

# Summertime in the Belgrades

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



VOLUME 26, NUMBER 11

## 2024: Sky Lights and Highlights

by Esther J. Perne



From the bluebird sky of a once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse over Maine to the magical night brightness of a Northern Lights display to the lightning-lighted sky of the Belgrade region's recent hours-long thunderstorm, 2024 was a season of dramatic displays of Nature.

From the tree-lined trails, to the rippling

waterways, to the beckoning backroads, 2024 was a summer of invitation to discover, enjoy, appreciate the natural surroundings, the open views, the green hills, the expanses of the lakes and the picturesque communities.

From the super-busy calendar of daily activities to the return of regular weekly and monthly

celebrations, 2024 presented a standout schedule of events and outings, many free, most of them family-oriented.

It wasn't that anyone had to feel motivated to leave the comfort and seclusion of residence, lodge or cottage, but it was nice to know that this

*Continued on page 2*

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is a region of community gatherings and creative enrichment.

From lake associations to road associations to watershed and land conservation associations, all with their tireless community of stewards, 2024 was the season for realizing and appreciating the strong infrastructures that are in place to protect and preserve the many natural components of the region.

From huge celebrations to simple ice cream outings, 2024 was a fun season - little kids jumping up and down in an ice cream line or in a puddle, photos showing smiles of sheer happiness (oh, yes, there is a fish in the picture, too), parents short on money taking the family to a free outdoor concert, seniors setting the example of involvement in clubs and organizations.

As always, 2024 was a season of great recreation diversity. Peer into a parked car or a pick-up truck (discreetly, of course) and the range of recreational equipment at the ready never ceases to amaze.

Yes, there could be, would be, but shouldn't be summertime accidents and 2024 was no different but the experience, speed and success of rescues was no different either. See this issue's Dams Keeper Report.

Yes, there were and are world worries, but the summer of 2024 here in the Belgrades in central Maine was an invitation to discover, enjoy, appreciate the natural surroundings, join a community gathering for music, crafts or conservation and indulge in a recreational outing, perhaps to admire the dramatic displays of Nature - like a golden sunset or a glowing moonrise.



## — End of Season Letter —

To all the supporters of Summertime in the Belgrades: Thank you for helping us have another successful summer.

To our readers: you did it again in 2024. You picked up so many copies of Summertime in the Belgrades that we ended the season with the pre-pandemic circulation of 5,000. That isn't just a number, it's a compliment that you like what Summertime in the Belgrades offers, use the Calendar of Events as a what's-up guide and are interested in the many ideas we try to present through our write-ups and columns.

To our advertisers: you did it again in 2024. You kept Summertime in the Belgrades going and kept the papers on your shelves in an era when so many print publications are discontinuing.

To our columnists: You did it more than again in 2024. You showed how special this region is, what valuable resources our history (Rod Johnson and Dianne Dowd) and libraries and books (Martha Barkley), our loons and dam committees and interns (Dick Greenan), our hiking and fishing and foraging passions (Pete Kallin) are.

There are many more entities to thank - the lake associations, the 7 Lakes Alliance, the real estate offices, the business groups and chambers of commerce all of whom provide news and views vital to the region.

We hope everyone has a super fall and a good winter and spring and then - it's Summertime.

If anyone missed out on any of the 2024 issues of Summertime in the Belgrades this summer, best bets for back issues are the Belgrade Public Library in Belgrade Depot and 7 Lakes Alliance in downtown Belgrade Lakes.

The Team....

*Esther, Michael, Gregor, Cordell and Ethan*



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**GPS DIRECTIONS:**  
 Camping: 30 Plains Rd., Litchfield, ME  
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## Table of Contents

- 2024: A Season As Good As It Gets..... 1
- Thanks to Summertime's Many Supporters..... 2
- Table of Contents: Wrapping Up Another Season..... 3
- Excerpts From DEP North Pond Water Level Notice ..... 3
- 7 Lakes Alliance: It's Been A Great Summer ..... 4
- Belgrade Historical Society: A China Cup Souvenir from the Belgrade Hotel..... 4
- Take It Outside with Pete Kallin: Enjoy the Rest of the Summer..... 5
- Calendar of Events: Catch a Concert, a Play, a Fair, a Craft Show..... 6
- Neighbors Driving Neighbors Honors Co-Founders..... 6
- A Legend Retires: The Deb Staber Legacy at L.C. Bates Museum..... 6
- Memories of Skowhegan's Andre Pied..... 7
- Map of the Belgrades: Take a Fall Drive or Hike or Dive..... 8-9
- R.B. Hall Band: Music of Yesteryear..... 10
- Notebook: A Few Fall Items ..... 11
- White Willow Retreat For Dogs ..... 11
- Business Directory: The Area's Best Shops and Services..... 12-13
- The Call of the Loon: The Fall Exodus Begins..... 13
- Barkley on Books: Letters Between E.B. White and Edmund Ware Smith..... 14
- Real Estate: Lake Associations Protect Our Lakes and Watersheds..... 15
- The Dams Keeper Report: The Rescue of a Man Through the Dam..... 15

## DEP to Hold Hearing on North Pond Water Level Regime

The following information is excerpted from a Notice issued by the DEP on July 31, 2024. Contact information is at the end of this article.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection will be conducting an adjudicatory hearing regarding the establishment of a water level regime for North Pond in the Towns of Smithfield, Mercer and Rome. This proceeding is being initiated because of a petition filed with the Department by 58 littoral or riparian owners or entities along North Pond.

The water levels of North Pond, according to the notice, are controlled by the dam at the inlet of Mill Stream and a dam at the outlet of North Pond on Great Meadow Stream, which flows to Great Pond.

[Editor's note: According to state and lake association information sources, the dam at the inlet of Mill Stream referred to in the DEP notice, known as the Coffin Dam or East Pond Dam on the Serpentine, was constructed by CMP in 1947 and controlled by the East Pond Association since then. In 1965 the East Pond Association purchased the dam. It currently has a net across it to prevent the invasive aquatic plant, Curly-leaf Pondweed, from further invading North Pond. The dam at the outlet of North Pond, known as the North Pond Dam, was constructed in 1985 by the North Pond Association and is controlled by the NPA.]

At this time, any person desiring to participate as a party to the DEP proceeding must file a written petition for leave to intervene which shall meet form, service and filing of document requirements detailed in the Department's Rules Governing the Conduct of Licensing Hearings. Members of the public who wish to provide comments to the Department about the petition do not need to petition to intervene.

