets. But six decades ago, most of those trees had to be felled due to Dutch Elm Disease, a fungus carried by elm bark beetles that gradually kills the tree.

A few trees survived, thanks to some natural resistance to the fungus or isolation from other elms, but now the last known specimen in the City of Waterville has died. She was Ellie the Elm. So named by Mike Roy, Waterville’s former, long-serving and now retired, city manager, she has stood sentinel outside City Hall for roughly a century and a half, the oldest living thing in the city.

She was probably there for nation’s centennial. She may even have been around for the end of the Civil War and certainly for all the wars since. She was there when Waterville became a city in 1888 and when it dedicated its new city hall fourteen years later. Her exact age will remain a mystery until she is cut down, likely before this article hits print, and her growth rings are counted.

Yet from death comes new life. After Ellie is cut down, her trunk and roots excavated, and the soil remediated, the City will plant a fir tree in her place. Each December, this conifer will become a living Christmas tree, eliminating the need to cut a tree somewhere else and have it trucked in and “planted” in Castonguay Square in for the season.

Ellie herself will not be forgotten. Some of her wood will be salvaged to build chairs and benches or to use in art projects. A plaque may be installed in her in her honor. And long will she live in the hearts of downtown denizens who appreciated the abundant shade her leaves offered and the elegant addition to the city’s skyline that her curved crown provided as it towered over the surrounding buildings.

The author thanks Linda Woods of the Elm City Tree Task Force and Serena Sanborn of Waterville Creates for their assistance in preparing this article.



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

www.belgradelakesnews.com

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McGRATH POND - SALMON LAKE ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting July 9th 6:00-7:30 pm

North Belgrad Community Center

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State of the Lakes: Preparing for the 2026 Invasive Aquatic Species Season

by Sharon Mann, Invasive Aquatics Director, 7 Lakes Alliance

From Courtesy Boat Inspections and early detection surveys to diver-led removals and expanded management efforts, 2026 will be an important year for protecting the long-term health of our lakes, streams, and wetlands.

As of October 2025, four waterbodies within our seven-lake chain are managed for invasive aquatic plant infestations. Great Pond and Messalonskee Lake continue to contend with long-standing infestations of variable-leaf milfoil, while East Pond (stream only) and North Pond are managing newer infestations of curly-leaf pondweed. Meanwhile, Long Pond, Salmon Lake, and McGrath Pond remain free of known invasive aquatic plant species.

Infestation Updates and Management Plans

Great Pond

We completed our annual kickoff dive in Great Meadow Stream last month and found only a handful of small variable-leaf milfoil plants. This encouraging pattern has continued since the 2022 herbicide treatment, although we did observe an increase in regrowth later in June and July last season. Treatments of this kind often provide strong suppression for several years, followed by a more noticeable rebound in regrowth around years four to five post-treatment. We are now entering the period when increased regrowth should be expected.

Messalonskee Lake and Belgrade Stream

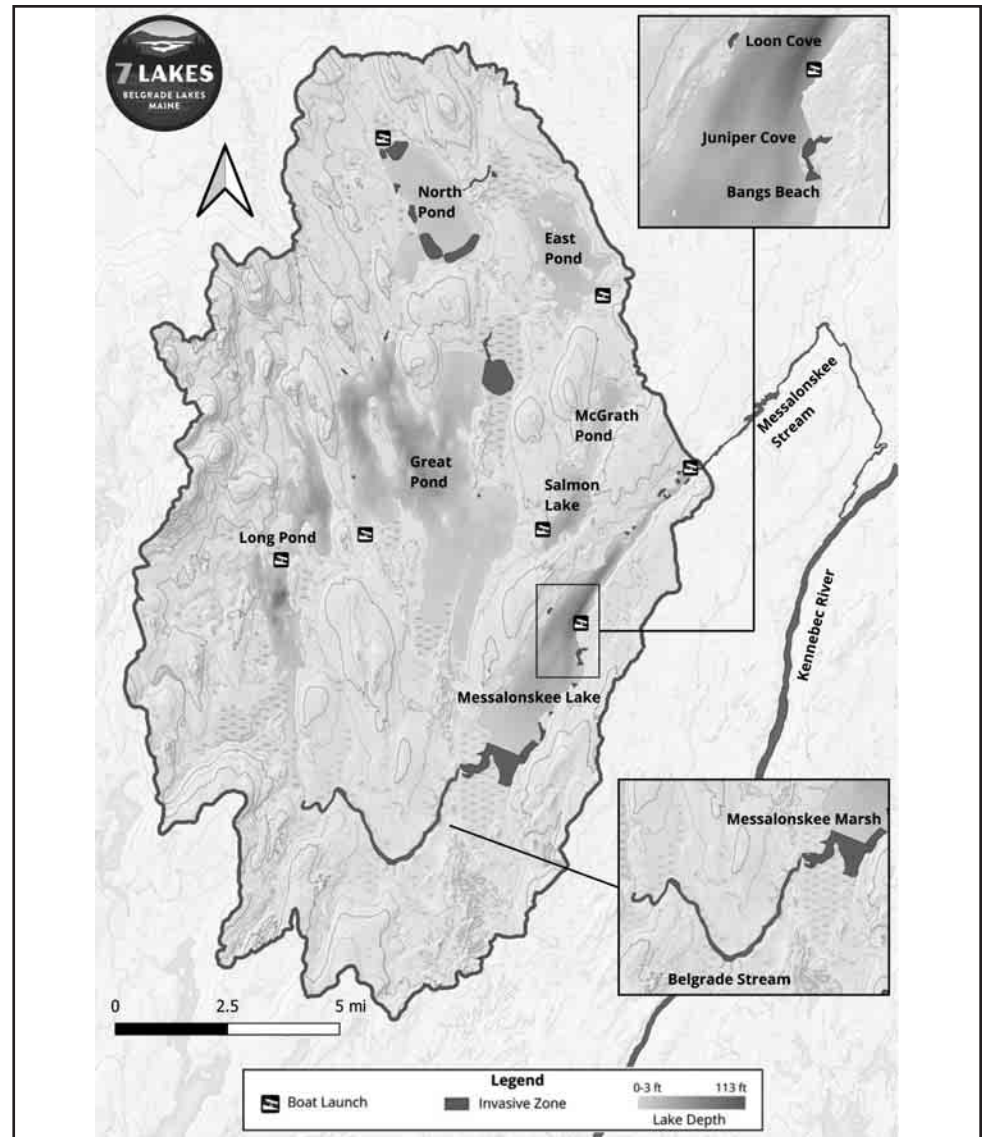
Last season, 7 Lakes Alliance officially adopted Messalonskee Lake and its connected streams under our invasive aquatic species management responsibilities. Select areas within Messalonskee Lake are expected to undergo herbicide treatment in 2026, and Friends of Messalonskee remains an active and valued partner in the fight against invasive aquatic plants. Official announcements and permitting updates will come through the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

East Pond (Serpentine)

In 2026, 7 Lakes will field a dedicated team of three certified divers—affectionately known as the “Curly Crew”—who will divide their time between The Serpentine and North Pond. This season, the Curly Crew will conduct submerged SCUBA surveys throughout the infested branch of The Serpentine one to two days per week, searching for and removing any remaining plants.

North Pond

This year, 7 Lakes expanded its dive program by hiring additional certi-



fied divers dedicated specifically to the East Pond and North Pond infestations. The largest patches continue to be concentrated near Pomleau Island in the northern basin, though North Pond Association volunteers also identified another hotspot near the entrance to Little Pond.

