

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 9

The Belgrade Lakes: More Than Beautiful — A Multi-Billion-Dollar Treasure

by Jeff Worthington

Every summer, thousands of people are drawn to the Belgrade Lakes for the same reasons. Clear water. Quiet coves. Loons calling across the lake at dusk. Early morning fishing, afternoon swims, evening boat rides, and memories that span generations.

For many, the lakes are simply a wonderful place to spend time with family and friends. But they are also something more.

The seven Belgrade Lakes — Great Pond, Long Pond, Messalonskee Lake, East Pond, North Pond, Salmon Lake, and McGrath Pond— form one of Maine's most remarkable natural resources. Together, they support recreation, tourism, wildlife, and the quality of life that has made this region one of the state's most desirable



What's that water worth?

places to live and visit.

They also represent an extraordinary economic asset.

Today, the waterfront properties surrounding the seven lakes are estimated to be worth more

than \$3 billion. Spread across roughly 170 miles of shoreline, these homes and camps form the backbone of the tax base for many of the surrounding towns. They support local schools, roads, emergency services, and the municipal services that residents depend upon every day.

When people talk about protecting water quality, they're not just talking about preserving beautiful scenery. They're protecting one of the region's greatest investments.

Research conducted in Maine has shown that clean lakes and strong property values go hand in hand. As water clarity

declines, waterfront property values can decline as well. That affects not only individual homeowners but also municipal tax revenues and the broader local economy.

Continued on page 2



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Continued from page 1

Conversely, every effort to protect water quality helps preserve homeowner equity while supporting the businesses that depend on healthy lakes. Restaurants, marinas, contractors, landscapers, lodging, real estate professionals, retailers, and many other local businesses all benefit from the region's reputation for exceptional lakes.

Fortunately, the Belgrade Lakes region has long recognized that protecting clean water requires more than good intentions.

7 Lakes Alliance, working in partnership with the local lake associations, municipalities, volunteers, and conservation organizations, has built an outstanding comprehensive watershed protection programs.

Throughout the year, scientists and volunteers monitor lake water quality, restore streams, reduce phosphorus runoff, conserve sensitive lands, educate property owners, and help identify problems before they become serious. Local lake associations contribute thousands of volunteer hours, working directly with shoreline residents to promote responsible stewardship and serving as advocates for the individual lakes that make up the watershed.

It is a partnership that combines local knowledge with sound science.

Perhaps the most important lesson is that

every lake is connected. Rain that falls miles away eventually finds its way into streams and lakes. Erosion from a driveway, a failing culvert, an improperly maintained septic system, or disturbed shoreline can affect water quality far beyond a single property.

Likewise, every positive action matters.

A stabilized shoreline. A properly maintained septic system. A repaired erosion problem. A conserved wetland. A volunteer collecting water quality samples. An educational workshop attended by a new shoreline owner. Individually, each may seem small. Collectively, they help protect a resource that benefits everyone.

The Belgrade Lakes did not become one of Maine's premier lake destinations by accident. Their beauty today is the result of decades of stewardship by residents, volunteers, lake associations, conservation organizations, municipalities, and, more recently, the coordinated watershed-wide efforts of 7 Lakes Alliance.

The rewards extend far beyond economics. Clean water means children can swim safely, anglers can enjoy healthy fisheries, loons and other wildlife can thrive, and families can continue traditions that have defined summers in the Belgrades for generations.

Protecting these lakes is about preserving a way of life. It also happens to protect more than \$3 billion in waterfront property, sustain local

communities, and ensure that one of Maine's greatest natural treasures remains just as remarkable for the generations still to come.





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August 27, 28, 29 & 30, 2026
Litchfield Fairgrounds - Litchfield, Maine

The Gibson Brothers (NY) F Nothin' Fancy (VA) F, S
Dave Adkins & Mountain Soul (KY) S Beartracks (NY) F
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Katahdin Valley Boys (ME) T Special Consensus (IL) T
Ironwood Drive (PA) S Back Woods Road (ME) F, S
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Holding Ground: Atlantic Salmon and the Battle to Save Their Habitat



There is a river in Maine’s High Peaks where, if you are patient and lucky, you can watch a wild Atlantic salmon jump. The Sandy River runs south out of the mountains of Franklin County through the towns of Madrid, Phillips, and Farmington before joining the Kennebec near Norridgewock. It is a beautiful river. And it is one of the last places in the entire United States where wild Atlantic salmon still return to spawn.

That is not a small thing. Atlantic salmon were once so abundant in Maine rivers that early settlers wrote about harvesting them by the wagonload. By the twentieth century, dams, pollution, and overfishing had pushed them toward extinction. Today, the Gulf of Maine population is federally listed as endangered. The Sandy River and a handful of other Maine rivers are what remains of something that once defined this entire coast.

The reason the salmon still come back to the Sandy River, the reason there is still a river worth coming back to, is that the forests along its banks have stayed largely intact. Forested streambeds keep water cool. They filter runoff. They hold the banks steady so the gravel beds where salmon lay their eggs don't fill with silt. Every acre of riverside forest is a piece of salmon habitat.

