

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 27, NUMBER 11

2025: Here's To The Changing of The Seasons

by Esther J. Perne



Adult loon rafting. Photo by: Dick Greenan

Here's to the merging of summer and fall when change is an invitation to adventure. It's time to try out a trail or visit a village or go back to a haunt that once held great meaning. It's time to enjoy the last events of the season....without the crowds.

Here's to the colors that climb up the hills, attracting leaf peepers from far and wide and inspiring viewers who are near.

Here's to the waters that stay warm through September, granting summer lingerers extra time to swim and to boat and to soak up the peacefulness of the lakes.

Here's to the sun that sets ever lower and further north but continues to provide beams that warm and sunsets that dazzle.

Here's to the wildlife that have sent off the sea-

son's young, that flock to migrate or forage to overwinter or sociably raft (loonstyle) before heading to the coast.

Here's to the memories that wait to be made, memories of two amazing seasons merging.

Here's to an awesome end of summer. Here's to a happy fall.



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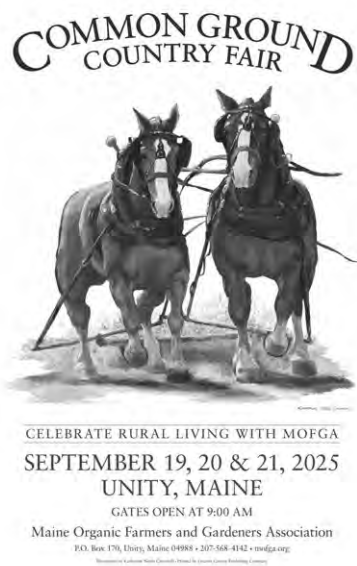
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Windsor Fair: August 23-September 1
Clinton Lions Agricultural Fair: September 4-7
Litchfield Fair: September 5-7
New Portland Lion's Fair: September 12-14
Farmington Fair: September 14-20
Common Ground Country Fair: September 19-21
Fryeburg Fair: September 28-October 5

Water Dance Farm in Belgrade

A family farm, a working farm, Water Dance Farm is making its niche in the Belgrade community by offering wholesome fresh produce, fresh eggs, pasture-raised poultry, baked goods, flowers, antiques and events and playgroups (which include the owner Aurore's 3 sons, two toddlers and baby born this summer.)

Formerly Winterberry Farm, this beautiful historic site has a new 3-generation team and some exciting changes - the barn is available for event space and the sale of antiques, playgroups are offered every Wednesday and Friday from 9 am-11 am, and CSA shares, which will start in 2026, will be offered as mini shares (10 weeks), full shares (20 weeks) and mixed shares (20 weeks). The mixed share CSA will be a blend of fresh, seasonal vegetables and beautiful, locally grown flowers.

For more information contact 713-3737 or WaterDanceFarm@gmail.com or stop by the roadside stand at 538 Augusta Road, which is open seven days a week to meet the farmers: Aurore, Nick, Jen and Kacey and their families and shop for baked goods, produce, flowers and whatever is in season.



Photo by Ethan Perne

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Norridgewock’s Great Labor Day Weekend Celebration

The 52nd annual Oosoola Days in Norridgewock combines the best of two great celebration locations: Central Maine Regional Airport on Sunday, August 31 and Oosoola Park on the Kennebec River on Monday, September 1. The celebrations will be preceeded by an Open House at Oosoola Park on Saturday, August 30

Sunday, August 31 - Central Maine Regional Airport (603 Airport Rd., Norridgewock)

- 7:00 - 11:30 am. **Pancake Breakfast.** \$8 per plate. All proceeds to benefit the Sandy River Flying Club.
- 8:00 am. **5k and Fun Run**, sponsored by **Maine Roof Solutions**. No entry fee! Registration begins at 7:45. Prized awarded for fun run and four age groups in the 5k
- 8:00 am to dusk. **Plane Rides** by Morgan Aviation. \$30 per seat
- 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. **Petting Zoo and Pony Rides** sponsored by **Skowhegan Savings Bank**.
- 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Live Music by **Matt Gagnon** sponsored by **Nickerson Yard Maintenance & Hardware**.
- 10:30 am. **Cornhole Tournament.** sponsored by **Waste Management**. No entry fee! Bring your own partner. 1st place team: \$300; Runner-up: \$100
- 2:00 pm. **Candy Drop**, sponsored by **Morgan Aviation** and **Gale Associates**

Monday, September 1 - Downtown & Oosoola Park

- 9:00 am. **Oosoola Days Parade.** lineup begins at 8:30am at Mill Stream Elementary School. Parade starts at 9 and runs from the school, down Main Street, to Oosoola Park
- 10:00 am. **Opening Ceremonies.** let the fun begin as we welcome guests of all ages to participate in a day full of fun at Oosoola Park on the Kennebec River.
- 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. **Mr. Drew & His Animals Too**, sponsored by the **Norridgewock Public Library**
- 10:30 am. **Horseshoe Tournament.** sponsored by the **Lambert's Auto Body**. No entry fee! 1st place team: \$300; 2nd place: \$100.
- 12:00 noon. **Historical Society Duck Drop.** Purchase ducks for \$5 each at the Norridgewock Town Office during normal hours or you can purchase from the Historical Society's table at the airport on 8/31 or in Oosoola Park on 9/1 until 11:00 am.
- 12:05 - 1:00 pm. **Magic Fred the Musician.** sponsored by the **Olver Associates**. Join Magic Fred for his high-energy, interactive magic show that will keep the whole family laughing, engaged, and amazed. He'll be performing under the gazebo at Oosoola Park!
- 1:00 pm. **Annual Frog Race.** Bring your own frog! Last chance to sign up is at 12:30. Children's race will begin first, followed by intermediate and adult races.