To help minimize the spread of curly-leaf pondweed and protect divers working below the surface, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Maine Department of Environmental Protection are implementing surface use restrictions in three areas of North Pond this season. The restricted areas will be clearly marked with buoys.



Belgrade History Beyond Belgrade

Submitted by BHS member Dianne Dowd

With this year being the 250th anniversary of America, it is a good time to reflect on America's Bicentennial of 1976. Many of us remember the great celebrations that took place that year. One of the most ambitious celebrations was the 1976 Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage to Pennsylvania. Starting as early as 1972, the Bicentennial Commission of Pennsylvania developed a program that would include five covered wagon trains that would cross the country, following as closely as possible to historical wagon trails and going through every state. A reproduction covered wagon was delivered to each state prior to the start of the national Wagon Train, and each wagon would leave from the individual state capitals. The trains would all arrive at Valley Forge National Historical Park in Pennsylvania by July 3, 1976. In addition, the wagons would collect scrolls from each state signed by the citizens rededicating themselves to the principles of the founding fathers. Eventually a half a million scrolls, bearing twenty-two million signatures of Americans were brought by wagon to Valley Forge.

After responding to an article about the wagon train in a Boston newspaper, Lyle Strickland of Belgrade was chosen as State of Maine Teamster



and assistant wagon master. The plan called for Lyle to drive a prairie schooner pulled by his 13-year-old matched Percheron geldings, Duke and Don from Maine south to Valley Forge, PA. Along the way, he would be joined with wagons from the other New England states. On May 11, 1976, the Maine wagon left Augusta and traveled south on Route 202 toward Rochester, New Hampshire. The Maine wagon was on the road for 7 weeks with 53 nightly stops. Although the wagon did not follow the most direct route, it covered 1,130 miles in total and made stops at schools and institutions to recreate part of this country's heritage.

As part of the celebration of the 250th anniversary of America, the Belgrade Historical Society will be hosting a program, Wagons Ho on June 30, 2026 at 6:15pm at Water Dance Farm, 358 Augusta Rd (Route 27), Belgrade. Local resident, Geri Herbster was a wagon train rider from Springfield, MA. in 1976 and will share her experiences on the wagon train with music, pictures, and memorabilia. There will be a short business meeting for members of the Belgrade Historical Society at 5:00 PM prior to the program.





— Take It Outside —

This week is the first week of summer vacation for most schools in the area and families with kids are beginning to show up everywhere. Almost all of the summer camps and sporting camps are back to a normal schedule. It is good to see our friends from away returning. These camps are not only very important to the local economy, but often bring visitors from all over the country who learn the joys of living near a lake in Maine. Many later come back to settle here in their retirement. There are many former Camp Kennebec alumni around Salmon Lake, Pine Island alumni and Runoia alumnae around Great Pond, Manitou and Matoaka alums around East Pond, and Snow Pond Center for the Arts alumni everywhere. This is also true of former visitors to Bear Springs Camp, Alden Camps. Whisperwood, Castle Island, Wheeler Camps, and other family camps in the watershed. Residents of Taconnet have been playing tennis with the same “kids” for decades. Camp Tracy on McGrath Pond provides opportunities for disadvantaged youth and Pine Tree Camp on North Pond is in its 80th year of providing camping opportunities for youth with various disabilities. A recent UMO study estimates youth summer camps alone generate about \$323M direct and indirect economic benefits in Maine, annually. These summer camps and sporting camps have been part of our watershed communities for over a century in some cases and continue to play a significant role in providing both financial and in-kind service to protect water quality throughout the watershed. These camps continue to expand their family-oriented activities and most provide “guest night” opportunities to experience some of their American Plan dining. They all have great cooks and I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities and learn more about their operations.



Cremer Family: Zach, Delylah, Mildred (2)
Adrianna and Zach Jr (4)

Mildred and 4-yr old Zach Jr. He said there was just enough rain to keep the mosquitoes down during their hike. They were very enthusiastic about the 7 Lakes trails and said they plan to hike more of them more often.



Connor Kowalsky stalking sunfish in the boathouse.

Matteo. Don has been “Taking them Outside” for years and they are all “Hooked on Fishing” as well as hunting and foraging for wild plants and mushrooms.

The trout fishing has been slow for the past month as the water warms. Once the surface water temperature gets above 70, the trout will tend to stay below the surface mixed layer in the cooler water below the thermocline (currently about 25 feet down). I have still been catching some nice rainbows trolling streamer flies or small spoons just off the bottom in areas 20 to 25 feet

Last week, I went for a hike at French Mountain and met the Creamer Family from Fairfield, just finishing their hike between rain showers. Zach is a local contractor who is completing a house for a 7-Lakes member on East Pond and was taking the family on a family hike at their recommendation. He was hiking with his wife, Adrianna, 16-yr old daughter, Delylah, and 2-yr old

Over Memorial Day Weekend, my friend Don Kowalsky on Great Pond had his kids and grand-kids in town for a bit of fishing. He sent me a picture of Grandson Connor stalking sunfish in the boathouse. He also included a couple of pictures of nice Brown Trout caught by his son, Timothy, and his daughter, Kaitlin Balestriere, ably assisted by her son,

Families in the Woods

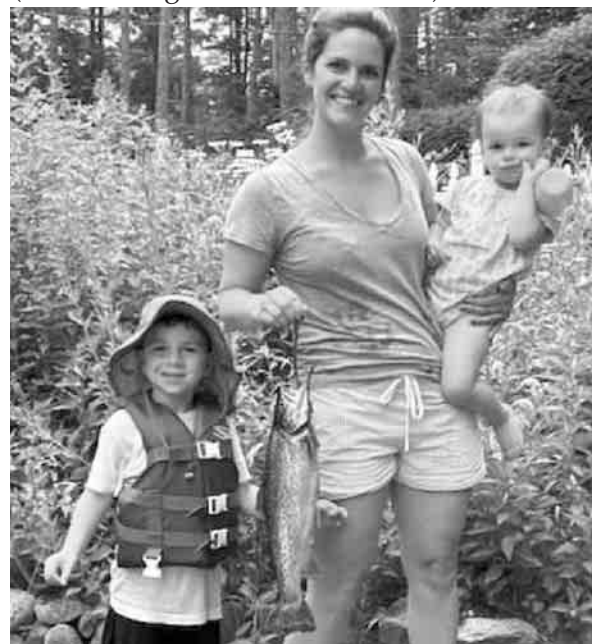
By Peter Kallin

deep. The bass are off their beds and feeding on alewives, as are the pike. The sunfish are still spawning in the shallows and provide a lot of action for youngsters just learning to fish

Check the 7LA Website (<https://7lakesalliance.org/events>) and FaceBook site for upcoming events. Our Thursday afternoon (3 to 4 PM) Chewonki presentations begin on June 24th (Predators). We have a guided birding paddle on June 26th with Maine Master Naturalist Julia Hanauer-Milne (Lower Long Pond 10 AM-noon). We will also be offering Invasive Plant



Tim Kowalsky with nice Brown Trout.



Matteo, Kaitlin and Olivia Balestriere with nice Great Pond Brown Trout.

Workshops and Junior Ranger training on Sunday mornings during the Farmers’ Market. Check with Sally (495-6039) in the gallery if you are interested in signing up. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the wealth of recreational opportunities this area offers. Do like they used to in “the good old days” and take a kid fishing, or on a hike, or paddling in a canoe. It’s how memories are made. Or take a parent, so they can become a kid again.