This is why the High Peaks Alliance has made the Sandy River corridor a priority. Since last summer, we’ve worked to conserve Walrath Woods, 120 acres of riverside forest in Strong. Ultimately, conserving the longest conserved stretch of the Sandy River and opening the town’s first public trail. We’re building the Sherry Walrath Memorial Trail, restored from an old snowmobile path. It will welcome hikers, anglers, and anyone who wants to walk beside a wild salmon river. If you’ve ever wanted to invest directly in wild salmon habitat in Maine, this is your chance.

Readers of Summertime in the Belgrades may already be following this story from another angle: students in the Belgrade area have been raising Atlantic salmon fry in classrooms and releasing them into the Sandy River as part of the Atlantic Salmon Federation's Fish Friends program. Those fish, if they survive their incredible journey to the ocean and back, may one day spawn in the very stretch of river the Walrath Woods project is working to protect. The classroom and the conservation project are part of the same story.

Wild Atlantic salmon are not a lost cause, but they are a cause that requires sustained effort. Protecting their habitat, piece by piece, river mile by river mile, is painstaking work. The High Peaks Alliance believes it is worth doing. The fish, apparently, agree.

The High Peaks Alliance works to conserve land and ensure public access across Maine’s High Peaks region. Visit highpeaksalliance.org to learn more and sign up for our newsletter for updates on conservation, access, and ways to get involved.



Summertime in the Belgrades

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It's Algae Season

By Matt Farragher, 7 Lakes Alliance, Lake Scientist

Water clarity has been excellent so far this summer, however, algae growth tends to increase this time of year. Sometimes growth indicates a larger water quality issue, but not always! Here are several ways to determine what kind of algae you see as we wade into the hottest time of year.

Cyanobacteria, also referred to as "blue-green algae," are colonial, single-celled microorganisms that cause most lake-wide algae blooms across Maine when conditions are favorable (hot air temperatures, abundance of the limiting nutrient: phosphorus). The Maine DEP refers to lake-wide blooms where water clarity drops below 1 meter (3.3 feet) as a "harmful algae bloom" (or HAB). Thick scums of cyanobacteria can accumulate in coves in the absence of a lake-wide bloom. We test scums for toxins each year and have never had a positive test.

Gloeotrichia echinulata ("Gleo") is a type of cyanobacteria we see annually on Great Pond, Long Pond, and sometimes Messalonskee Lake.



A scummy accumulation of cyanobacteria *Gloeotrichia* and *Dolichospermum* in a cove of Great Pond, July 9, 2026

might pick up other detritus along the way and can sometimes look unsightly, they are not a concern, unlike a lake-wide algae bloom featuring cyanobacteria, or scum accumulations in a cove. If you are not sure what you are seeing, want to join our Gleo monitoring project, or have questions, please contact Lake Scientist Matt Farragher or visit 7 Lakes Alliance at 137 Main St., Belgrade ME.

Unlike other cyanobacteria, Gleo appears in deep, clear lakes. It emerges from the sediment and rises to the surface where it can spread horizontally across the lake. Gleo forms large (~2 mm) spherical colonies with a faint ring around their edge. Gleo can accumulate in coves and around docks, creating thick scums. If you see stringy, green "cotton-candy" looking clumps, these are likely colonies of filamentous green algae. These are harmless, and often grow in shallow, vegetated areas of lakes but can break loose due to strong winds or large wakes. While they



Belgrade History Beyond Belgrade

Submitted by BHS member Dianne Dowd

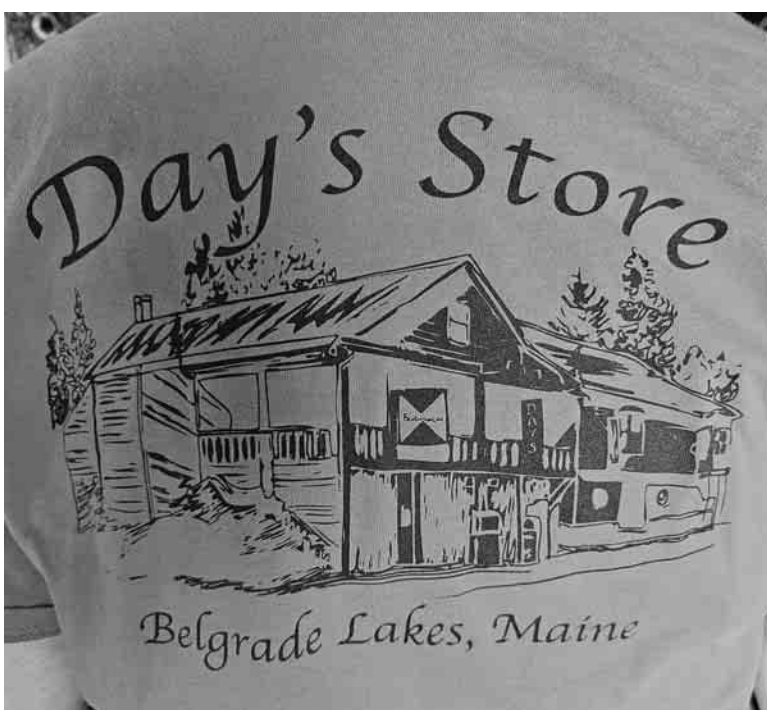


Out of the Belgrade Historical Society's files comes this great picture of folks out for a boating trip in the early part of the 1900s. This picture postcard was probably taken between 1905 - 1910 and shows a group of 5 tourists with local fishing guide, Alfred L. Stevens. The clothing styles are very typical of Edwardian fashions. The women are wearing high necked blouses and very large picture hats. Their hats would have been adorned with ribbons, feathers, and artificial flowers. These enormous hats would have required hairstyles that could support the hat. The most popular styles required women to sweep their hair up from the forehead into coils or buns. The hats were secured with long hat pins (up to eighteen inches long). The men are dressed in 3-piece suits (Jacket, trousers, and a waistcoat or vest.) Their shirts have high but-

ton collars, and they all (including the guide) have neckties. One of the men is wearing a straw boater hat. Straw boater hats were popular as menswear from 1880 - 1930 but could only be worn from May 15 (known as "Straw Hat Day") to early September. Even though these folks may have been on vacation, they would never have considered abandoning the correct attire of the day.