Summertime in the Belgrades

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Do We Need to Worry About Gloeotrichia?

Matt Farragher, Lake Scientist, 7 Lakes Alliance

If you have been out on Great Pond, Long Pond or Messalonskee Lake recently, you may have noticed small green particles drifting in the water or collecting along the shore. This is a type of cyanobacteria called gloeotrichia echinulata that has been showing up in high numbers this

"Gloeo" emerges in late-summer and can form dense scums or mats along shorelines, particularly in coves and downwind areas. Gloeo can accumulate near your shore one day and dissipate the next day, making gloeo a challenge to predict and monitor. Often considered a nuisance algae, gloeo can cause skin irritation and rashes for some swimmers. As gloeo dies, it breaks down and has the potential to release toxic chemicals. Although we have not detected any toxins in our testing, caution is still warranted. The lake science team at 7 Lakes Alliance recommends avoiding contact with water where dense accumulations of gloeo are present. Children and dogs should be kept out of areas with dense accumulations to avoid ingesting water, and swimmers should take a shower with fresh or filtered water and soap after swimming in water with gloeo.

Why is This Happening?

Gloeo has been appearing more frequently and at higher abundances in recent years in otherwise clear, low-nutrient lakes across North America and Europe, including several of the Belgrade lakes. Warming water temperatures has led to earlier and more severe depletion of oxygen on the bottom of lakes, which triggers phosphorus to be released from lake sediments and into the water



Gloeotrichia (pronounced "glee-oh-tricky-ah") echinulata.

where it becomes available for algae. Phosphorus is the most important nutrient that initiates excess algae growth in our lakes. The gloeo spores develop in the bottom waters near sediment containing phosphorus, then float to the surface where they reproduce and can be distributed horizontally by wind-driven water currents.

What Can We Do About Gloeo?

The Lake Science team at 7 Lakes Alliance has been monitoring gloeo progres-

sion regularly, and our volunteer monitors have been tracking abundances around the lakes as well. The solutions for the lakes start on the land. Erosion control is one of the most effective ways to reduce the amount of phosphorus entering our lakes. Actions such as:

- Maintaining a natural shoreline buffer with native plants.
- Conserving land and keeping tree cover to reduce runoff and cool the nearby land and water.
- Supporting erosion-control projects, both large and small: 7 Lakes Alliance works on both large-scale erosion control projects with towns, road associations, and smaller projects through our YCC program.

There is still more to be done, and it requires community-wide effort. If you would like more information or would like to help monitor gloeo, please contact matt.farragher@7lakesalliance.org or danielle.wain@7lake-salliance.org.



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— Take It Outside —

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 and we are finally beginning to get some much-needed rain. 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 (Pg. 10). The warm surface layer has plenty of oxygen to support the large bass but the deeper water is largely 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. I frequently catch three or four 3-to 4-pound bass one after the other.



Drought-stunted blackberries and black trumpets.

See You Next Year

By Peter Kallin

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.



Nice smallie taken on white zonker.

Last week, I returned from a short trip to the West Coast and headed out to one of my foraging spots in the Kennebec Highlands where I normally find quite a few blackberries and black trumpet mushrooms this time of year. There were only a handful of drought-stunted blackberries (about a third their normal size) and the black trumpets that had sprouted after a brief shower a week or so ago were only about 3/4” inch long and completely dehydrated.

It is hard to believe that this is the final

Continued on page 10 ...

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— Calendar —

Thursday 8/21 - Sunday 8/24 - Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival, nonstop entertainment, nonstop field pickin', large spectator tent, camping, 11 bands, concessions, www.blisteredfingers.com, Fairgrounds, Litchfield.

Through Saturday 8/23 - "Gentleman Clothier," Lakewood Theater, 474-7176, Route 201, Madison.

Through Sunday 8/24 - Madison-Anson Days, "Enchanted Garden," food, fun, competitions, sales, land parade, boat parade, fishing tournament, children's activities and much more, towns of Madison and Anson.

Friday 8/22 - Don Campbell Band, country music, free admission, 2 and 7 pm, 946-5311, Sawyer Memorial, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

Friday 8/22 - Tini Bikinis, funk, soul, bubblegum punk, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Concert, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Saturday 8/23 - Vienna Historical Society Flea Market & Open House, bake sale, lunch available, book signing by author Beverly Wight Smith, events at Waite House - birthplace of Milton Bradley and Mill Stream Grange, Route 41, Vienna.

Saturday 8/23 - North Pond Invasive Plant Paddle, 9 am-12 pm, 7lakesalliance.org, sponsored by 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Saturday 8/23 - Designing Women Artist Market, 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 8/23 - Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival, brews from 30 Maine crafters, local food vendors, tours of Maine Grains and sections of the Langlais Art Trail, music, activities start 10 am, general admission pouring 3-7 pm, general admission \$55, designated driver \$15, Downtown Skowhegan.

Saturday 8/23 - Church Supper, 5:30 pm, Smithfield Baptist Church, downtown Smithfield.

Saturday 8/23 - Fishing Stories, hosted by Michael Cooper, step up to the mic and share your favorite, 5 minutes each, all ages welcome, donations appreciated, 7 pm, Chesterville Center Union Meeting House, Chesterville Center.

Saturday 8/23 - Lynn Deeves, Maine singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, 7 pm, \$10, Mt. Vernon Community Center, 2 North Road, Mt. Vernon.