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— Calendar —

...Through Saturday 6/27 - Monmouth Fair 2026, midway, exhibition hall, pulling events, pig scramble, bike drawing, stage show, food, Saturday is Woodsman's Day, free parking, 13 and over \$7, 12 and under free, www.monmouthfair.com, Academy Road, off Route 202, Monmouth.

...Through Saturday 6/27 - "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder," musical, 474-7176, Lakewood Summer Theater, Route 201, Madison.

...Friday 6/26 - through Sunday 6/28 - Antique Tractor Festival, Maine Antique Tractor Club, over 30 years of preserving Maine's agricultural heritage, over 100 antique tractors, displays, demonstrations, 20 local Maine crafters and vendors, children's activities, food trucks, giant flea market and swap meet area, 431-2718, 351 Waterville Road, Norridgewock.

...Friday 6/26 - through Sunday 6/28 - Maine Horse Association Downeast Horse Congress, free and open to public, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Madison Avenue, Route 201, Skowhegan.

...Friday 6/26 - 12th Annual Tee-Off for Transportation, 4 Person Scramble, 9 am, 859-1630, Lakewood Golf Course, Route 201, Madison.

...Friday 6/26 - Birding Paddle on Lower Long Pond, please RSVP 495-6039, 10 am - 12 pm, meet at the large parking lot at Wings Mills Dam, off Wings Mills Road, Belgrade.

...Friday 6/26 - Trio con Brio, with special guest vocalist Christine Leicher, free and open to the public, 1 pm, Lithgow Public Library, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta.

...Friday 6/26 - Don Campbell Band, country, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Summer Concert, 6-8:30 pm, food trucks 6-7:30, Waterfront Park on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

...Saturday 6/27 - Hallowell Artwalk, displays of art by local artists in downtown Hallowell, exhibits, live music, workshops, food trucks, 10 am-4 pm, Water Street, Hallowell.

...Saturday 6/27 - Downtown Scavenger Hunt for Kids of all ages, information at gardinermainstreet.org, downtown Gardiner.

...Saturday 6/27 - Costume Pet Parade, in celebration of America's 250th Anniversary, prizes for most festive outfit and best patriotic theme, registration 10 am, line up 10:45 am, followed by Maine Potato Races, Kids Obstacle Course, Touch-A-Truck and Raffles, Smithfield Municipal Complex, 926 Village Road, Route 8, Smithfield.

...Saturday 6/27 - North Pond Buff Enough Workshop, Build a Better Buffer/Lakesmart, family event, free ice cream, 10 am-noon, Fairview Grange, downtown Smithfield.

...Saturday 6/27 - Chicken Barbeque, Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department, \$15, 1/2 chicken, 2 sides, roll, drink, dessert, 11 am 'til sold out, downtown Smithfield.

...Saturday 6/27 - Kingfield POPS Music Festival, Maine's premier outdoor concert featuring the Bangor Symphony Orchestra, 4:30-9:30 pm, music, food, fireworks, kingfieldpops.org, Kennedy Farm, Route 142, Kingfield.

...Saturday 6/27 - Hallowell-Kennebec Contra Dance, donation \$15-\$25 adults; \$5-8 teens; children free; pay what you can, 7-10:30 pm, Hallowell City Hall Ballroom, Winthrop Street, Hallowell.

...Sunday 6/28 - Belgrade Lakes Farmers Market, 8 am-1 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance parking lot, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Sunday 6/28 - Drop-in Puppet Making Workshop, 9 am-12 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance building, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Sunday 6/28 - Village Green Artisan Fair, summer craft series, free admission, 9 am-2 pm, West Road, downtown Belgrade Lakes.

...Sunday 6/28 - Kennebec River Ramble, a community paddle from Waterville to Sidney, 8 miles of scenic adventure, 10 am launch time, registration includes shuttle, hosted by Main Street Skowhegan and Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, begins at Waterville boat launch.

...Sunday 6/28 - Greg Boardman, Elsie Gawler, Steve Muise performing, 2 pm, \$15, 293-4321, Vienna Union Hall, Route 41, Vienna.

...Monday 6/29 - Guided Birding Walk, 8-10 am, please RSVP 495-6039, meet at the Quill Hill parking lot located on Drury Ln in Rome, just north of the Rome Corner intersection of Routes 27 and 225.

...Monday 6/29 - Western Maine Foothills Band, selections from Big Band, marches and other eras, 7-8:30 pm, Meeting House Park, 139 Main Street, Farmington.

...Tuesday 6/30 - Wagons Ho, celebrating the 250 anniversary of the United States with a program on the 1976 Bicentennial Wagon Train Pilgrimage, 6:15 pm, Water Dance Farm, 358 Augusta Road, Route 27, Belgrade.

...Tuesday 6/30 - "Myth vs Fact: The Lives of Benedict Arnold and Paul Revere, movies night at Johnson Hall Opera House,



6:30 pm, Water Street, Gardiner.

...Tuesday 6/30 - Boogie Mob, Rock on the River concert series, 7-8:30 pm, Bandstand, Water Street, Hallowell.

...Wednesday 7/1 - View Conserved Land from Great Pond, 10 am-12 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, after safety briefing, the group will board the education boat (22 ft pontoon) for the tour, meet in 7 Lakes Alliance building, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Wednesday 7/1 - Aquatic Plant Identification & Interactive Art Workshop, 1-3:30 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, meet in 7 Lakes Alliance building, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Wednesday 7/1 - "Walking the Cobbossee" (history of uses), talk by Sara Maschino, 6:30 pm, Gardiner Public Library, Water Street, Gardiner.

...Thursday 7/2 - Waterville Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, Waterville.

...Thursday 7/2 - Mammals of Maine Animal Presentation with Chewonki, 3-4 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Thursday 7/2 - Cruise-In Night, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.

...Thursday 7/2 - Scott Cole Trio, Waterfront Concert Series, 6-8 pm, Lake Messalonskee, Waterfront Park, Old Belgrade Road, Oakland.

...Thursday 7/2 - Lefty and The Ladies, Village Green Concert Series, 6-8 pm, Belgrade Lakes.

...Thursday 7/2 - "History of Christ Church," talk by State Historian Earle Shettleworth, Jr., 6:30 pm, Christ Church, Gardiner.

...Thursday 7/2 through Saturday 7/11 - "Clue," Lakewood Summer Theater, 474-7176, Route 201, Madison.