This boat trip would have been a pleasure cruise rather than a fishing trip. Alfred Stevens would have manned the oars and guided his Rangeley style craft around the pond or lake. Outboard motors were not available at this time in history. The boat would have traveled at a leisurely pace so there was no fear of any one losing their hat.

One can only wonder what these tourists of yesteryear would think of today's standard vacation wear for both men and women: t-shirts, shorts, and a ball cap. Every year my brother must buy an authentic Belgrade Lakes t-shirt when he comes to visit. This means a quick stop at Day's Store at the start of every visit. After 30 years, he has quite a collection of all colors and graphic designs. Some of his t-shirts are a bit worn and the graphics are faded but the t-shirt is still wearable. Most importantly they are still comfortable. For many visitors, Belgrade Lakes t-shirts like the one pictured (vintage shirt no longer available) here are a great reminder of their vacation here and a great souvenir.





— Take It Outside — Early Summer Fishing and Water Quality Monitoring

By Peter Kallin

Editor's Note: Due to the rapid pace of Summertime, the newspaper, the following column was inadvertently omitted. But, it's great at any date...

Last weekend included Juneteenth and Father's Day, as well as one of my regular (every two weeks) water quality monitoring sessions. Two of my kids came for the weekend: my younger son and my older daughter. My son was here all weekend and my daughter spent Friday and Monday as she was basically passing through on her way to run in the 10K portion of the International Bay of Fundy Marathon in Lubec. Rob and I got out fishing on Saturday and we celebrated Saturday night with fish taco salad made with fresh caught white perch and yellow perch and some pickerel filets from the freezer. Last week, Mother Nature reminded us all how much power she can generate sometimes and how quickly she can change things up without warning. We had a couple of thunderstorms early in the week that caused some high winds and flash flooding. These intense weather events can also



Barb's Race Bib for the Bay of Fundy 10K



Rob holding a nice smallie caught near the Castle Island Bridge.

affect water quality in our lakes, rivers, and streams. Significant precipitation events usually result in large erosion events that can add significant sediment loads when Mother Nature uses her pressure washer instead of her normal gentle rain that infiltrates slowly while removing contaminants. Typically, "The First Flush" is especially contaminated as it often contains a lot of dust, grease, oils, etc., that is washed off impermeable surfaces such as roofs or pavements. High winds stir up the lake and can change both temperature stratification and currents, as well as causing large waves that cause additional shoreline erosion. Ongoing water quality monitoring programs coordinated by 7-Lakes Alliance and Lake Stewards of Maine (former Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP)) are in place to help document changes to our water quality and better understand how to protect our water quality.

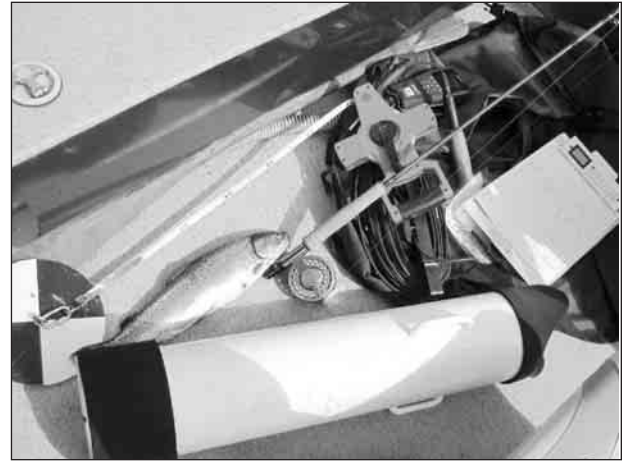


Water Quality Test Site.

I am both an invasive plant and water quality monitoring volunteer for these programs. While there is a certain amount of altruism involved, there is also a great deal of self-interest and opportunities for other potential rewards. On Sunday morning, after calibrating my (actually BLA's) WQ Meter at the MLRC WQ lab before the farmers' market, I got out on Long Pond with my son, Rob, his girlfriend and his large German Shephard dog to collect water quality data at both DEP Station 01 (Upper Basin) and Station 02 (Lower Basin) before the predicted afternoon thunderstorms kicked in. Usually, Father's Day is a good time to see a lot of daughters out fishing with their dads. Typically, the dad is driving the boat and the daughters are in the bow, catching some rays. This year's overcast and occasional rain modi-

fied that a bit and the daughters were usually steering the boat from a protected cockpit while the dads were trolling in the rain from the fantail.

Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM), is a statewide lakes nonprofit is that trains, certifies and provides technical support to hundreds of volunteers who monitor a wide range of indicators of water quality, assess watershed health and function, and screen lakes for invasive aquatic plants and animals. Formed in 1971, Maine's VLMP is the longest-standing state-wide citizen lake monitoring program in the U.S., as well as one of the largest, with more than 1,200 active volunteers monitoring more than 500 lakes statewide. On behalf of the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA) Water Quality Committee, I collect dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature profiles every two weeks at Water Quality Test Sites (marked by an orange and white buoy) in the deepest parts of both Upper and Lower Long Pond. After review by LSM these data are entered into the Lakes of Maine Database (www.lakesofmaine.org). That information not only helps monitor lake conditions and provides independent Quality Assurance (QA) for data gathered by Colby College and 7-LA, but gives me insight into where the fish (especially salmon and trout) will be hanging out. Hint: depth at which temperatures are between 55- and 65-degrees F and oxygen levels greater than 4 mg/L. This depth changes throughout the year and the fish will move until they find it. If they can't find it, they will not survive in the lake. Right



Tools of the trade: WQ Meter, Secchi disk, Aquascope, and nice Rainbow Trout caught by fishing at the right depth in the temperature-oxygen profile.

Continued on page 14 ...

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— Calendar —

Through Saturday 8/8 - “Curtains,” a musical comedy who-dunit, 474-7176, Lakewood Theater, Route 201, Skowhegan.

Friday 8/7 - Sunday 8/9 - The Tragedy of Macbeth, Shakespeare in the Park, by Lights Up Productions, free admission, Friday and Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 2 pm, www.lightsupskowhegan.org, Coburn Park, Route 2, Skowhegan.

Friday 8/7 and Saturday 8/8 - 55th Annual Blueberry Festival, “all things blueberry” baked goods, chicken BBQ Friday, pancake breakfast Saturday, live music, huge yard sale, Friday 3-7 pm, Saturday 7 am-1 pm, Winslow Congregational Church, Lithgow Street, Winslow.

Friday 8/7 - Sunday 8/9 - Readfield Heritage Days, food, fun, history, fireworks, downtown Readfield.

Friday 8/7 and Saturday 8/8 - Weekend Concerts, New England Music Camp, 3-5 pm, 8/8 - Musical Theater and Classical Voice Showcase, 1 pm, Bowl in the Pines, Route 23, Sidney.

Friday 8/7 - Guided Paddle from Wings Mills to Fogg Island, 10 am-12 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, meet at Wings Mills Dam off Wings Mills Road, Mount Vernon.

Friday 8/7 - Sandy River Ramblers, Bluegrass with a distinctly Maine flavor, 2 pm and 7 pm, free, air-conditioned, 946-5311, Sawyer Memorial, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

Friday 8/7 - Kingfield ArtWalk, local art, live music, poetry, refreshments throughout downtown, 5-7:30 pm, Main and School Streets, Kingfield.

Friday 8/7 - Purgatory Jack, country with a side of rock, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Concert, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Friday 8/7 - Zepparella, Waterville Rocks, door opens 6, music 7, free, Head of Falls, Waterville.

Saturday 8/8 - Winnie the Pooh, Lakewood Young Performers, public performance, 10 am, 474-7176, Lakewood Theater, Route 201, Madison.

Saturday 8/8 - Oakland Area Alumni Association, annual luncheon and awards, 10:30 am-2 pm, 314-4981, Messalonskee High School, Oakland.

Saturday 8/8 - Kennebec River Brewfest, hosted by Augusta Downtown Alliance, 30+ breweries, food, music, 2-6 pm, downtown Augusta.

Saturday 8/8 - Friends of Messalonskee Annual Meeting, 3-6 pm, Sunrise Bagel, 50 Main Street, Oakland.

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

Saturday 8/8 - The Union Coffeehouse, Carole Wise singer/songwriter, 7 pm, Open Mic, baked goods, donation \$10 per person, Union Church, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Sunday 8/9 - Belgrade Lakes Farmers’ Market, 8 am-1 pm, 7 Lake Alliance parking lot, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Sunday 8/9 - The DE-experience-wide-variety of music from blues and country to classic rock and pop and funk, Concerts at Norcross Point, free, 2-4 pm, downtown Winthrop.

Sunday 8/9 - Scott Cole, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

Monday 8/10 - Explore Messalonskee Lake by Kayak, learn how to kayak and identify invasive and native plants on Messalonskee Lake, Friends of Messalonskee Lake, \$7, pre-register and read full Course Description at midmaine.maineadulted.org, 10 am-noon, everything provided, meet at State of Maine Boat Launch, Route 27, Belgrade.

Monday 8/10 - Guided Hike on the Fogg Island Trail, 10 am-12 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, meet at Fogg Island Trailhead, off Spring Hill Road, Mount Vernon.

Monday 8/10 - Western Maine Foothills Band, Concert in the Park, 7-8:30 pm, Meetinghouse Park, downtown Farmington.

Tuesday 8/11 - Between the Lines, Osoola Park Music Series, 5-7 pm, Osoola Park, Route 2, Ferry Road, Norridgewock.

Tuesday 8/11 - Moosehedz, Rock on the River series, 7-8:30 pm, Grandstand, Water Street, Hallowell.

Tuesday 8/11 - Carolyn Enger, acclaimed concert pianist, 7 pm, donations gratefully accepted, Union Church, Route 27, downtown Belgrade Lakes.