Saturday 8/23 - Monday 9/1 - 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, Windsor.

Sunday 8/24 - Belgrade Lakes Farmers' Market, 8 am-1 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance Parking Lot, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Sunday 8/24 - Katie Daggett and Ed Desjardins, Concert at Norcross Point, free, 2-4 pm, Winthrop.

Sunday 8/24 - Skowhegan Community Band, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

Monday 8/25 - 33rd Annual Play For A Cause Golf Tournament, Kennebec Valley YMCA, registration 9 am, shotgun 10 am, 622-9622, Augusta Country Club, Route 202, Manchester.

Daily through August 31 –

– self-paced Story Stroll on the walking trail around the Belgrade Regional Health Center, 4 Clement Way, Belgrade (off Rt 27).
"Sugar in Milk" by Thrity Umrigar. Sponsored by the Belgrade Library Trustees. Free.

Monday 8/25 - Western Maine Foothills Band, Concert in the Park, 7-8:30 pm, Meetinghouse Park, downtown Farmington.

Tuesday 8/26 - Educational Boat Tour, RSVP 495-6039 for details, 7 Lakes Alliance, 37 Main Street, Belgrade Lake.

Tuesday 8/26 - The Fossils, Oosoola Park Music Series, food trucks, 5-7 pm, Oosoola Park, Ferry Road, Route 2, Norridgewock.

Tuesday 8/26 - Rock on the River Concert, Bandstand, Water Street, Hallowell.

Wednesday 8/27 - Invasive Aquatic Plant Identification Workshop, 10-11 am, please RSVP at 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Thursday 8/28 - Open House, Belgrade's Old Town Meeting House Historical Museum, 1-4 pm, Cemetery Road, Belgrade.

Thursday 8/28 - Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, Downtown Waterville.

Thursday 8/28 - Cruise-In, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Thursday 8/28 - Outdoor Concert, Waterfront Music Series, free, 6-8 pm, Waterfront Park, Oakland.

Thursday 8/28 - Magnie FAM-FAMILY, Village Green Music Series, 6-8 pm, 495-3481, recreation@townofbelgrade.com, Main

Continued on page 7.....

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Fishing Stories

Sat, August 23, 7pm

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Hosted by Michael Cooper

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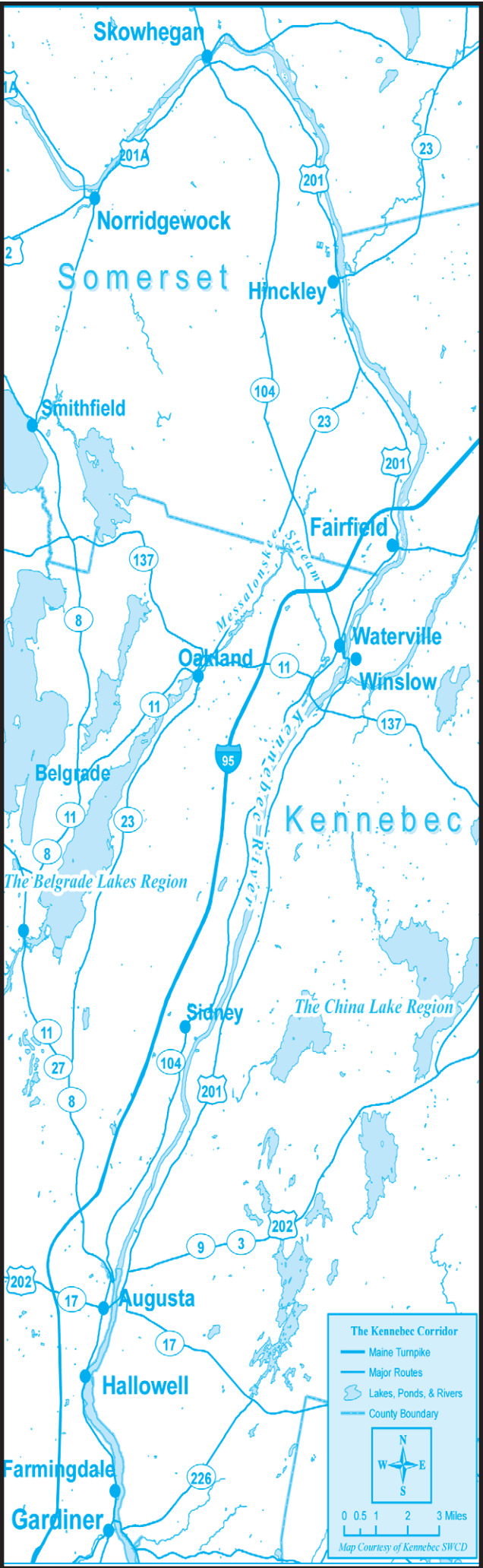
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—Along the Kennebec River Corridor—



Continued from page 6...

Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Thursday 8/28 - Sunday 8/31 - "Dracula: A Comedy,"
Lakewood Theater, 474-7176, Madison Avenue/Route 201, Madison.

Friday 8/29 - Bailey's Mistake, Celtic-inspired four piece folk band, Johnson Hall Free Summer Waterfront Concert Series, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.

Friday 8/29 - Porch Party Mamas, folk, country and blues, 7 pm, Vienna Union Hall, off Route 41, Vienna.

Skowhegan Brewfest...



The Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival is scheduled for Saturday, August 23 and with the legendary waterfalls of the Kennebec River in the background participants can enjoy not only an array of Maine craft brews, wines and distilled beverages, but can stroll Skowhegan's historic Water Street and bridges, tour the iconic Somerset Grist Mill (formerly the county jail) home of Maine Grains and follow a section of the Langlais Art Trail of amazing wooden sculptures including the famous Skowhegan Indian.