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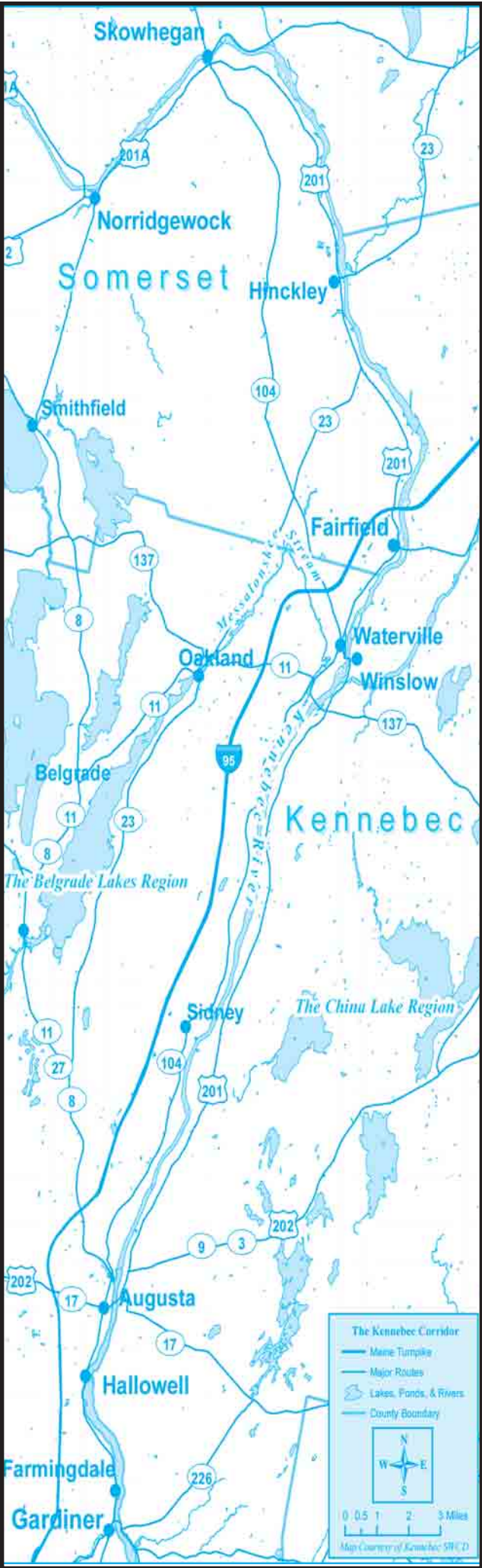
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—Along the Kennebec River Corridor—



“ABC Ducks” Fly South to Support Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland



Renee Cunningham (left), owner of Oliver & Friends Bookshop and children book author Jeanine Deas

Acting together as a team, Waterville children’s book author Jeanine Deas and Oliver & Friends Bookshop owner Renee Cunningham have donated 10 free copies of Ms. Deas’ new children’s book, “ABC Ducks of Deering Oaks Park,” to MaineHealth Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland, Maine. The children’s hospital is a 15-minute walk from Deering Oaks Park and its much-beloved ducks and Victorian-style duck house.

According to Sharon Granville, The John D. Bancroft, M.D. Child Life Program Manager at Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital, the young readers often love a particular book so much they want to take it home with them ... which is perfectly fine!

“I’m passionate about children and children’s literature, so it delights me to have ‘ABC Ducks’ shared with the children at Barbara Bush Hospital,” said author Jeanine Deas, who collaborated on the popular picture book with Maine illustrator Andrew Bourassa.

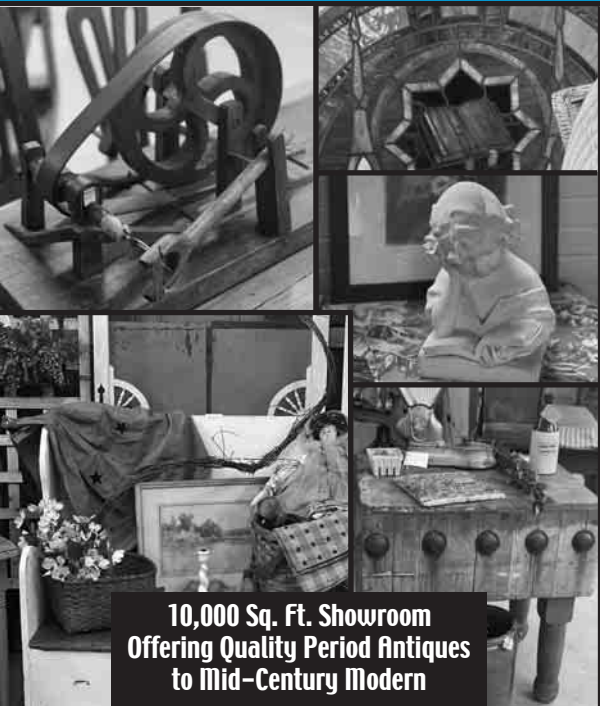
Oliver & Friends Bookshop owner Renee Cunningham agrees: “Providing copies of this lovely picture book to the children at Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital was a true community collaboration, and I’m so proud to have been a part of it.”

Funds needed for the purchase and shipping of copies of “ABC Ducks of Deering Oaks Park” to Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital in Portland were quickly raised by a half-dozen small-donation donors: friends, family members, and fellow church members of Jeanine Deas in Waterville and Winslow.

For more information, please call Oliver & Friends Bookshop at (207) 707-2123 or email oliverandfriends-books@gmail.com

For more information about “ABC Ducks of Deering Oaks Park,” please visit: <https://12willowspress.com/home/books/abc-ducks/>

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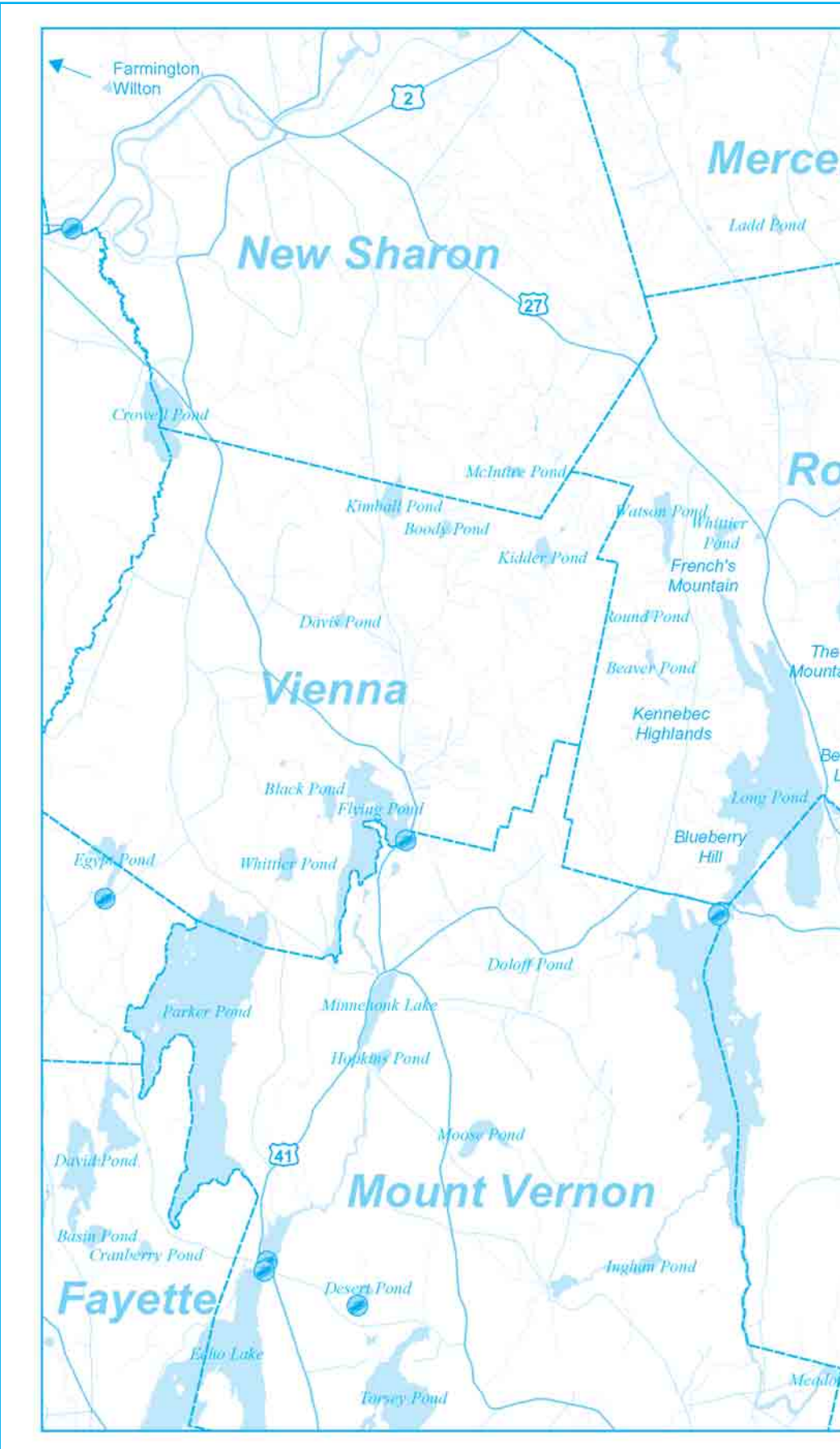