Wednesday 8/12 - Lake Science Education Boat Tour, 10 am-12 pm, please RSVP at 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main

Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Wednesday 8/12 - Invasive Aquatic Plant ID Workshop, 1-2 pm, 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Wednesday 8/12 - Vaughan Woods and Historic Homestead, House & Garden Tour, 10 am, reservations recommended vaughanhomestead.org, 622-9831, \$10 per person, 2 Litchfield Road, Hallowell.

Wednesday 8/12 - Preview for Lithgow Book Sale, 5 pm, \$20, sale is 8/13-8/15, Lithgow Public Library, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta.

Wednesday 8/12 - Belgrade Seasonal Residents Meeting, 6:30 pm, Town Office, 990 Augusta Road (Route 27), Belgrade.

Thursday 8/13 - Saturday 8/22 - Skowhegan State Fair, “Summer Fun All In One,” endless food, fun, exhibition, livestock events, live bands, daily shows, harness racing, pulls, demolition derbies, \$1 8/13 and 8/18, senior citizens 8/17, military appreciation 8/19, parking \$5, admission \$10 or \$15, kids 10 and under free, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Route 201, Madison Avenue, Skowhegan.

Thursday 8/13 - Belgrade Historical Society Open House at Old Town Meeting House, displays highlighting Belgrade’s rich history, 9 am-12 pm, Cemetery Road, Belgrade.

Thursday 8/13 - Bake Sale, 9 am, Lithgow Public Library, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta.

Thursday 8/13 - Children’s Day Program, Magician Phil Smith: Abracadabra, 2 pm only, free, air-conditioned, 946-5311, Sawyer Memorial, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

Thursday 8/13 - Waterville Farmers’ Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, downtown Waterville.

Thursday 8/13 - Cruise In, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Thursday 8/13 - Free concert, Waterfront Music Series, 6-8 pm, public park, Lake Messalonskee, Oakland.

Thursday 8/13 - Primo Cubano, Village Green Music Series, 6-8 pm, 495-3481, recreation@townofbelgrade.com, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Thursday 8/13 - Saturday 8/22 - Our Town, 474-7176, Lakewood Theater, Route 201, Madison.





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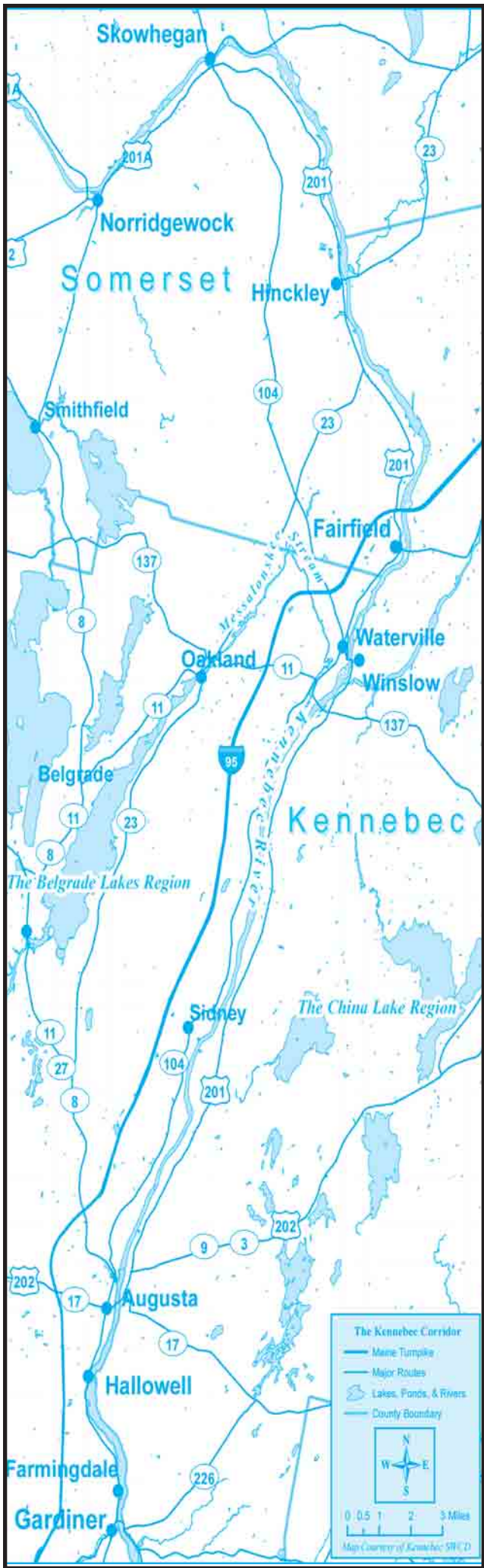
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Waterville Opera House Prepares World Premiere Production of Unabashedly

Every year, the Waterville Opera House (WOH) stages four community theatrical productions, each a labor of love. Dozens of hands, hearts, and minds touch each show, bringing to life beloved musicals like *White Christmas* and *Matilda*, gripping mysteries and thrillers like *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Deathtrap*, and slapstick romps like *Clue* and *The Play That Goes Wrong*.

The next theatrical, however, is something unique and special: a world premiere by Mike Teverbaugh.

Back in 2024, WOH was selected by the American Association of Community Theatre (AACT) as one of six producing theatres nationwide for the 2026 New Play Fest. The Waterville Opera House is the first theatre in Maine to receive this prestigious national honor, and after a rigorous process to select an original work from a pool of submissions, WOH is excited to finally bring *Unabashedly* to the local theatre community and Maine at large.