The Commissioner of the Department has delegated Ron Mongeon to be the Presiding Officer. For copies of the full notice, the Maine Dam Registration, Abandonment and Water Level Act, the Department rule concerning In-Stream Flows and Lake and Pond Water Levels and the Rules Governing the Conduct of Licensing Hearings, interested persons should contact [Ronald.Mongeon@maine.gov](mailto:Ronald.Mongeon@maine.gov).

The deadline for written petitions for leave to intervene must be received by the Department on or before Friday, August 30th at 5:00 p.m. No date has been set for the actual hearing.



**Summertime in the Belgrades**

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## It's Been a Great Summer

It just took a few minutes to carry my kayak down to the dock and launch on the Belgrade Stream. I am fortunate to have had a lifetime of experiences kayaking in some amazing locations, but to go paddling after work? I'm lucky. With the calm of the evening and my paddle nearly silent in the water, I felt solitude. I traveled the stream roughly north along the Fogg Island Preserve two full miles of protected shoreline to the inlet for Ingham Stream. I stowed my paddle and drifted, immersed in the sights and sounds of lower Long Pond, alone. Outdoor recreation is a privilege I have enjoyed throughout my life, but on this outing, on this night, I am not just thinking about the paddle. I am struck by the intimate connection between the land and the lake and the graceful progression as water recedes and land emerges, gradual wetlands yielding to upland forest. This setting allows me to witness all the aspects of a functioning ecosystem, with all my senses, in the quiet of the evening.

Experiences like these and my training as an ecologist combine to give me great enthusiasm for all the work we do at 7 Lakes Alliance. It's been a great summer for me to join the team and celebrate many accomplishments. Of course, our efforts will continue throughout the year, but here are a few highlights that stand out for me:

- Land conservation projects continue to be very successful this year. We have already conserved over 270 acres with several more projects slated for completion in 2024 that will conserve approximately 380 additional acres. This work protects the lakes, safeguards wildlife, enhances the climate resilience of the watershed and provides valuable connections to nature for all.
- Advancing the science of water quality remains at the core of our mission. Just this year alone our lake scientists have processed over 1000 samples and of course are closely monitoring the situation in North Pond, which has been par-



ticularly challenging this year and where we are actively planning an alum treatment for 2026

- Our invasive aquatic plant program continues to have a major impact—here's just one example: Since our management efforts began in 2021 on the East Pond Serpentine, we have seen an 89% reduction in invasive Curly Leaf Pondweed growth. This is a shining example of how early detection and persistent manual removal efforts are effective in controlling an invasive once it has colonized.

• Our trail stewardship program received a noteworthy Federal Recreational Trails Program grant to expand and enhance the trail system on the Dolly property which 7 Lakes conserved adjacent to the Kennebec Highlands.

• The list goes on and on... the Erosion Control team, Youth Conservation Corps, Courtesy Boat Inspectors, LakeSmart evaluators have all been in the field and exceeding the number of projects and contacts from previous seasons. Our Summer Scholar Program with Colby and Bates college students conducted

seven water quality and land conservation research studies that have an immediate impact on the work that we do.

- Our community engagement team organized a packed calendar of educational events every week both at the 7 Lakes building and in the field. For example, we hosted a successful, two-day program at Camp Tracy on McGrath Pond with our new educational boat with approximately 140 participants. The program featured a hands-on program on water quality assessment, aquatic plant identification and examination of the shoreline ecosystem.

Back in my kayak, the impending darkness of twilight caught me a bit by surprise, and with the help of my headlamp, I start for home, content. I'm also thankful for the foresight and support of this community to conserve the lands and waters for all.



## Belgrade History Beyond Belgrade

Submitted by BHS member Dianne Dowd

Although the Belgrade Hotel burned in 1956, it had been in the hospitality business for close to 60 years. During that time, many souvenirs of the hotel had been produced and sold to visitors as mementos of their vacations spent in Belgrade.

This china cup with a picture of the Belgrade Hotel is a souvenir from the early 20th century. Known as German view china, this type of pictorial porcelain souvenir depicted a wide range of subjects from resort hotels, churches, municipal buildings to local landmarks, and could be found on plates, pitchers, saltshakers, button boxes and many other china pieces. Crafted across Germany and Austria, this china was exported by the gross to general stores and gift shops. Salesmen would collect orders from merchants along with photographs or postcards that would be shipped overseas and then artistically transferred to ceramic pieces, which were then shipped back to the United



States for distribution. It generally took a year to fulfill orders.

The stamp on the bottom indicates this cup was indeed made in Germany and an order had been placed by G.A. Smith & Company of Belgrade Lakes, Maine. Through researching old newspapers, I discovered that Guy A. Smith operated a general store in Belgrade Lakes which he sold in 1905 to Harvey Parker. Parker's store was located next to the Central House. The store was later bought by Ervin Bean (brother of L.L. Bean) and renamed Bean's Bait and Tackle Shop.

For many years, this lovely cup was the property of Florrie Stuart (1889-1970). Florrie was a long-time resident of Belgrade Depot and a member of the first class to graduate from Belgrade High School in 1908. She was employed by the State of Maine Highway Department for 25 years and served as the Belgrade town treasurer for 17 years. She was active in the Belgrade Grange and Ladies Aid Society of the Old South Church.

The cup was passed down to her great niece, Kathy Holbrook of Florida, who is donating it to the Belgrade Historical Society in memory of her great aunts, Florrie Stuart, and Eva McDermott.





## — Take It Outside —

## See You Next Year

By Peter Kallin



Bub driving the boat..