Live music starting at 1:30 pm will include: Thomas LeClerc, Man of Leighsure, Northern Exposure and River Bottom Funk. Tickets are at <https://skowhegancraftbrewfest.com>.

Hallowell Artwalk

Come take a walk on Hallowell's historic Water Street on Saturday, August 30, and enjoy the art - and the food and the live music and the riverside views of the Kennebec. Hallowell Artwalk will be hosting displays of art by over 30 local artists from 10 am to 4 pm, more artists will be exhibiting at the galleries, interactive workshops will be scheduled along with the displays and local businesses will be welcoming visitors. The rain date will be Sunday, August 31. waterstreethallowell.org

Friday 8/29 through Sunday 9/7 - "Deathtrap," sponsored by Waterville Creates, ASL interpreted performance on 8/31, \$31, 873-7000, Waterville Opera House, 1 Common Street, Waterville.

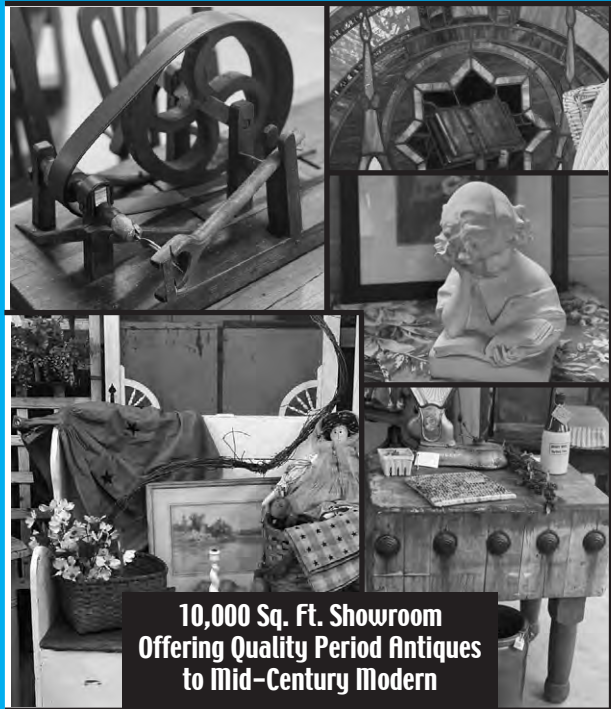
Saturday 8/30 and Sunday 8/31 - Tour of Belgrade, Saturday bikes only - \$65, Sunday cars welcome; stops, samples and connections at farms, homesteads and maker spaces, food trucks, to benefit Belgrade Recreation, register at www.thebelleofbelgrade.com, start location The Center for All Seasons, Route 27, Belgrade Lakes.

Saturday 8/30 - Hallowell Artwalk, displays of art by local artists, live music, food trucks, 10 am-4 pm, rain date August 31, Water Street, Downtown Hallowell.

Sunday 8/31 - Sunday Project, 2025 Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

Sunday 8/31 and Monday 9/1 - Oosoola Days, fun and games, food trucks, live music, Sunday - Central Maine Regional Airport: pancake bkft, 5K, plane rides, cornhole; Monday - Oosoola Park: parade, exhibits, children's activities, Frog Races, Ferry Road, Route 2, Norridgewock.

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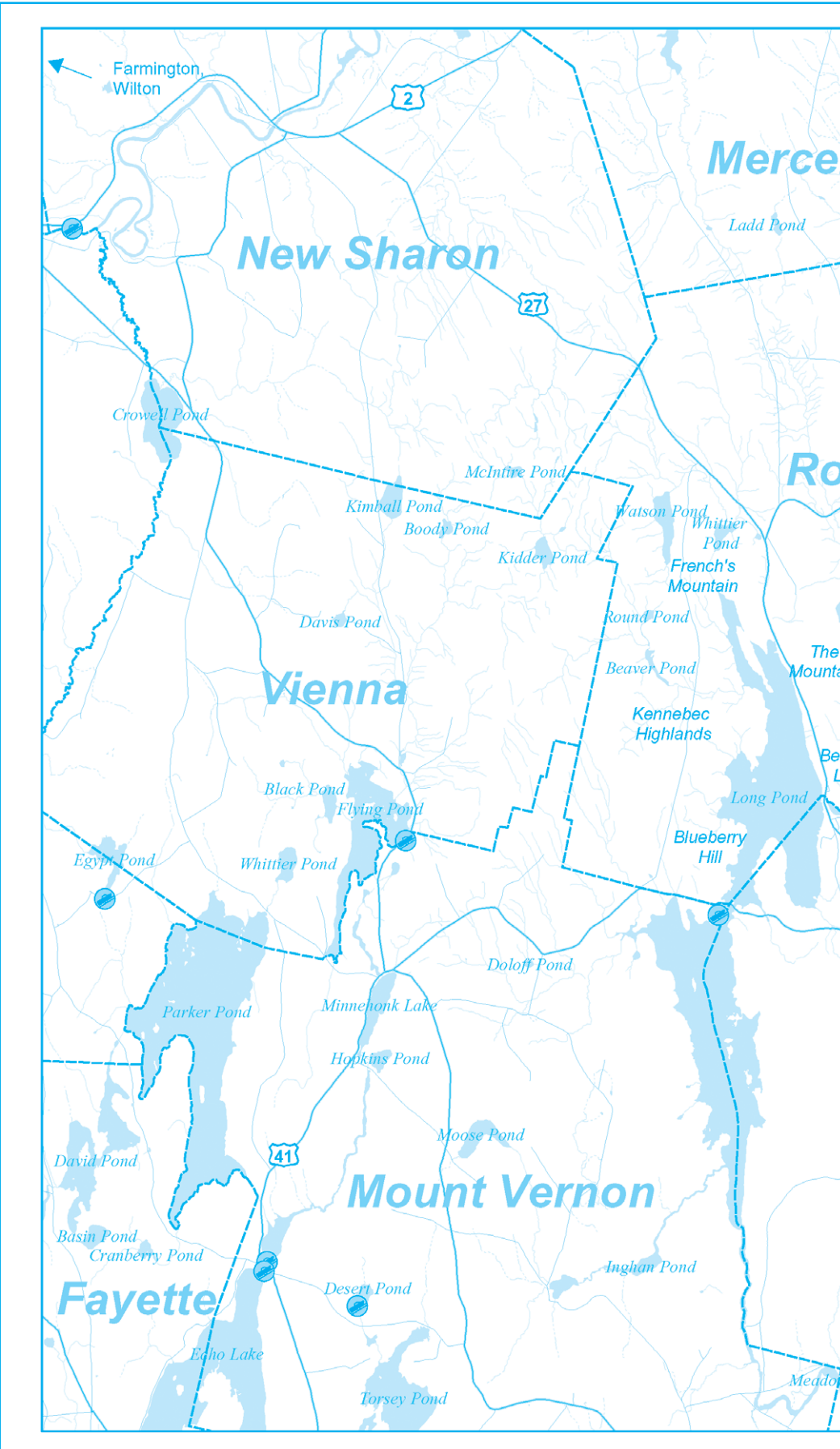