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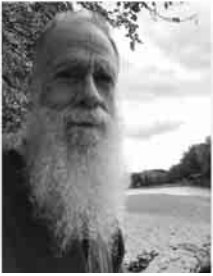
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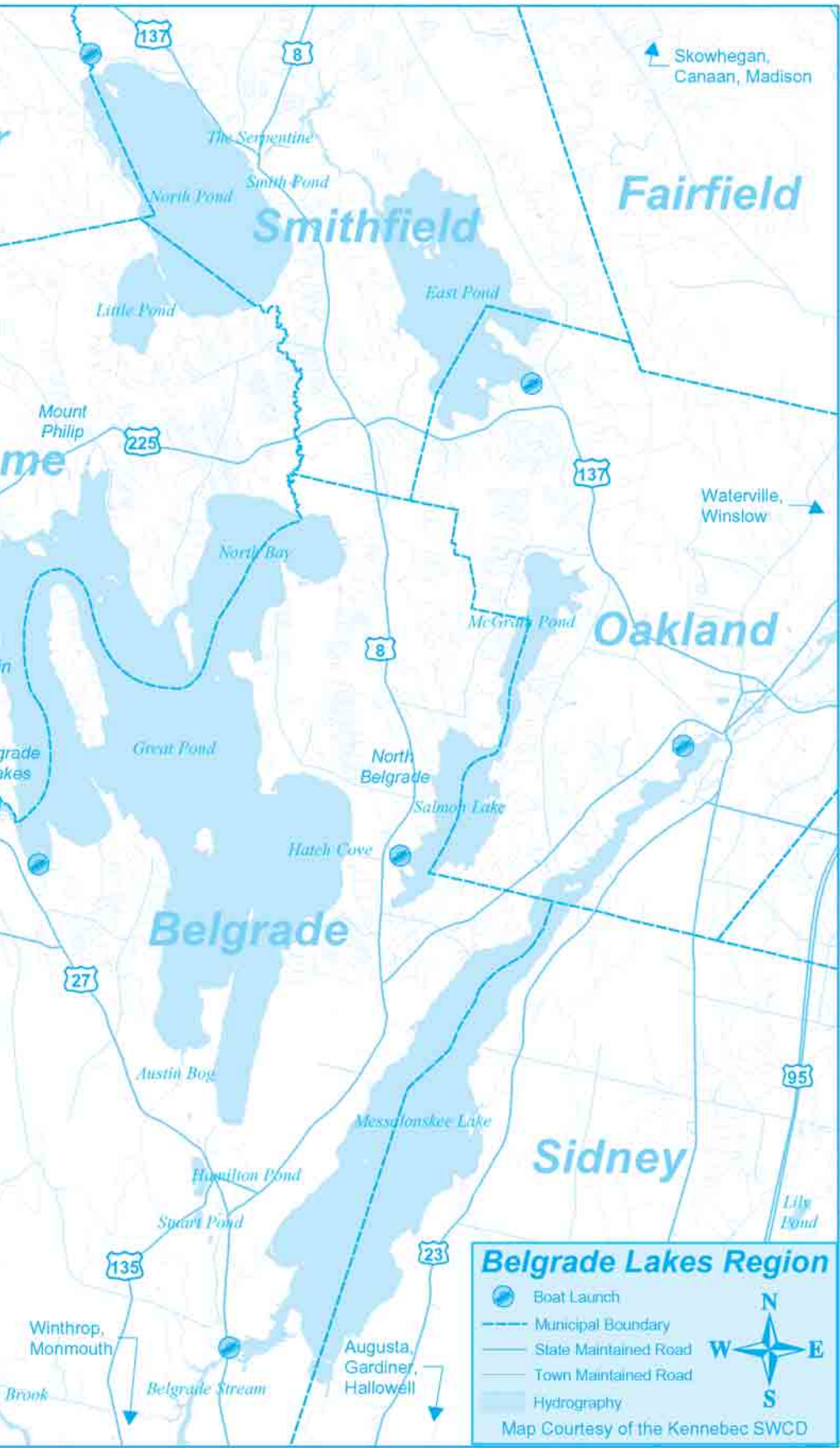
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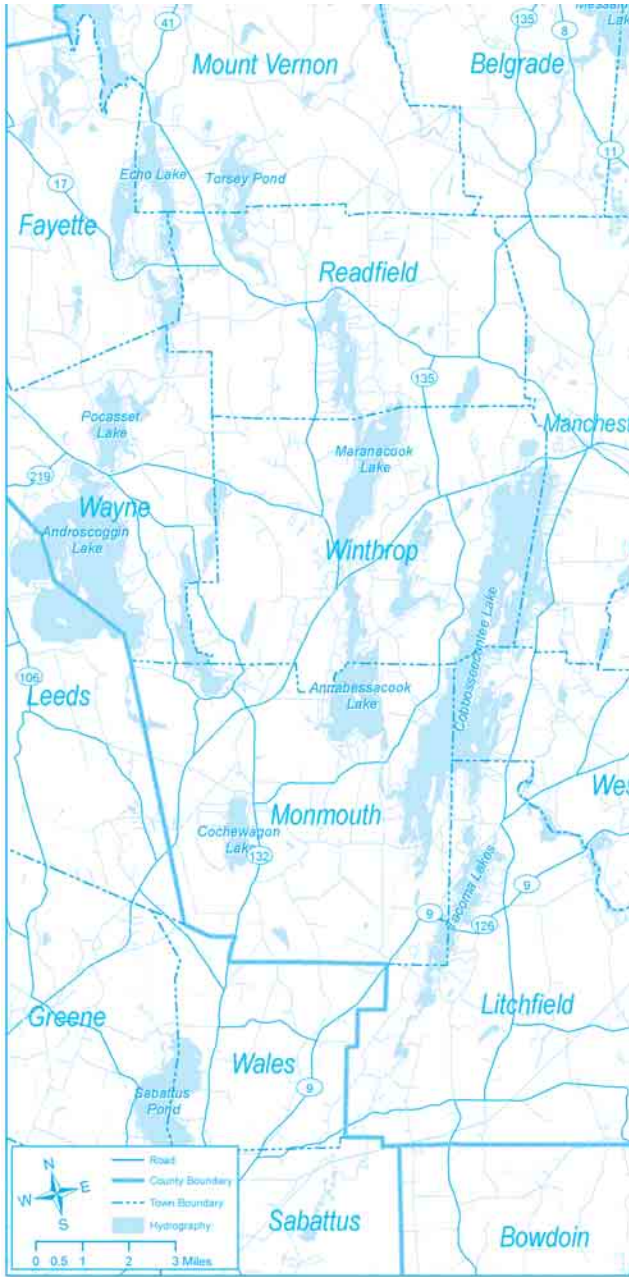
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24th Annual 5K on the 4th: A Great Celebration in Winthrop