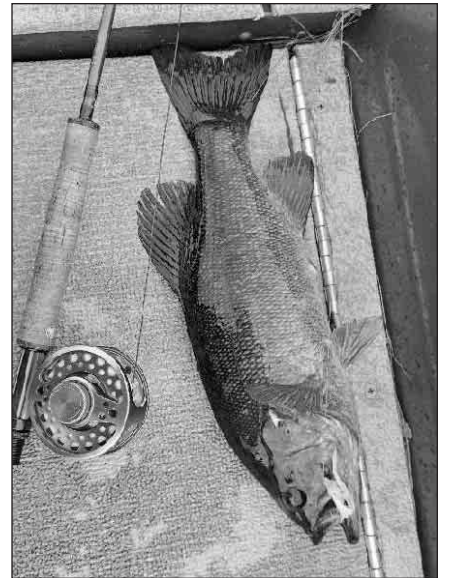
Suddenly the days are getting a little shorter and I am noticing more swamp red maples beginning to turn red in the wetlands and birches turn yellow high on the hillsides. It is still quite warm during the day, but the nights are growing cooler. Like the birds and squirrels, I am double checking my summer "to do" list and trying to make sure everything gets done. I am amazed at how many things are still on the list. In addition to looking for mushrooms and elderberries when I hike, I find myself keeping my eyes peeled for grouse, deer, and turkey sign. Those seasons are rapidly approaching, and last year's venison supply is running low in the freezer. I have been seeing turkeys everywhere, a promising sign for the fall season. Both the loons and the bass and pike in the lakes are chasing large schools of baitfish (mostly landlocked alewives) and trying to build up fat reserves to get through the winter. Check out the screen shot from my fish finder below. The warm surface layer has plenty of oxygen to support the large bass but the deeper water is depleted of oxygen but has enough to support the large schools of small baitfish. You can watch the larger fish dive down to grab some lunch and then return to surface layer to digest their meal. Fishing at the base of the layer, around 20 ft, with anything that looks like a minnow, will yield results. I have had good success with a white zonker fly, fished with a sinking tip flyline.



Spring peeper on car windshield.



Bass in the surface layer feeding on alewives below.



Nice smalie taken on white zonker.

Additionally, the loons with chicks are teaching their offspring how to catch their own food. When the chicks are first born, the parents chew up fish and crayfish and basically regurgitate food morsels into their chicks' eager open mouths. The chicks grow rapidly, and the parents soon simply bring the chicks, still wriggling morsels, which the chicks grab hungrily. After a week or so of this routine, the parents simply drop the food in the water near the chicks and the chicks need to catch their food before it escapes. At the same time, the chicks are learning to dive underwater, which is a major step in evading airborne predators such as eagles. Soon the chicks are foraging for their own food alongside the parents. Over the next two months or so, the loons will molt, replacing their insulating down with feathers, and begin to learn to fly. Those chicks that learn to fly before the lake freezes over will head to the ocean for the winter and eventually return to the lake, usually after two years on the ocean.

Last week, my grandson, Bayard, and I headed out to go fishing and noticed that a small branch from a poplar tree had fallen onto my daughter's windshield. We picked the branch off the windshield and discovered a spring peeper, one of our native tree frogs that is frequently heard but rarely seen, on the windshield. I captured the frog and brought it into the house to show the crowd watching the Olympics. Unfortunately, the small frog leaped out of my hand and managed to hide somewhere in the living room before we could recapture it. After an unsuccessful search Bayard and I went fishing and caught some nice bass. The next morning at about 5 AM, I got up and headed towards the kitchen in the dark. I noticed some motion in an area at the base of the stairs that was lit up a bit by the predawn light. I flicked on the light and managed to recapture the frog and took it out on the front porch to "let our peeper go!"

It is hard to believe that this is the final issue

Continued on page 14 ...

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## Calendar

• **Thursday 8/22 - Sunday 8/25** - Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival, nonstop entertainment, nonstop field pickin', large spectator tent, camping, 11 bands, concessions, [www.blisteredfingers.com](http://www.blisteredfingers.com), Fairgrounds, Litchfield.

• **Thursday 8/22 - Saturday 8/24** - Madison Anson Days, large community celebration, food, contests, music, children's carnival, parade, book sale, rummage sale, street dance, fishing tournament, golf tournament, fireworks and more, 696-5622, Madison, East Madison, Kennebec River, Anson.

• **Through Saturday 8/24** - "Mrs. Parliament," Lakewood Theater, 474-7176, Route 201, Madison.

• **Friday 8/23** - Volunteer Trail Day, 7 Lakes Alliance maintenance work, [dan.woughter@7lakesalliance.org](mailto:dan.woughter@7lakesalliance.org), Mount Phillip, Route 225, Rome.

• **Friday 8/23** - Pianist Marc Mailhot, performing artist for over 60 years, free admission, 2 and 7 pm, 946-5311, Sawyer Memorial, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

• **Friday 8/23** - The Shakes, funk/rock, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Concert, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

• **Friday 8/23** - The Porch Party Mamas, folk, country, Celtic and blues, 7 pm, Union Hall, 5 Vienna Mountain Road, Vienna.

• **Saturday 8/24 and Sunday 8/25** - The Maine Book Fest 2024, a full weekend of literary activities, 10 am-4 pm, readings, raffles, presentations, workshops, vendors, [www.themainebookfest.com](http://www.themainebookfest.com), Head of Falls, downtown Waterville.

• **Saturday 8/24** - Designing Women Fine Art and Craft Show, bridging art and community since 1991, to benefit The Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center in Winthrop, 9:30 am-4 pm, Longfellow's Greenhouse, Puddledock Road, Manchester.

• **Saturday 8/24** - Community Fun Night, fun for the whole family, 6-9 pm, Belgrade Parks and Recreation, Workman Field, Belgrade.

• **Saturday 8/24 - Monday 9/2** - Windsor Fair, one of Maine's largest agricultural fairs, daily entertainment, huge exhibit of farm animals, harness racing, pulling events, food, exhibits and more, [www.WindsorFair.com](http://www.WindsorFair.com), Windsor.

• **Sunday 8/25** - Village Green Craft Fair, 9 am-2 pm, rain or shine, 495-3481, [Recreation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:Recreation@townofbelgrade.com), Village Green, Main Street and West Road, Belgrade Lakes.

• **Sunday 8/25** - Norwood Pearson, graduate of Winthrop High School, solo album (vinyl) release party with opening guests Bella Ann and KAIJU, Concert at Norcross Point, free, 2-4 pm, Winthrop.

• **Sunday 8/25** - Sunday Project, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

• **Monday 8/26** - Western Maine Foothills Band, Concert in the Park, 7-8:30 pm, Meetinghouse Park, downtown Farmington.

• **Tuesday 8/27** - Small "Backyard" Farm Workshop, sustainable backyard farming, 7 Lakes Alliance in partnership with Somerset County Soil & Water Conservation District, 5:30-7 pm, register in advance by emailing Jenn Hebert, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

• **Wednesday 8/28** - Game Day, dozens of different games, bring a lunch, spend the afternoon, have fun, 10 am-3 pm, 465-6306, North Belgrade Community Center, Route 8, North Belgrade.