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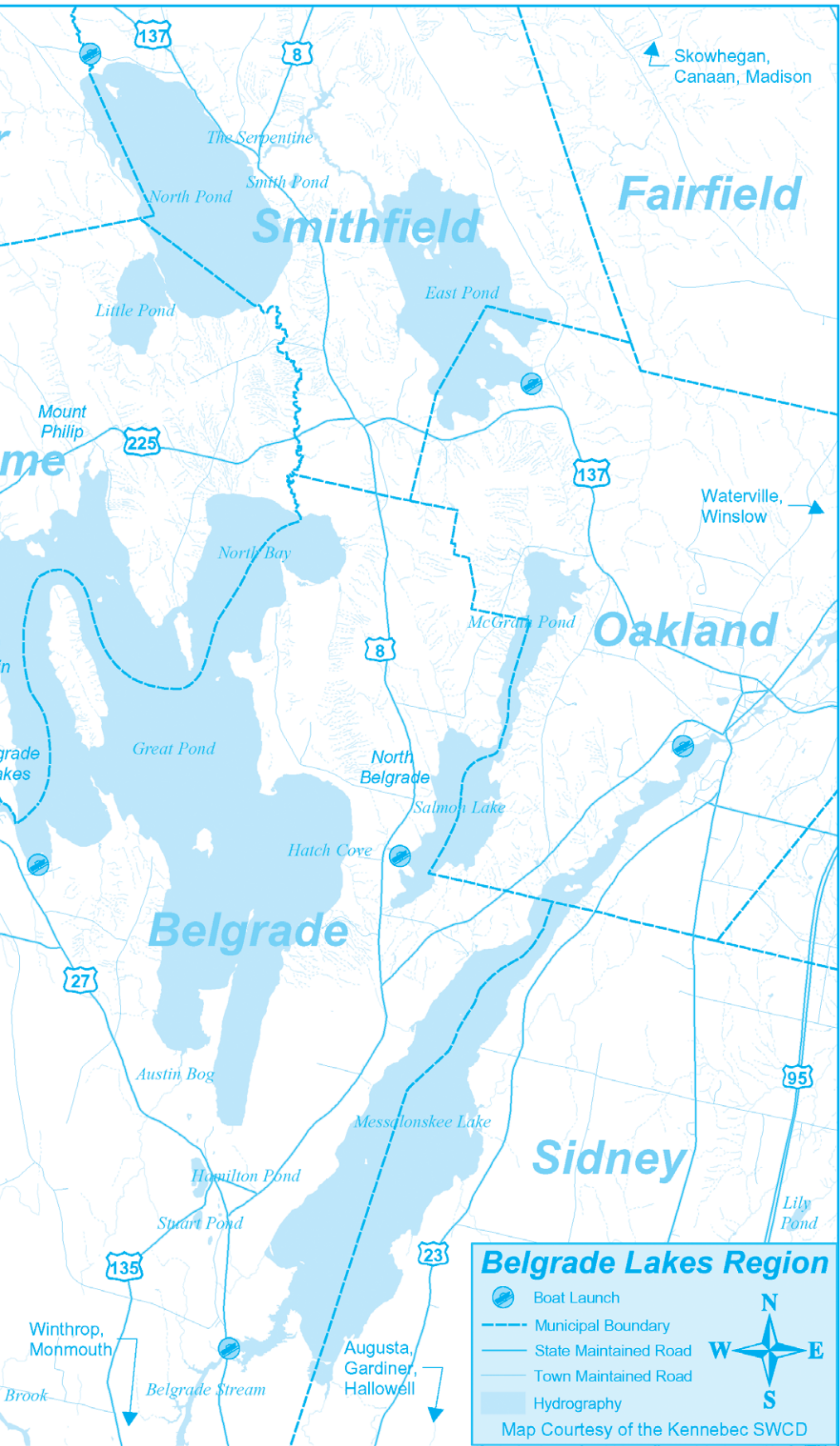
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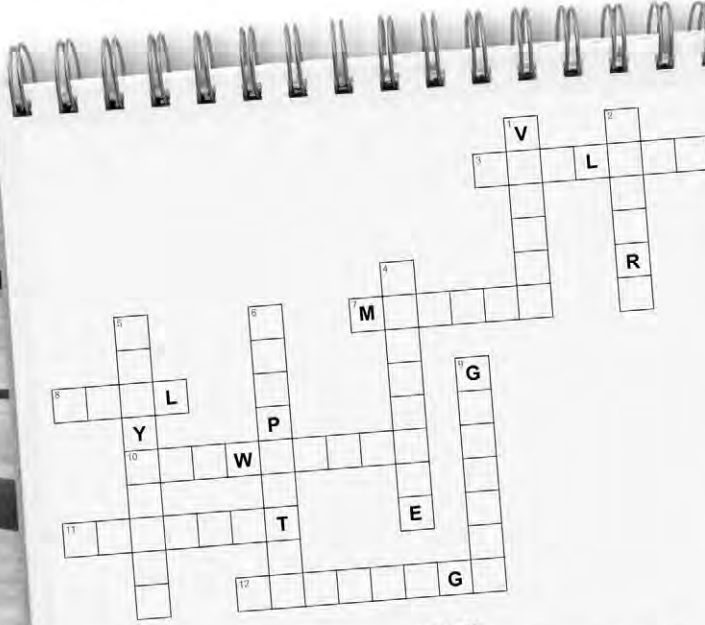
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Designing Women at Longfellow's Greenhouses in Manchester