“Having the opportunity to direct the world premiere of a new play is both exciting and humbling,” said director Debra Susi. “Unlike a classic play with decades of production history, every rehearsal of *Unabashedly* has been an exploration. Our cast, designers, and stage management team have worked together to discover these characters, shape their relationships, and bring this story to life for the very first time. It has been a wonderfully collaborative process.”

Unabashedly is a comic drama set largely in a newsroom. As editors and journalists chase stories and facts, they begin to examine and question the tangled threads of fate in their own personal histories.

Just as the play concerns the unexpected—and sometimes seemingly unlikely—connections we all make in life, the production itself represents a major opportunity for community and togetherness. Community theatre, Teverbaugh says, goes beyond a simple “labor of love”—it’s a “labor of connection.”

“Community theatre is all about working together towards one goal, to achieve a level of perfection and bring people together for one intimate experience,” Teverbaugh said. “It’s very vulnerable in that way. The more of that there is, the better off we will all be. It takes a lot of thought and consideration, not just of the idea you’re trying to express, but

also of the people you’re expressing it to. As a writer, it’s very fulfilling when you’re able to communicate your thoughts and feelings well enough that actors can express them in a way you recognize. To do this in a theatre full of strangers is great. It’s a labor of connection.”

WOH veteran Jacob Sutherland leads the ensemble, which includes both familiar faces and newcomers to the stage. Each cast member has the unique opportunity to originate their respective role, forever receiving that credit for all future productions of *Unabashedly*.

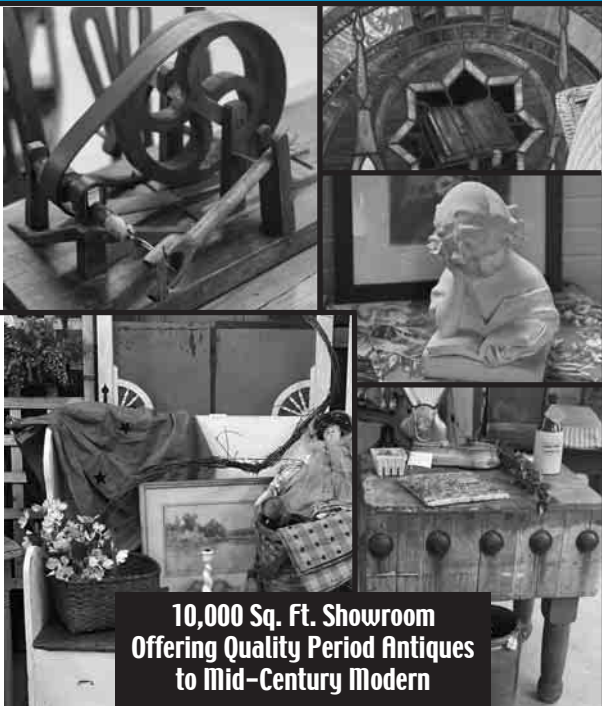
“Every time I get the opportunity to bring a character to life on stage, there’s a responsibility to honor what’s on the page and bring out the best in the text through my performance,” Sutherland said. “With an opportunity like *Unabashedly* where I’m originating the character, I feel like I get to share that responsibility not only with my cast mates and director, but also the writer, since he’s involved in this collaboration. I’m given the chance not only to interpret what’s on the page, but to actually ask questions and build and explore with input from the playwright himself.”

Joining Sutherland on stage in the full cast:

Dave—Jacob Sutherland

Continued on page 10...