• **Wednesday 8/28** - Preserving Your Tomato Harvest, by Kate McCarty, 4 pm, [www.lithgowlibrary.org](http://www.lithgowlibrary.org), Lithgow Public Library, Winthrop Street, Augusta.

• **Thursday 8/29** - Cruise In, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Kennebec River, Gardiner.

• **Thursday 8/29** - Real Jazz, quartet, free summer concert series, 6 pm, Lithgow Public Library, Community Meeting Room, Winthrop Street, Augusta.

• **Thursday 8/29** - The Blues Prophets, Waterfront Music Series, free, 6-8 pm, Waterfront Park, Oakland.

• **Thursday 8/29** - The Fossils, Village Green Music Series, 6:30-8 pm, 495-3481, [recreation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:recreation@townofbelgrade.com), Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

• **Thursday 8/29 - Sunday 9/1** - "Sherlock Holmes and the Ice Palace Murders," Lakewood Theater, 474-7176, Madison Avenue/Route 201, Madison.

• **Sunday 9/1** - Run For The Horses 5K and 1K, a picturesque race near Lake Wesserunett to benefit Double B Equine Horse Rescue, 9 am, [karenrapallo@gmail.com](mailto:karenrapallo@gmail.com), Hight Chrysler Dodge, 507 Lakewood Road, Madison.

### 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.

## Neighbors Driving Neighbors Honors its Co-founders



On August 3, Neighbors Driving Neighbors, the volunteer ride service, was very happy to honor its co-founders, Sandy Wright and Dr. Dan Onion, at a ceremony held at the Mt. Vernon Community Center. A bronze plaque, mounted on a granite stone and installed on the Community Center grounds, was dedicated to Sandy and Dan in recognition of their years of service to NDN and the community. The stone and plaque were made possible through contributions from NDN board members and donations from the community.

Guest of honor, Sandy Wright, addresses the community at her recognition ceremony.

Photo: Bill Rosenberg

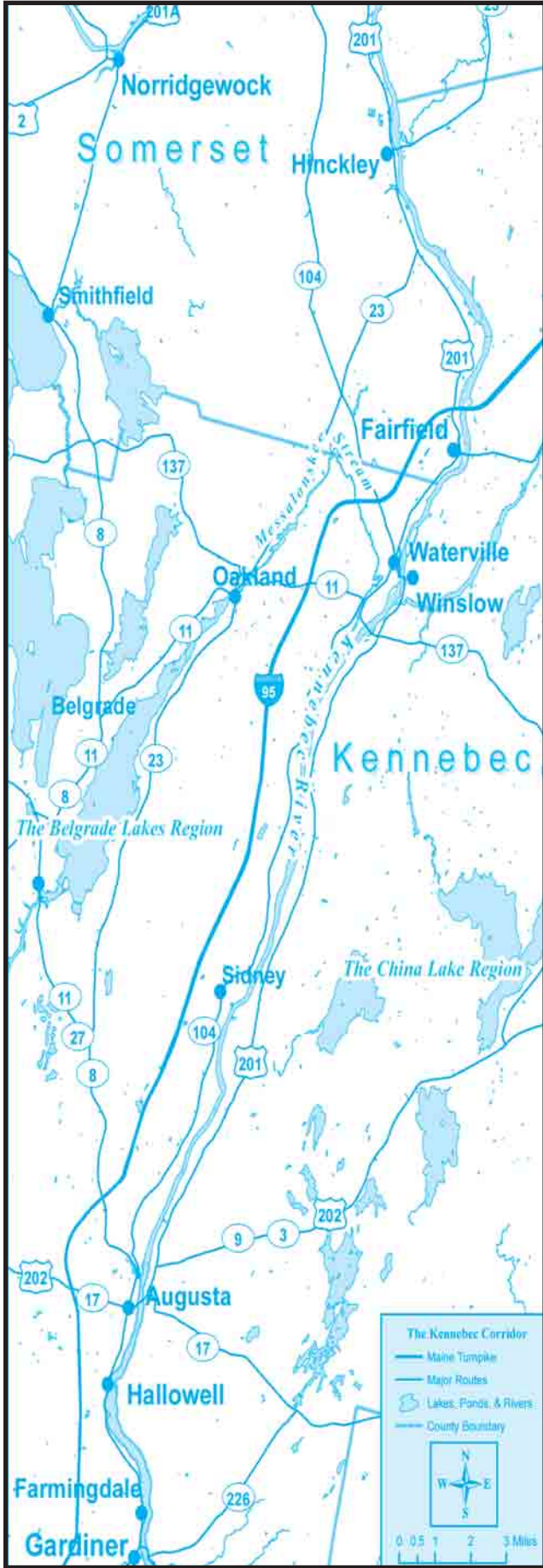
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## — Along the Kennebec River Corridor —



### The Ultimate "Ice-Breaker" Educator Andre Pied 1942 - 2024

"Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes!" The group of adults recites and quickly touches whatever is called out, adding new directions (nose, waist, hips, ankles) and picking up the pace each round until no one is in sync and the whole group is laughing hysterically and has become friends. The leader is satisfied. Andre Pied has worked his ice-breaking magic once again.

My introduction to Andre was through a Skowhegan Adult Education French Immersion program held in St. George de Beauce, Quebec the last week in June during the 1990s and early 2000s. As Director of Skowhegan Adult Ed, Andre, fluent in French through his Canadian parents and with an extensive background in educational work, was the perfect organizer and leader.

Although it would be impossible to chronicle all the places the immersion participants went and the people we met, the families we lived with, the classes and outings and friendships and studious times and fun that were integral to the program, it is easy to say that Andre opened a lot of doors for a lot of people. For some, especially teachers, it was improving or perfecting their French, for others it was a reconnection with their Quebecois heritage, or perhaps a vacation; for me it was the best week of the year for the 12 years that I attended.

Among the doors Andre opened for me was being hired to teach creative writing at Skowhegan Adult Ed and to teach English at the English immersions in Skowhegan and being included in some of the committee work on the Maine/Quebec Kennebec Corridor that was being developed.