In an ongoing partnership, Maranacook Lake Association and the Watershed Friends welcome all runners, joggers and walkers to the 2026 Friends on the 4th 5K, held on the 4th of July through downtown Winthrop Main Street and along the scenic eastern shore of Maranacook Lake. Pre-registration is highly recommended but last minute registration on race day may be possible at the American Legion, 117 Bowdoin Street. A \$40 cash registration fee will be charged. 100% of the entry fee goes toward protecting the lakes, ponds and streams of the Cobbossee Watershed. Check-in is at 7 am; the race starts at 8 am. <http://www.maranacooklakeme.org>

...Continued from page 2

anonymity. Her reflections on great paintings and comparisons to writers was a bit startling to me, but original. Maybe today Uncle Tom’s Cabin is not appreciated like it was when first published. I gained new knowledge when I found The Keys to Uncle Tom’s Cabin. The first chapter of that book by Stowe revealed slavery in Maryland not too far from my home in Silver Spring, Md. Newspaper reports reveal Stowe’s sources for her historically based novel. How she wrote so many books, not just the world famous one we are all familiar with? David sticks to the narrow topic of her trip to London, mobs of admirers and Paris explorations. Always there’s new history from David McCullough for 2026, our country’s 250th celebratory year. “Gazing upward within the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Hatty felt a ‘sublimity’ she found impossible to analyze or express. It was a long way from the kitchen table in Brunswick, Maine, where she had written Uncle Tom’s Cabin, a baby in a clothes basket at her feet.”

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Notebook

Hinckley: L.C. Bates Museum Summer Camps

• The L.C. Bates Museum of Natural History and Culture is offering 6 summer camp sessions starting June 29-July 2 with Life in the Olde Days (History) Camp - Maine in the 1800s. The other five sessions include: July 6-10 Stones & Bones Camp; July 13-17 Young Naturalist Camp; July 20-24 All About Animalia!; July 27-31 Aquatic Ecology & Eco-Explorer Camp; and August 3-7 Astronomy Camp. For information about options for enrollment, age groups, time and fees, contact 238-4250 or info@gwh.org

Belgrade: "Heartwood" Community Read

• In "Heartwood" by Amity Gaige, in the heart of the Maine woods a Maine search and rescue team races against time when an experienced hiker, a 42-year-old woman, vanishes from the Appalachian Trail, but is it an accident? This summer reading program with the Belgrade Public Library culminates in a get-together at the end of the season. 495-3508

Hallowell: Join the Old Hallowell Day Great Parade

• Old Hallowell Day 2026 will be on Saturday, July 18 with a registration deadline to march in the parade Wednesday, July 8. Forms are available at downtown stores or online at oldhallowell-day.org/events/parade. A voluntary donation of \$30 for participation is requested but not required; those who cannot donate are welcomed to march. Parade positions will be available July 11. On July 18, check-in for pre-registered entries is 8:30-9:30 am. The Parade begins promptly at 10 am. Call 462-4067 with questions or concerns.

Mount Vernon: Explore Hidden Gems

• On Sunday, July 26 the town of Mount Vernon is offering a unique opportunity to view nine intriguing sites, most of which are usually not open to public view, such as a magical garden with enchanting stonework, a blacksmith shop, an art gallery and more. The self-guided tour will run from 10 am to 4 pm; the ticket for the tour will be a brochure that lists the locations. Seasonal box lunches from Scapes cafe will be available for purchase. The price of tickets is \$25 in advance, \$30 day of. A processing fee will be added if tickets are purchased on EventBrite. Tickets may be

purchased at the Mount Vernon library, at public events in Mount Vernon and at <https://mtvernon-hiddengems.eventbrite.com/>

Gardiner: Monthly Paint & Purrr Night

• Paint with the kitties the 2nd Friday of each month. Whether you're a seasoned artist or picking up a brush for the first time, the Cat's Familiar Cafe local feline friends are ready to provide all the purr-sonal inspiration you need. All supplies provided: canvas, paint, brushes, etc., a fresh sandwich and choice of soda or water, and kitty cuddles from cuddly adoptable cats. Cost is \$35 per painter. Time 6 pm. Reservations at www.the-catsfamiliar.net Location 318 Water Street - The Kitty Coven.

Sidney: Snow Pond Community Trails

• Visitors to the Snow Pond Center for the Arts or New England Music Camp are invited to enhance their experience by enjoying the facility's 2.5 miles of trails that surround a designated wading bird habitat and offer opportunities to view many kinds of wildlife and plants.. The Snow Pond Trail System is built to be sustainable - to have as little impact on the environment as possible and to integrate with the surrounding landscape. Information and trail maps are available at the Snow Pond Visitors Center which is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

Farmington: Landscape Painting Locally Inspired

• The University of Maine at Farmington Emery Community Arts Center is currently exhibiting the artwork of Rumford native Phil Poirier: "A Retrospective Interrupted." The solo exhibit features landscape paintings inspired by locations in Maine and New Hampshire and will be on display through September 17, 2026. Gallery Open Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 12-6 pm. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

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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
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Call of the Loon

Loon Etiquette



When in the presence of loons, what is considered proper Loon Etiquette? Basically, what are the dos and don'ts when it comes to approaching these beautiful and inquisitive birds?

And if you look closely, you will see three distinct toenails on this webbed foot. Each toenail is about the same size as an adult human's pinky toenail. But the reason for their toenails is another whole story which we'll visit in an upcoming column!

We love to "rubberneck" around loons which is understandable as we observe our loon's behaviors,



The Wing Flap can be something as simple as a stretch, to dry off or to make sure that you see them.

chicks and even their nests up close but please consider that our loons need their privacy and security even more during their breeding time which is right now! Unfortunately, there are those few individuals that think they need to or deserve to, get real up close invariably flushing the bird

and possibly resulting in a failed nest. There is no guarantee that the loon will return to the nest so please, give all wildlife their space and it's always best to observe their proclivities with a good pair of binoculars as you do see so much more!

The State-wide 200' No-Wake Zone, although important for so many obvious reasons, when practiced, is just not adequate to ensure shoreline stability as well as our nesting loon's safety. We are supposed to just make headway speed within 200' of any shore or island on freshwater lakes, rivers and the ocean for that matter. But, a fast boat or jet ski out in the middle of the lake is much more of a threat as the average loon will not have enough time to dive until the vessel is directly over them. An equal responsibility that we have in relation to our wildlife is to refrain from all illegal lead fishing gear and absolutely recover all fishing lures and more importantly, all fishing line. We experience several cases each summer where our loons become wrapped in fishing line and/or become fatally hooked by a lure that was broken off by a fish and subsequently harvested by a loon.

Well-intentioned canoes, kayaks, and in particular paddleboards, result in way too many birds being flushed from their nests because the birds perceive a threat from a standing human up close.



This nesting Great Pond loon is obviously in its defensive posture.

If you have 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 here in the Belgrades!

Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project



Two fishing lures recovered on 5/24/26 in Beaver Cove, upper Long Pond on one morning!

Left: This nesting Long Pond loon was 'inadvertently' flushed off their two eggs by two paddleboarders.

If you feel you must get closer to a loon, never approach it straight on which is obviously threatening. It is always best to approach very slowly from upwind and if possible, particularly for enhanced photography, with the sun at your back. By turning off the engine and letting the wind slowly bring you in closer is the preferred technique and is far less threatening. If the loon stays low in the water and/or dives, you are too close and threatening this bird!