Join Designing Women on the lawn at Longfellow's Greenhouses, Puddledock Road, Manchester on Saturday, August 23, 9:30 am-4 pm at an Artist Market of quality craft and artwork by women artists. Guests will be able to shop and visit with the artists in a beautiful scenic setting.

The event will include live music by

Twisted Strings, Maine Crime Writers and a light lunch. A suggested \$2.00 donation at the entrance will be collected by the Winthrop Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center serving Kennebec and Somerset Counties. In the event of rain, the Market will be held inside a greenhouse. For more information visit www.designingwomen.org



...Continued from page 5



Bass in the surface layer feeding on alewives below.

issue 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



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

look completely different in the winter with the foliage gone. Carpe skiem!





Dark the Night and Bright the Stars

Waterville Creates and Ticonic Gallery + Studios are proud to present Dark the Night and Bright the Stars, a powerful new exhibition curated by Lights Out Gallery, which explores the theme of ancestry through visual art, sculpture, textiles, and traditional craft. The exhibition will be on view from July 9 through October 12, 2025, with a robust lineup of associated programming that will explore cultural heritage, ancestry, and personal storytelling.

With Dark the Night and Bright the Stars, each artist shares a unique approach to honoring and communicating with ancestral memory, offering deeply personal interpretations rooted in cultural heritage.

Gabriel Frey (Orono, ME) is a Passamaquoddy artist; Gabriel embraces a hybrid approach to basket-making, balancing function and form equally. His baskets connect past, present and future into beautiful functional works of art. Raphael Gribetz (Presque Isle, ME) is a sculptor and musician who draws on Jewish spiritual and artistic traditions to explore family, faith, and culture through religious iconography and metaphor. Sarah Haskell (York, ME) is a weaver and educator; Haskell creates contemplative works about memory and the spirit world, frequently engaging communities in collaborative textile installations.

Daniel Minter (Portland, ME) is known for powerful imagery exploring Black identity, diaspora, and spirituality; Minter uses his art as a conduit for ancestral communication and cultural preservation. David Lone Bear Sanipass (Monmouth, ME) is a jeweler, storyteller, and painter; his paintings, jewelry, and oral storytelling offer cautionary tales, history, and wisdom for future generations. Avis Turner (Rockland, ME) using wax, bronze, and clay, Turner sculpts ethereal winged beings that reflect her interest in reincarnation, nature spirits, and ancient Celtic myth. Maria Wolff (Portland, ME) is a metalsmith inspired by her Danish/Germanic heritage; Wolff's work reimagines Scandinavian craft traditions, focusing on historical

techniques and festive customs.

Together the work created by these artists reflects a broad spectrum of traditions—Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq, Jewish, Afro-Atlantic, Scandinavian, and Celtic—each illuminating history, identity, and inter-generational connection.

"We've been collaborating over the past two years on this show and are thrilled to partner with Waterville Creates to bring this vision to life," said Karlë Woods, Co-Founder and Creative Director of Lights Out Gallery. "This exhibition honors the stories and histories that live within us—those passed down through generations, felt in our DNA, and newly uncovered by our creative practice. Through our interview series, we discovered a powerful thread connecting these seven artists who each engage with their ancestry in deeply intentional ways through their work."

Marie Sugden, Exhibitions Coordinator at Waterville Creates, emphasized the importance of the collaboration: "We are deeply honored to collaborate with Lights Out Gallery and to be the first gallery in central Maine to present one of their acclaimed exhibitions. As someone with a profound appreciation for craft, I'm thrilled by the opportunity to celebrate Maine's rich legacy of craft and traditional makers in our space."

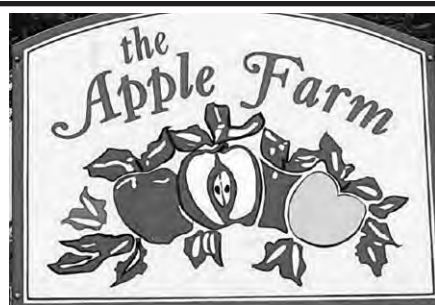


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Call of the Loon

A Loon Chick's Journey!