When I think of Andre I think of networking, of the innumerable French language enthusiasts he brought together, of the many central Mainers he helped in search of their French heritage and of the individuals I met indirectly through Andre and the immersions: my late husband, our Summertime in the Belgrades webmaster, film director Ben Levine whose "Reveil: Waking Up French" is scheduled to be screened August 24 at the East Madison Grange and Senator Mark Lawrence who is active in the Legislature with the Franco-American Caucus.

After the immersion program wound down, I lost track of Andre, but not of his accomplishments with the immersion programs. When I drive through Skowhegan, memories of huge dinner celebrations at the former Kyes Motel, of a presentation at the CMP facility on the island, a group lunch at Redington-Fairview Hospital, a tour of the Margaret Chase Smith Library, the bed races down Water Street and so many students sitting on a dock at Lake Wesserunsett while Andre took a picture that it's a surprise it didn't break.

A celebration of Andre's life is scheduled at Lakewood Golf Course Clubhouse in Madison on August 23 at 4 pm.

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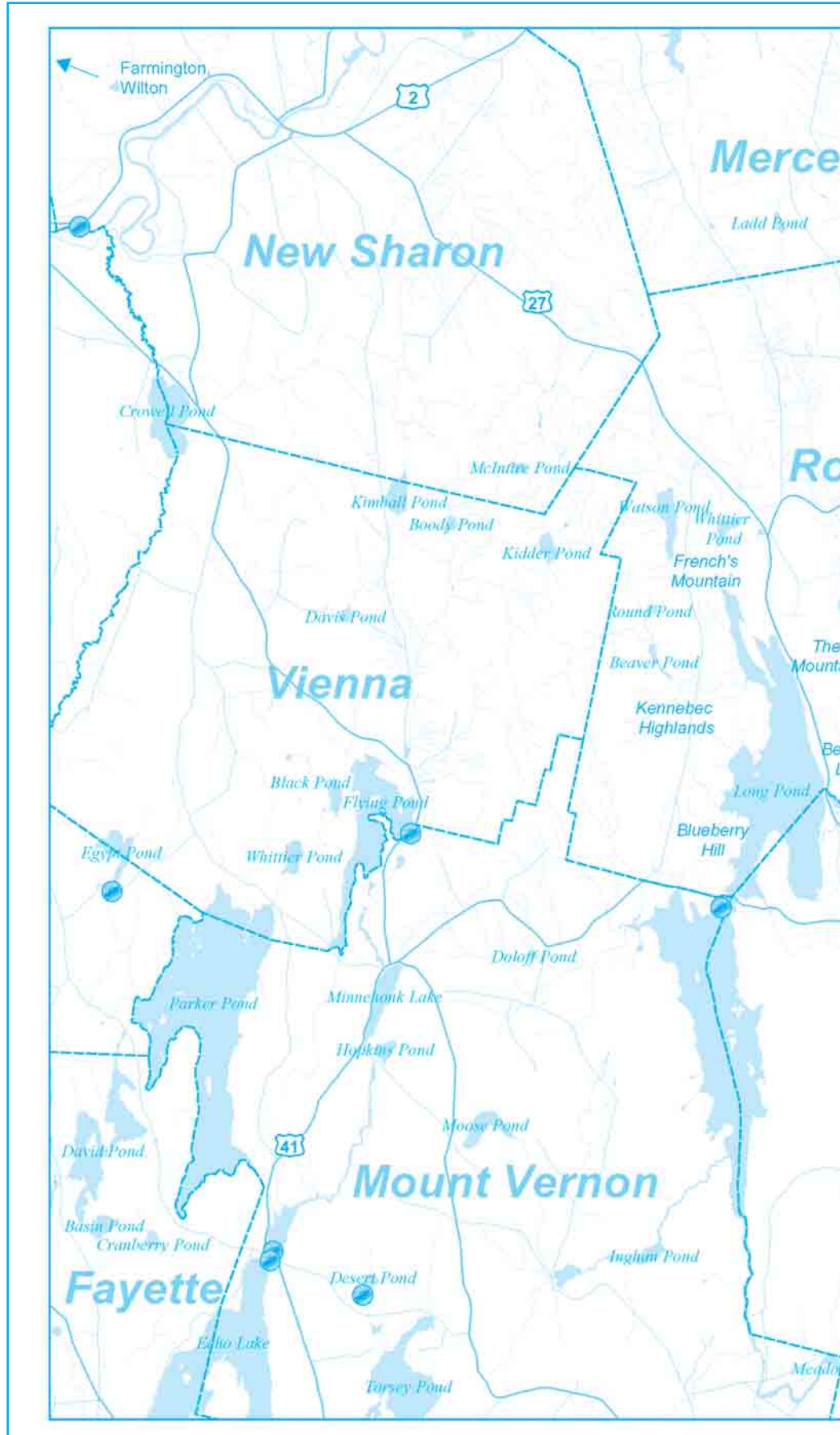
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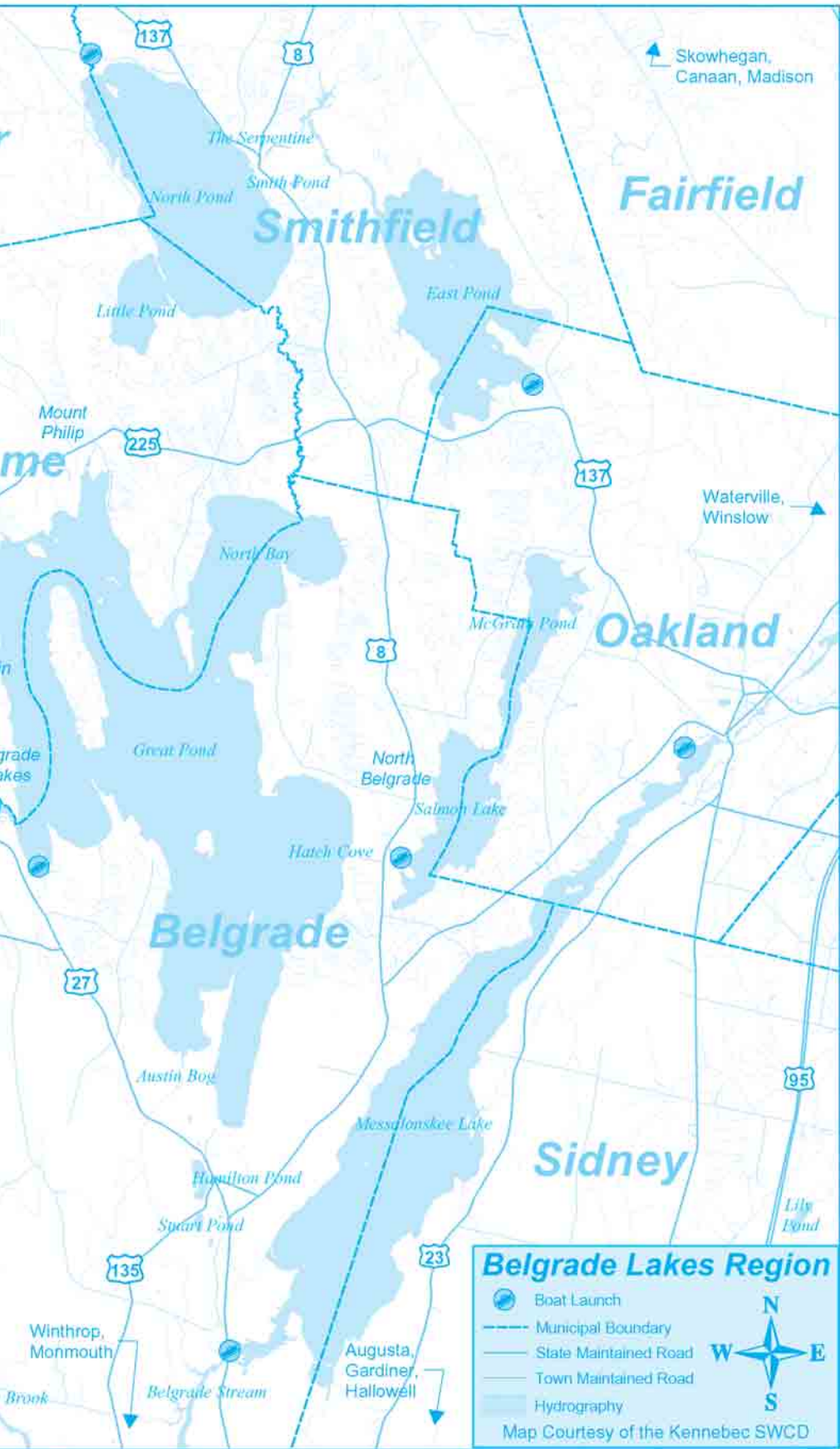
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## R.B. Hall Band Brings Music of Yesteryear to Oakland Park