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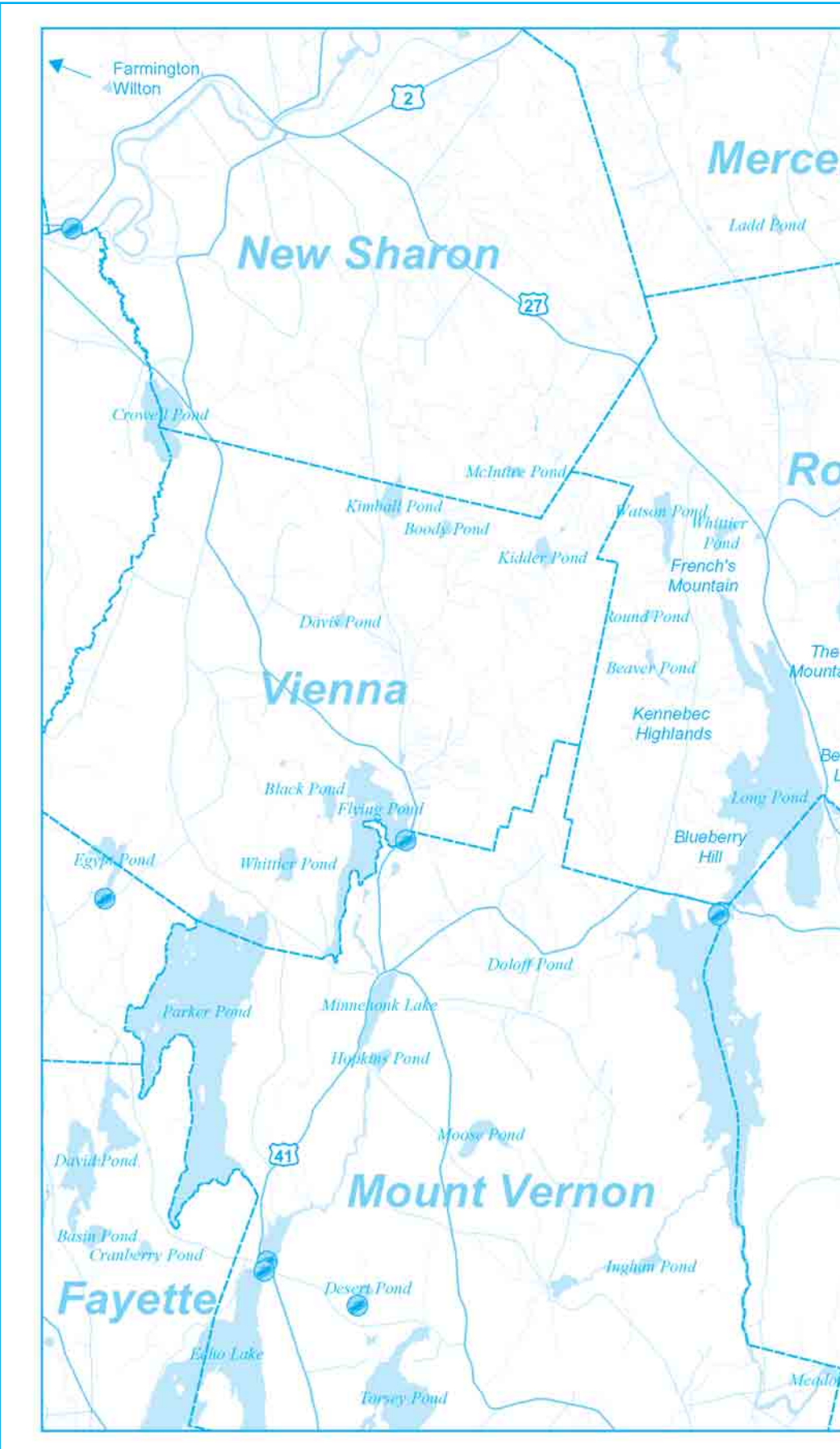