If the loon swims away, please do not chase it! Particularly, if there is a chick in the vicinity. Following a loon in any watercraft is "chasing it" and verboten! We are right in the middle of a loon's breeding season so please be extra careful and considerate.



The Age of Homespun by Laura Thatcher Ulrich

by Martha F. Barkley

How pleased I was Christmas Day when our guest for dinner picked up this massive history from a table by the living room sofa. Many markers in this 500-page research project were showing. The cover is a double jacket display of embroidery showing a lady fishing and man watching and back cover lady hiking and man gathering in the sheaves, delightful bright colors.

Yes, I told my inquisitive friend, I am index reading the great volume for Martha Ballard* Diary recordings in her brief, daily accurate accounts, often phonetic spellings.

We in Belgrade had a Community Read recently of The Frozen River, a very popular novel by Ariel Lawhon. Her novel was based on Ulrich's Pulitzer and Bancroft Prized history A Midwife's Tale.

This newer history by Ulrich is about "Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth." Martha Ballard is within these pages many times. She not only delivered healthy babies, but many homespun products came from the Ballard farm nearby Belgrade.

The map at the beginning of this history reveals the Kennebec River in the Eastern Abanaki area. "[T]his book focuses on the stories of individual people—makers, collectors, and users of ordinary household goods."

Does that interest you the reader? I focused my readings on our local Martha Ballard's trusty diary. Hannah Ballard, Martha's daughter, also has two pages of reference in the index. Shopping in Hallowell for her daughter's wedding was a big trip for Martha, who lived out near where our Alford Hospital is presently located. The Ballard barn may still be seen way up on the hill above Sam's Club at the mall. The Ballard grave yard is down at the

entrance of the mall area, fenced in nicely with black iron to preserve it by the uphill busy road near the traffic light. Martha's grave location has not been located yet, but other Ballards are marked here.

"Martha Ballard ... wrote of sowing, weeding, harrowing, raking, pulling, spreading, stacking, breaking, and swinging flax." In July and August, Martha and her daughters were working the flax, "lifting the plants carefully by the roots, holding the stems as straight as possible to avoid tangling, then stacking them in neat bundles for later processing." September 12, 1796, "the Ballards spread their flax...and 'housed' it on October 1."

Gardeners can appreciate this physical work required to create linen back when the Ballard women did this back breaking labor.

When the Winthrop carding mill opened, Ballard increased her wool production. Knitting, like today, was a common occupation for Martha while waiting for a baby to be delivered. Many stockings to keep feet warm.

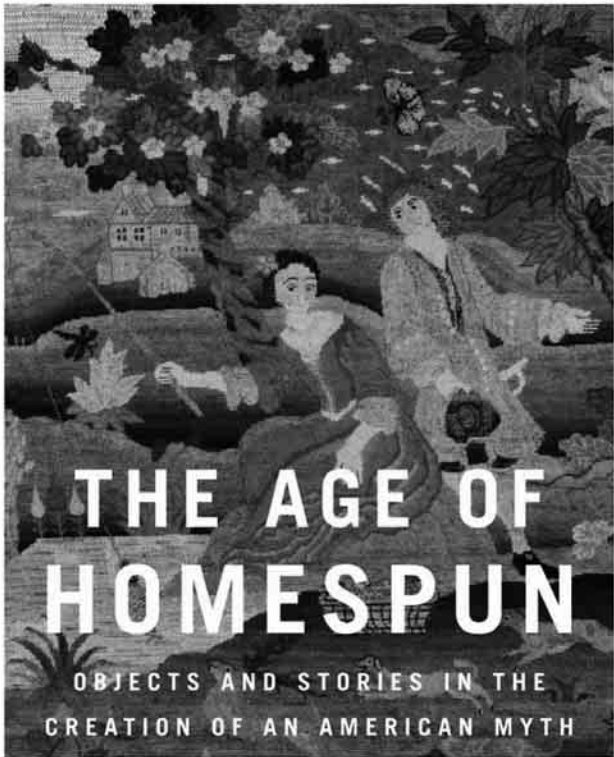
So peruse this lengthy history full of photos and intriguing old maps. Maybe you are interested in coastal homespun in addition to our Belgrade homespun documented in Martha Ballard's famous diary.

**Martha Moore Ballard, 1735-1812, was an Augusta-area wife, mother, healer and horticulturist who delivered over 800 babies and kept a detailed diary for 27 years.*



LAUREL THATCHER ULRICH

Pulitzer Prize-winning Author of *A Midwife's Tale*



"Eloquent, imaginative ... the creativity and vigor that made *A Midwife's Tale* an instant classic are also present [here]." —*Newsday*



Join us for the Belgrade Lakes Fireworks Show!

★ FRIDAY, JULY 3RD ★

Fireworks will light up the sky
at dusk over beautiful Long Pond.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Enjoy the best views by boat or from shore near Day's Store.

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MLS# 1667075 19 Foster Lane, Belgrade
Own a piece of history with this classic Maine camp and shared waterfront on Long Pond. Located in the Belgrade Lakes Village, this camp once belonged to the world famous Belgrade Hotel. Taken down to the studs and completely remodeled in 2023, the home features 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, gorgeous hardwood flooring throughout, a new roof, all new windows, propane heating and central air conditioning, a full house generator, and 168ft of shared waterfront. **\$629K**



MLS# 1665916 Lot 9 Overlook Drive, Hallowell—Nestled atop Overlook Drive, this prime lot awaits your dream home in one of Hallowell's most sought-after neighborhoods. This area boasts stunning views and offers a lifestyle enriched by nature, community, and convenience. The neighborhood is adjacent to the Howard Hill conservation area, which features a network of walking trails. Hallowell's nearby downtown area is a delightful mix of local shops and restaurants, creating a vibrant community hub alongside the Kennebec River. Shopping malls and essential services are just a short drive away. 1.99 acres. **\$115K**



MLS# 1660177 342 Smithfield Road, Norridgewock
A truly turnkey opportunity with exceptional flexibility. The current owner is offering the property complete with the professional equipment and contents of a successful dog grooming business—making it ready for immediate operation from day one. This is a fantastic opportunity for owner-users or investors. Beyond its current use, this versatile mixed-use property offers a wide range of possibilities. Whether you're looking to launch or grow a business, generate rental income, or convert the space for residential living, the options are abundant. **\$277K**



MLS# 1659919 751 West Road, Belgrade Charming 720 sq ft home offers the ease of true first-floor living in a peaceful rural setting. Inside, you'll find a warm and inviting layout highlighted by a cozy wood stove—perfect for adding both comfort and character during cooler seasons. The property features a barn, providing excellent space for storage, hobbies, or workshop use. Conveniently located, this home offers easy access to local shops, a nearby golf club and course, scenic lakes, and larger surrounding cities—giving you the best of both quiet country living and everyday convenience. Whether you're looking for a primary residence, a getaway retreat, or a property with room to expand your interests, this unique offering delivers charm, practicality, and location. **\$280K**



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75 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918



— Real Estate Update — The Value and Lifestyle Our Lakes Offer

There are over 6,000 lakes and ponds in the State of Maine, creating a network of waterways that define the region's natural beauty and recreational opportunities. In our backyard of Kennebec County alone, there are 106 lakes and ponds, each contributing to the unique charm and lifestyle of the area.

Living, working, or visiting the Belgrade Lakes Region offers a unique perspective on the value that these bodies of water bring to the community. As real estate professionals in this picturesque region, we have an intimate understanding of the value and lifestyle that our lakes offer. These natural treasures are more than just scenic spots, they are the lifeblood of local tourism, recreation, and real estate.