By Gregor Smith



Photo By Gregor Smith

performing in Maine. Community bands allow amateur musicians who played in high school to continue to do so long after they graduate. Indeed, among the R.B. Hall Band's current complement are a father, a daughter, and a grandfather, all from the same family.

The Oakland concert lasted a little over an hour. The program included several marches by R.B. Hall, as well as popular, sentimental, and patriotic fare, such as "New York, New York," "You're a Grand Old Flag," "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," "(Won't You Come Home) Bill Bailey," "God Bless America," a medley of songs about animals using "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" as a refrain, and as the grand finale, "Seventy-Six Trombones" from beloved Broadway musical *The Music Man*.

The band dedicated their concert in general and the last work in particular to Selma Pulcifer (1927 - 2023). A lifelong resident of Oakland, Pulcifer was the last surviving charter member of the band. She picked up the trombone in high school in 1944 and never put it down. She played in the band throughout its history and held various band offices, including a stint as president. She died early last December, five weeks after her 96th birthday.

The band's namesake, Robert Browne Hall, was born on June 30, 1958 in Bowdoinham. Although not nearly as well known today as his contemporary, John Philip Sousa, R.B. Hall, as he was commonly called, was internationally renowned as a cornetist, composer, and band leader in his own day. At various times, he led the Richmond Cornet Band, the Bangor Band, the Waterville Military Band (which he also founded), and the Colby College Band. He also performed in and directed other ensembles in Maine and beyond. He composed 62 marches and at least 40 other works. He died in Portland in 1907, three weeks shy of his 49th birthday. In 1981, Gov. Joseph E. Brennan signed a bill thereafter designating the last Saturday in June as R.B. Hall Day in the State of Maine.

The R.B. Hall Band is currently active only in the summertime. It rehearses on Tuesday evenings from mid-April through Labor Day at Williams Elementary School in Oakland. Many of its members perform in other bands during the rest of the year.

The band will perform again at the Clinton Fair on Saturday, September 7, at 1:00 p.m.

## Good Will-Hinckley's L.C. Bates Museum Director Retires

Gary Dugal, Good Will-Hinckley's President and Executive Director announced recently the retirement of L.C. Bates Museum Director, Deborah Staber. We are honored to announce the retirement of Deborah Staber, who has been a passionate and dedicated Director of the L.C. Bates Museum since 1992. Staber retired on June 30, 2024, concluding a remarkable career spanning over thirty years, during which she has overseen and nurtured the museum's operations.

Dugal recently presented Staber with the Good Will-Hinckley 'Legacy Life Changer Award' saying, "It is with deep admiration, immense gratitude, and profound appreciation for your 32 years of faithful and dedicated service to the mission of Good Will-Hinckley, that we humbly say thank you." He continued, "Your fierce passion and tireless efforts in educating our youth and the greater community have not gone unnoticed. Countless youth have been exposed to the wonders of our cabinet of curiosities under your watch. Your legacy at the L.C. Bates Museum has left the indelible mark of the helping hand in the fabric of Good Will-Hinckley and will continue to educate youth and families for years to come."





## Notebook

### Somerset Humane Society

• A Benefit Craft Fair and Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, October 12 at Coburn Park in Skowhegan from 9 am to 4 pm. Spaces may be rented for \$30; set up time is 7 am. All proceeds will benefit the Skowhegan Somerset Humane Society at 123 Middle Road. For more information call 858-0257.

### Belgrade Senior Fall Trip to Fort Knox and Penobscot Narrows

• On Thursday, September 19, the Belgrade Senior Resource Committee will host a Fall Trip for Seniors to

Fort Knox, the Penobscot Narrows Observatory and coastal Belfast where lunch is on your own. The trip is \$10 for residents and seasonal residents of Belgrade and \$20 for nonresidents. The chartered bus will leave the Center For All Seasons at 8 am and return around 5 pm. Pre-registration required. 495-2258

### Skowhegan History House Open Through September

• The Skowhegan History House Museum is open for tours Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-4 pm through September. The new exhibit highlights the museum's founder: "Living Legacy: Louise Helen Coburn (1856-1949)." For more information visit [skowheganhistoryhouse.org](http://skowheganhistoryhouse.org) or call 474-6632.