Loon chicks can swim and dive within their first week, but rely on their parents for warmth and food and sometimes, just transportation.



This Long Pond Tracy Cove chick is just 1-2 days old!

Loon chicks can swim and dive within their first week, but rely on their parents for warmth and food and sometimes, just transportation.



Our chick is now 2 weeks old and still covered in its nice warm down. After all, it is still mid-June.

They often ride on their parents' backs for warmth and protection during the first few weeks. Initially, parents provide all of the food, but chicks gradually start catching their own. You may even observe a parent purposely dropping a minnow directly in front of the chick to teach it how to catch its own food. By about five weeks, chicks can catch about half of their own food but still beg for food from their parents.



This Long Pond Tracy Cove chick is now 6 weeks old. Note the loss of down!



He/she is now 13 wks in October and ready for their inaugural trip to the central Maine coast!



A loon chick is considered fledged around 11-12 weeks old when it can fly and is supposed to be largely independent, although it will continue begging for food from its parents until the parents leave for their winter vacation, generally somewhere along the Maine coast.

Loon chicks typically leave their natal lake shortly after their parents and migrate to the coast for the winter where they will spend the next few years before returning to their natal lake or one nearby.

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

Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project





Cape Cod Sharks

by Martha F. Barkley

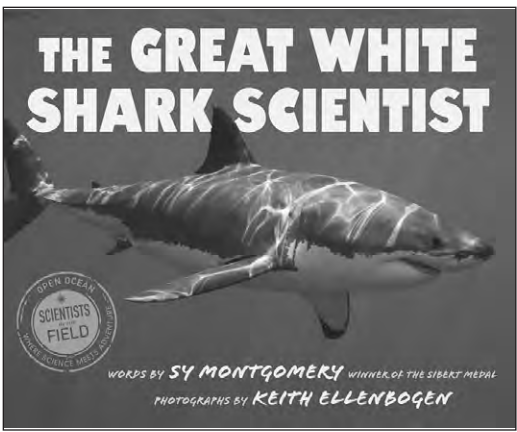
We have no fear of sharks in our lakes, but maybe your children would love to read about Cape Cod saltwater scientists written by Sy Montgomery and photos by Keith Ellenbogen. The Great White Shark Scientist is Winner of the Sibert Medal is a beautiful picture book for the very young.

“All the events described in this book really happened, and happened just as they are described. All the photographs of wild animals were taken in a natural habitat.”

What could be better for young and old alike to learn about life in the sea. Many children’s books and adult in-depth animal studies on our library shelves are by Sy Montgomery. She is prolific.

Her newest Turtle book for adults is illustrated beautifully throughout with a middle selection of color photos at our Belgrade Library. Of Time and Turtles takes you everywhere from those tiny dime store creatures we had as kids to the most ancient creatures in the world. “Mending the World, Shell by Shattered Shell” has intriguing chapter titles to pull you inside the turtle shell and outside where they live everywhere, even here in our lakes.

Young Adult books by Sy really ring a memory bell for me: 2006 “the good



goodpig,” who can forget that true story? It is “the extraordinary life of Christopher hogwood.” Very very popular read and “only” 25 check outs at the Lithgow Library in Augusta. Black and white photos galore on front and back inside covers with

colorful photos middle section, one revealing Christopher’s last Christmas card all decked out. You should see him.

The Hummingbirds’ Gift is full of wonder and beauty like our daily visits here at the lake. Do you have something red to attract this zooming in and out little creature? Just our red salt and pepper shakers on the window sill kept attracting daily hummingbird checks, so swift and smart, not touching

the window but quickly going on to nectar in red flowers nearby. This lovely read for young adults is dedicated “To mothers everywhere, who understand.”

Go on a Sy Montgomery hunt anywhere that shelves books. So many published that I simply can not list them all.

New York Times Bestselling Author of The Soul of an Octopus: previously published as a chapter in Birdology...



Neighbors Driving Neighbors Summer Happenings

What’s been happening at Neighbors Driving Neighbors (NDN) lately?! A lot!First, they are celebrating their 10th anniversary this year. What began as a small but mighty grassroots effort has grown into a nonprofit leader in the community. They are proud to say they not only survived the 2020 pandemic, but have thrived. In 2023, they added Readfield to their service area and in 2024 they were happy to add to their volunteer driver pool as well as register several new riders. To keep that momentum going, they are always looking for new drivers, so contact them if you enjoy driving and like to help others. Additionally, if you find yourself or a loved one in need of rides to medical appointments, supermarkets, pharmacies, other errands and even social visits, please reach out and register with them before you need that ride.

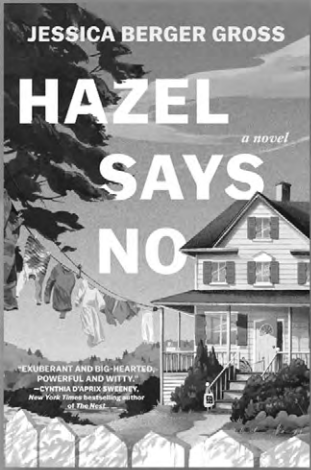

This past spring, NDN received special recognition from the Maine Volunteer Foundation. The certificate read: “Exemplary Recognition: This certificate is proudly presented to Neighbors Driving Neighbors in recognition of your outstanding community service, meaningful contributions, and commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of others.” The commitment of their volunteer

drivers is indeed exemplary and is greatly appreciated by their riders.