Our lakes are why people visit and move to the Belgrade Lakes Region. They offer recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing, swimming, and kayaking, which draw visitors and potential homeowners alike. The lakes also serve as the perfect backdrop for community events and family gatherings, enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Recognizing the economic and cultural significance of these lakes, the University of Maine conducted a comprehensive study in 2023 to measure their value to the state economy. The findings were astonishing, revealing that Maine's lakes contribute a staggering \$14.1 billion per year. This impressive figure underscores the importance of maintaining and protecting these natural resources.

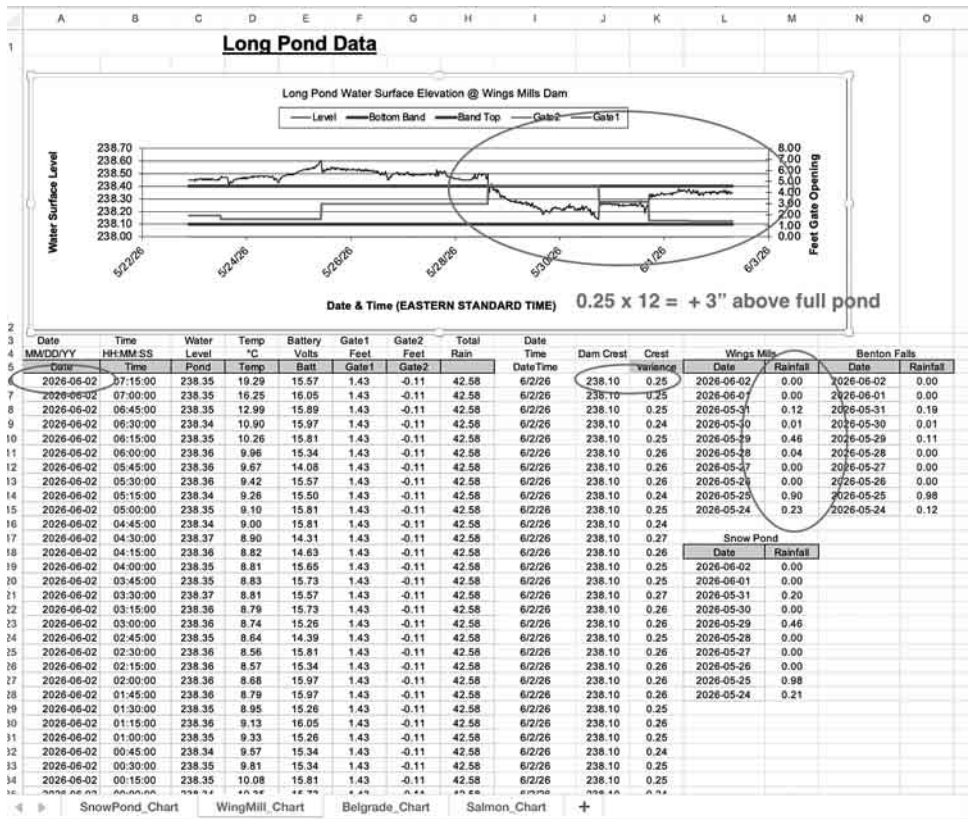
The study included an analysis of 150 lakes statewide, focusing on several key aspects: lakefront properties, recreational opportunities, youth camps, the usage of the lakes, and water quality. Each of these elements plays a critical role in the local economy and community well-being. Lakefront properties are highly sought after, with their scenic views and direct access to water-based activities significantly boosting their market value. Homebuyers are often drawn to these properties not just for their beauty, but for the lifestyle they promise—one of tranquility, outdoor adventures, and a close-knit community.

Recreational opportunities abound in the Belgrade Lakes Region. The lakes are a hub for activities that cater to all ages and interests, from a morning paddle to afternoons of water sports. These activities not only attract tourists but also foster a strong sense of community among residents. Water quality is an integral part of the appeal and sustainability of lakefront real estate in Central Maine. High water quality ensures a healthy ecosystem, safe recreational waters, and sustained property values. Efforts to monitor and improve water quality are vital for maintaining the ecological balance and attractiveness of the region. Local real estate companies, especially those in the Belgrade Lakes Region, are invaluable assets. They not only enhance the natural beauty and lifestyle of the area but also drive significant economic benefits.

Dan McCarron



The Dams Keeper Report



6/2/26 Long Pond's Wings Mill Dam Data Logger Report

As of this writing, we are happy to report that all our pond water levels are in a great shape after a very tumultuous past week as you can see from today's data logger. Thanks to these persistent showers! Yet, our farmers and gardeners are still complaining that the showers do help but, "we need RAIN"! From a water quality standpoint, showers are better for our watershed with its reduced sediment flow off our properties and roads. Regardless, Great Pond's Village dam is currently 2.76" above full pond with both gates closed. Long Pond's Wings Mill dam is exactly right at 3", also above full pond with both gates also completely shut down. Salmon/McGrath is now 4.32" above full pond with its calibrated valve opened just the mandated 1 cfs. flow. Our neighbors on Messalonskee are down 4.56" below full which is just a fact of life with their electricity generation needs. As you have read, for the rest of the summer, we continue to be in our "save the water" mode with all our gates being closed when at all possible.

Precipitation for the past 10 days was 1.76" and we are looking at just .62" for the next 10 days. FYI, our normal weekly precipitation during the summer is supposed to be 0.875" so you can see where we've been running so far, slightly about

average. The long-term forecast has and still is calling for an average 26% less precipitation which is basically what we've had for the past four years. Hence, our "save the water" mode!

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

Welcome back and enjoy your Summer! It should be a beautiful one.

Dick Greenan Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee

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Free Outdoor Concerts

Enjoy a free, outdoor concert - many of them waterside; some with playgrounds nearby - in central Maine's beautiful parks. Bring a lawn chair or blanket. Buy snacks or food truck fare on site or plan on visiting a local restaurant.

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

Tuesday - *Norridgewock*, Oosoola Park Music Series, 5-7 pm, on the Kennebec River, Ferry Road, Route 2.

Tuesday - *Hallowell*, Rock on the River, 7-8:30 pm, Hallowell Bandstand, on the Kennebec River, Water Street, downtown Hallowell.

Wednesday - *Augusta*, Waterfront Wednesday Concert Series, 6-8 pm, on the Kennebec River, Waterfront Park, Water Street, downtown Augusta.

Thursday - *Belgrade Lakes*, Village Green Music Series, 6:30-8 pm, Village Green, Main Street, downtown Belgrade Lakes.

Thursday - *Oakland*, Waterfront Music Series, 6-8 pm, Waterfront Park, Lake Messalonskee, Old Belgrade Avenue, Oakland.

Friday - *Gardiner*, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Summer Concerts, 6-7:30 pm, some Saturday concerts, Waterfront Park, on the Kennebec River, Water Street, downtown Gardiner.

Friday - *Waterville*, Waterville Rocks, Head of Falls, beer garden opens 6 pm, music begins 7 pm; 4 Fridays in July and August, in case of rain show held inside Waterville Opera House, downtown Waterville.

Saturday and Sunday - *Sidney*, New England Music Camp, 3 pm, Bowl in the Pines, Lake Messalonskee, Route 23, Sidney.

Sunday - *Winthrop*, Norcross Point, 2-4 pm, on Lake Maranacook, downtown Winthrop.

Sunday - *Skowhegan*, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, on the Kennebec River, Route 2, downtown Skowhegan.