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## Call of the Loon

### The Fall Exodus Begins



A Great Pond adult in the midst of his Wing Flap!

As fall approaches, we've seen that many of our seasonal residents have already buttoned up their camps to begin their fall migration to the warmer climates. The loons are no exception. Loons, of course spend their summers on our lakes, but winter on the open ocean down near Biddeford Pool, etc. This exodus begins as early as late August for some, and stretches to November for others. Adults with chicks, unsurprisingly, tend to stay later but do not fly off together which is strange.

It has not been that great of a year for loon productivity and potential future residents. Long Pond had only one chick this summer who is still with us as of this writing. Great Pond started with seven chicks and is now down to just four. As you are aware, our lack of productivity has been due in most part to adult loon intruders not allowing the habitual nesting pairs to work their magic. And in several instances, human interference in the



The 2024 Belgrade Lakes Annual Loon Calling Contest

form of inquisitive paddle boarders, kayaks, swimmers, etc. haven't helped the situation.

To make matters worse, we collected eleven abandoned eggs in addition to a few that had been predated by local raccoons, mink, and maybe an otter or two. They would have accounted for at least another eleven chicks. We collected five abandoned eggs last year and seven in 2022. This is getting to be more common throughout the northeast and is being extensively studied to come to some resolution. Hopefully, sooner than later! Without our consistent chick productivity, the future is certainly for our loon population could be in jeopardy. Or have we seen this before?



A Long Pond "Teenager" begging unsuccessfully for a free lunch!

Our esteemed Loon Mentor, Lee Attix, will be assessing and compiling all of this summer's data and sharing our work with that of the rest of New England's wildlife biologists to hopefully figure out what is going on and to provide some guidance for next summer and those that follow. We'll be posting the findings on the BLA website in mid-September.

As this is our final "Call of the Loon" column for this season, I want to Thank Esther, Michael and Gregor, and the rest of the Summertime in the Belgrades staff for their support this past summer. I also want to Thank all of you for your care and support of our cherished loon population. It has been my sincere pleasure to be just a part of this project.

Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project





## chickens, Gin, and a Maine Friendship

by Martha F. Barkley

Letters written by E.B.White and Edmund Ware Smith to each other are collected and edited by Torie DeLisle of Skidompha Library and Martha White, granddaughter of White and published by DownEast Books.

Shall we let the two essayists simply speak for themselves in their correspondence with each other?

Both famed writers were "from away" but both settled in Maine later in life. Many references to health and winter migrations, but they kept in touch quite a bit concerning their chickens and hen houses and feeding animals and even building porches on the very stylish hen house named the Chicken Hilton. Even illusions to the architecture of Chartre Cathedral and its exterior complexity like the chickens domain.

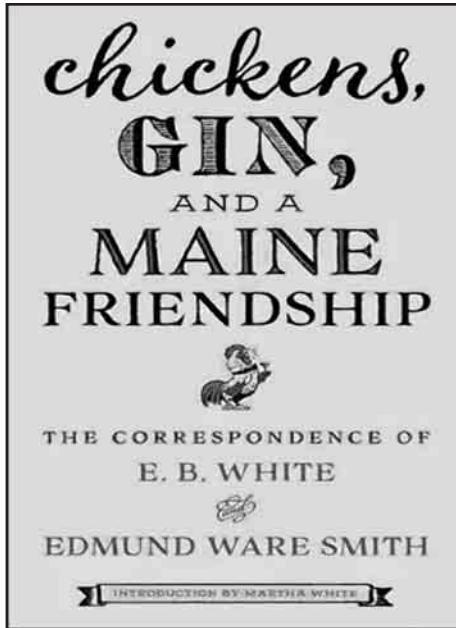
Have a laugh or two or more at these two wordsmith writers, even a post card from White the day he picked an orange!

"Just before we crossed the lake in Oct., I took a last look around at the closed and shuttered cabins."

"We live in this remote cabin six months a year..."

"I hope you stood up well during the conferring of the day's honors at Colby and got home to North Brooklin and to bed at a wholesome hour." E.B.White did not attend his White House honor by President Kennedy, but he did attend a lifetime achievement recognition at nearby Colby College.

White wrote this about John F. Kennedy. "When we think of him, he is without a hat, standing in the wind and the weather...He died of exposure, but in a way that he would have settled for—in the line of duty, and with his friends and enemies all around, supporting him and shooting at him...he did not fear the weather, and did not trim his sails, but instead challenged the wind itself, to improve its direction and to cause it to blow more softly and more kindly over the world and its people."



"I've recently finished a piece...on stillness. It centers around Kidney Pond Camps in the mountains of Baxter Park...No motors allowed—outboard, inboard, or pontoon plane. You paddle your own canoe. What is more silent than a canoe under paddle?"

"I have just finished a piece on outdoor etiquette called, 'Into the Woods with Emily Post'".

"I sent in my chick order the other day, so Spring can't be far behind."

Letters written by fine writers, forever kept safely folded stationery in a library. A lost art with today's texting and emailing. Two long time friends exchanging carefully chosen words.

"I have been a long time acknowledging Strunk & White on The Elements of Style. It made me try to write sentences with no words which is why you haven't heard from me before now." What a clever excuse for not writing a letter from one great to another great composer of words.

Before your next jump in the lake, why not write about Maine's summer joys in a paper and pen letter to someone special in your life? They may treasure it more than a quick text or email photo or whatever hasty communication we are all so absorbed in doing too often and without much contemplation of our surroundings here at the lake.

"I was pleased that so many of you felt the beauty and goodness of the world."\*

From E.B.White to Sixth Graders in 1973 who wrote him letters...quote from Some Writer! by Melissa Sweet. The lucky students received an egg carefully emptied and sent in protective packaging from White's saltwater farm in Maine. What is more perfect than an egg? E.B. wrote about the marvel of an eggshell and sent them SOME GIFT!



...continued from page 5



Enjoy the rest of the summer. See you next year.