In early August, NDN hosted a BBQ for their volunteers. They hope to make this an annual event, as the connection and camaraderie that is made at these casual neighborly events is just wonderful. It was a sunny day, with about 30 people in attendance. They took a few minutes to recognize four drivers who went above and beyond with over 100 trips each in 2025: Steve Symonds, Sandy Beal, Nancy West, and Susan Emmerling. Each received a gift basket with a new NDN 2015-2025 T-shirt among other things. Additionally, they honored six drivers who have been with NDN from the beginning: Shelly Fitzgerald (Rome), our current president; Sandy Colt (Belgrade), our vice president; Allan Harville (Vienna); Bob Weimont (Fayette); Quimby Robinson (Mount Vernon); and Dave Fuller (Mount Vernon).



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— Real Estate Update —

Thank You and a Quick Recap

As we wind down another season of *Summertime in the Belgrades*, I'd like to thank our readers and visitors for allowing us to share stories, real estate insights, and advice throughout the season. Selling real estate in the Belgrade Lakes Region is truly a privilege, and it's always rewarding to connect with so many people who care about this special place.

Here's a quick recap of how the 2025 summer real estate season has played out so far, looking at sales from May through mid-August:

Homes overall: From May through mid-August, 89 homes sold across the region, averaging about **\$472,000**. That's almost identical to last summer, when 84 homes sold at an average of **\$466,000**. In other words—prices have leveled off a bit, and sales volume is holding steady.

On the lakes: Lakefront living continues to shine. We saw 25 waterfront homes sell this summer, with an average price of **\$845,000**. Last year, the same

number of lakefront homes sold, but the average price was closer to **\$743,000**. So while the number of sales stayed steady, prices on the water keep climbing. What does this mean? The market here is steady and healthy. Buyers are still looking, especially for waterfront homes, and sellers are seeing solid interest. As fall approaches, the pace will naturally slow down, but serious buyers will still be out there hoping to find their spot in the Belgrades. As fall arrives, the pace of sales will naturally slow, but life in the Belgrades never really does. The end of our Summertime season is a wonderful reminder that while one season is wrapping up, the best parts of lake life continue all year long.

Thank you and see you next summer!

Dan McCarron



Campers Tackle Invasive Plants

On Thursday, July 30th, a volunteer conservation effort of significant force showed up to Hayden Park in Belgrade, ME. The group of more than 100 volunteers, mainly consisting of campers and camp staff from Camp Somerset for Girls, worked tirelessly to cut down and bag invasive Japanese Knotweed.

Japanese Knotweed is an aggressive, bamboo-like plant which has allelopathic properties, which means this invasive plant secretes chemicals into the soil and inhibits the growth of other plants. Japanese Knotweed is known to destabilize soils and damage native ecosystems and shorelines.

As a result of Thursday's project, 72 contractor bags of weeds were removed from Hayden Park, a feat made possible due to a notably efficient effort by they

campers. They displayed excellent teamwork and positive energy during their service.

The volunteer event was organized by the Maine Conservation Corps, 7 Lakes Alliance, and Camp Somerset for Girls. This event is part of a federally funded National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant which was awarded to Maine Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future to help educate and engage the community on green infrastructure practices to combat shoreline and coastal erosion which poses a threat to the state of Maine.

Hayden Park is the first of many public places 7 Lakes Alliance is working to improve and use to educate people on how to combat erosion in their own communities. The public is invited to join 7 Lakes Alliance at Hayden Park on August 8th for an erosion control demonstration. At this event, the Maine Conservation Corps' newest addition, the "Shore Corps", will provide a demonstration of Best Management Practices for shoreline erosion. Contact Shore Corps Steward Daniel Sylvester if you have event questions. Dan can be reached by email at daniel.sylvester@7lakesalliance.org.



The Dams Keeper Report

A WATER LEVELS PUBLIC NOTICE 8/12/25



We are in another serious drought which is rearing its ugly head for our farmers, gardeners and lakes residents. The above photo shows the Castle Island thoroughfare under the bridge which is still just accessible, but you'll want to trim up and watch where you are going.

The long-term forecast back in May had forecasted an average of 25% less precipitation for this summer but unfortunately here in the Belgrades, we've received significantly less. 6.85" in May, 3.32" in June, just 2.03" in July and absolutely zero in the past thirty days. Normal precipitation is around 3.42" per month.

Obviously, we haven't had the rain but to make matters worse, we lose approximately 3/10" per day due to evaporation with an air temperature of 80F. With the recent 90F+ temperatures, the loss per day is closer to 6/10".

And if that wasn't enough, our water table is down around 8'. For comparison, it was down just 2.88' back in August 2023. When the water table drops, obviously it affects our wells but results in a phenomenon called Induced Recharge which is basically the reverse flow of our lake springs and aquifers back into the low water table. Add the additional loss from the 70% or so of our camps that still use lake water and you see why our lake water levels are where they are. Knowing we were heading into another drought, we started with our lakes 3" above full pond to give us as much breathing room as we could and despite all of our dam gates being shut down for the past two months, we are where we are. Without some significant rain, things are not going to improve.

The entire Belgrade chain of lakes are all in dire straits. Both East and North Ponds are reportedly down 12" so there is obviously nothing to flow into Great and Long Ponds.

Lastly, for those of you with boat lifts, we would suggest checking to make sure you can still get your boat off. And now is also a good time to remove that boat lift canopy while you can still access it with your boat on the lift.

Thank you all for your patience.

Your Belgrade Area Dams Committee



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