For those of you who will be around for the winter, I encourage you to join me on the local trails on snowshoes or skis. The local trails look completely different in the winter with the foliage gone. Carpe skiem!

of "Summertime in the Belgrades" for this year. I hope this column has inspired some of you to get out and explore the outdoor recreation opportunities the region has to offer, and I hope you took a kid or two along. Until next year, I encourage everyone to "Take it Outside." For those who will be around during the fall, get out on some of the trails to view the foliage. It can be truly breathtaking. For those of you who will be around for the winter, I encourage you to join me on the local trails on snowshoes or skis. The local trails look completely different in the winter with the foliage gone. Carpe skiem!



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## — Real Estate Update —

This is a topic we revisit annually in this real estate column because the health and future of our lakes are crucial to our tourism, economy, and real estate market.

Our local lake associations share a vital mission: protecting our lakes and watersheds through education and action. As property owners, we can participate in both.

Maine is home to over 130 lake associations, with the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA), founded in 1909, being the oldest. The BLA primarily focuses on Great and Long Ponds but is involved in planning, action, and education for all local lakes through its partnership with the 7 Lakes Alliance. While many lake associations were initially formed to address specific issues, most now focus on preemptive measures to protect our lakes and watersheds before problems arise.

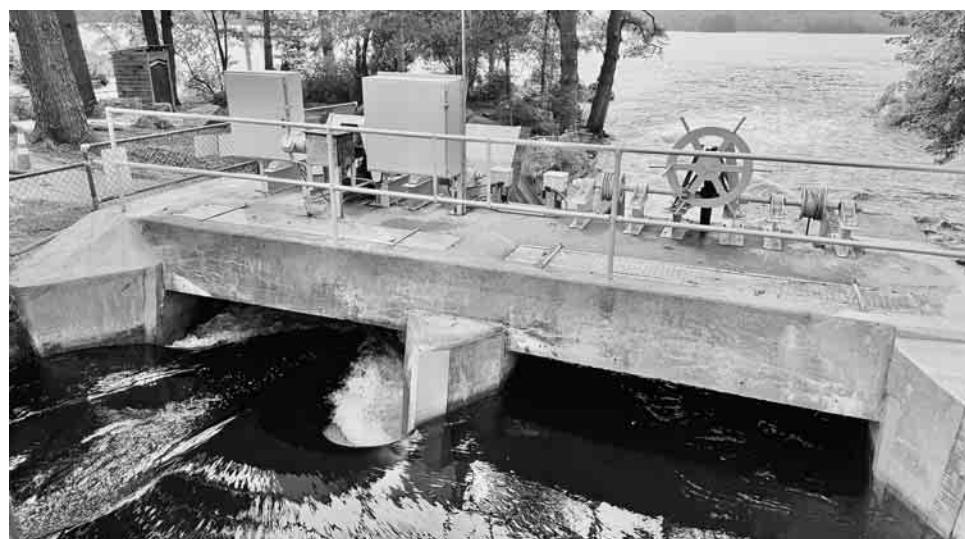
Maintaining clean lakes and lands requires collective effort, funding, and action. As waterfront or watershed property owners, we each have a



### The Dams Keeper Report

Well, this is our final Dams Keeper Report for the season. Whoever said that “Summer in Maine is nothing but two weeks of bad sledding” isn’t too far off the mark! It seems like summer should be getting longer with all of that global warming but here we are regardless – once again!

I received a call from one of our esteemed Dams Committee Members that he just heard a ‘kid’ just went through the Belgrade Village Dam! I was just getting ready to pen this week’s issue so I jumped in the truck and went down to discover that our Belgrade Rescue folks already had everything under control and were working on a middle aged man who fell out of his sit-upon kayak just above the dam while trying to retrieve his lure from an overhanging branch. He capsized, was drawn down to the dam and went under the gate which had been opened to four feet to lower the level of Great Pond after our recent rains. Fortunately, a renter in the stream side cabin heard his calls, called 911 and Rescue promptly responded. The fisherman was banged up but apparently overall OK considering the trip he just had! Delta took him to Inland Hospital to be checked out and reacquainted with his kayak that our Game Warden kindly brought to the hospital. Our Game Wardens are certain-



The Village Dam 1 hr. after our fisherman went in and under Gate 1 on the left! ly “Full Service”!

This is a lesson to anyone that wants to dive, jump or swim above the dam, particularly when the gate(s) are open. There used to be a “No Diving” sign on the bridge which has been apparently ‘borrowed’. We will be installing a new sign which we hope will remain with the bridge and respected for the warning that is intended.

We are still trying to recover from the recent rains – and those thunder storms! As of this writing, Great Pond has fortunately come down to 2.28” still above full pond with its primary gate opened 4’ as stated above and was apparently enough for a large man to go through! Long Pond’s Wings Mill Dam is currently at 0.6” above full with Gate1 opened up to its maximum of 6’ and Gate 2 opened to 3.5’. It takes time to move these flooding waters downstream with so many choke points such as Castle Island and Spaulding Bridge

## Get Involved! Utilize the Resources of Our Lake Associations

responsibility to contribute. Your involvement doesn’t have to be heroic; it can be as simple as making a donation, volunteering time, educating yourself, or being a good steward of your property.

Lake associations have also evolved into social platforms. Many, including the BLA, hold annual meetings where members, neighbors, and volunteers gather to get updates on lake health and learn about available programs. These events often serve as reunions for property owners, where they can share stories, discuss conservation efforts, and meet new neighbors.

I encourage all waterfront and watershed property owners to get involved at some level. Most lake association meetings are scheduled over the summer months. Attend your local meeting, learn about the efforts to protect your lake and the value of your property. It’s a great opportunity to learn, volunteer, or make a tax-deductible donation. Join the community and play your part in preserving our precious lakes.



in its path. Salmon/McGrath is still in good shape right at 0.6” above full. And our neighbors on Messalonskee are right at 3.12” below full which is great considering all of the water we’re sending their way.

The 2024-5 Fall/Winter Lake Drawdown calls for Great and Long Ponds to be drawn down to 1.5’- 2.0’ and Salmon down to 1.0’-1.5’ by November 1st. Weather permitting, the drawdowns usually take place after the October 12th weekend to give everyone time to take that last boat ride of the season! You can access the 2024-5 Fall/Winter Drawdown Schedule this fall on your Town’s website.

Enjoy what’s left of The Summer of 2024 and your Vacation! I hope it’s been a memorable one. It has been for us, but I am sure for different reasons. Thank you and see you next Summer!

Dick Greenan  
Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



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