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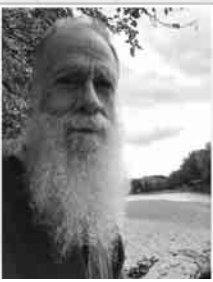
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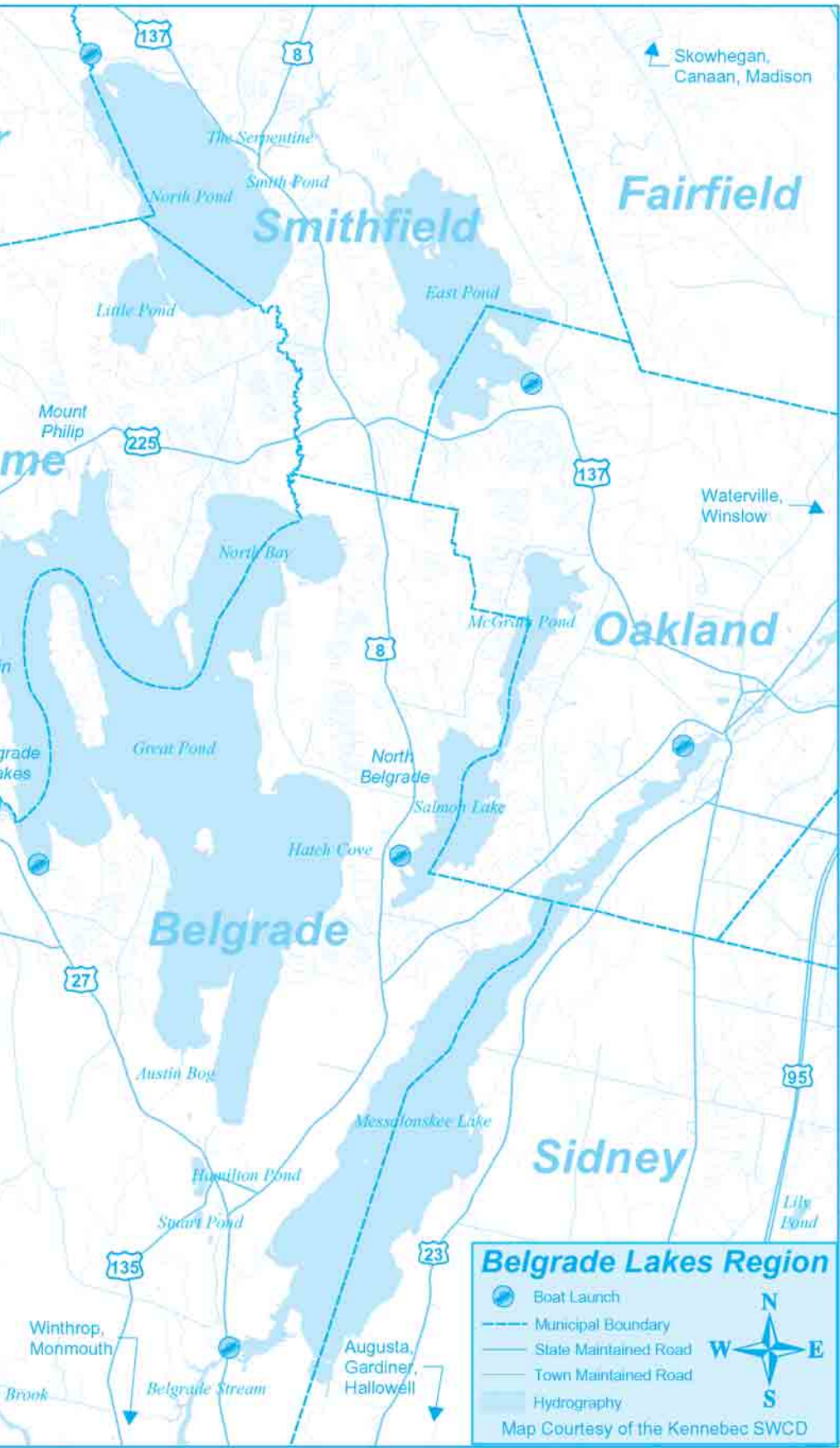
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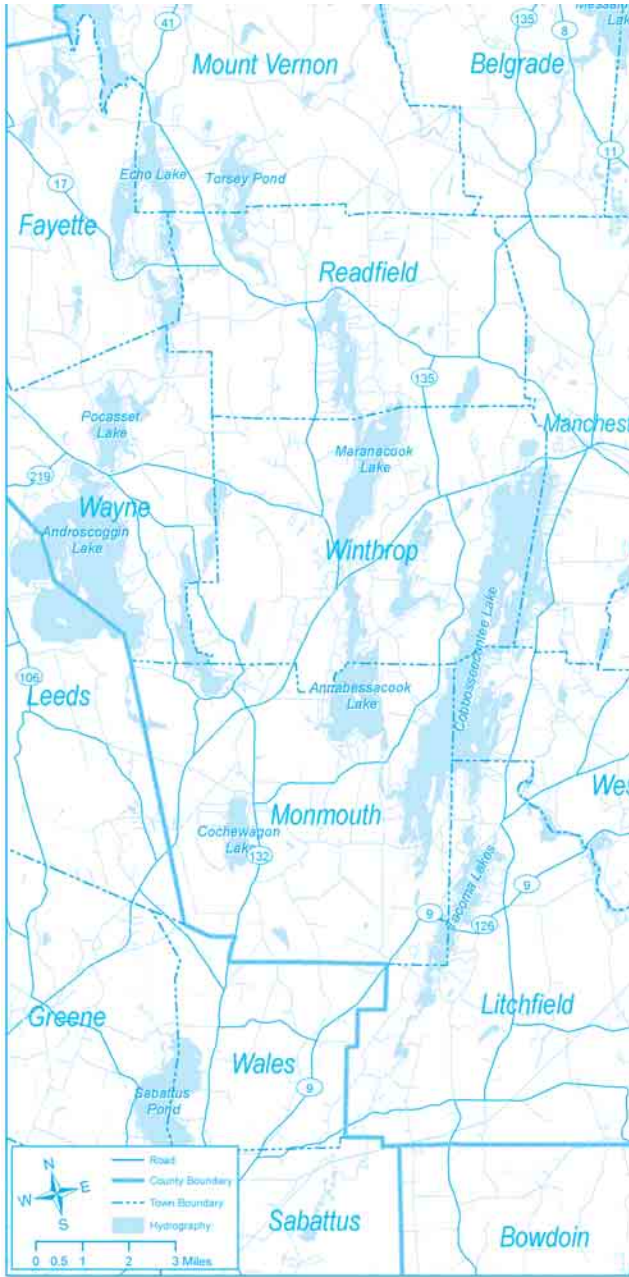
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Winthrop Area Watershed



A Secret Worth Sharing III

By Shannon Sprague



Taking another opportunity to bring something beautiful out into the light. The relationship the Union Church of Belgrade Lakes has with the Belgrade Central School by caring for one child at a time. There is a joint effort to be sure that elementary-aged children have the winter clothing that they need to stay warm, have fun and are ready to enjoy the region's chilly, snowy season!

This union and joint effort simply starts with a question asking "how can we help?"

The school gives the church a list with non-personal identifying information such as clothing size and favorite colors so the privacy of each child is protected. From here members of the Union Church get busy purchasing, organizing and putting the love of God into action!

Whenever possible, they shop locally, while purchasing new outdoor gear such as; coats, snow pants, boots, mittens, gloves and hats for upwards of 22 children. Once purchased, they carefully organize outfits for each child packing them in individual bags to be delivered.

This relationship between these two caring community organizations is a great reminder and example to all of us of what can happen when we all care for each other. All seeing each other as one and the same in each other's eyes! A need is recognized and another quietly responds with kindness, love and compassion.

Although providing the material objects to keep kids warm is obviously important, this initiative is about so much more. It's an invaluable mutual act of service extended out in the shape of cooperation of both organizations. These children will have the confidence and safety knowing that they can play outdoors with their friends and not worry about being cold. The community bonds that are formed are endless when opportunities such as these are accomplished! Benefits of all, rippling out to everyone involved!

There are acts that are performed, served humbly and quietly organized that should be brought out into the community to share good news and this is one of them!

If you would like to donate to this cause or get involved with the Union Church of Belgrade to serve community initiatives such as this please visit <http://www.unionchurchmaine.org/> or call (207) 495-3599.



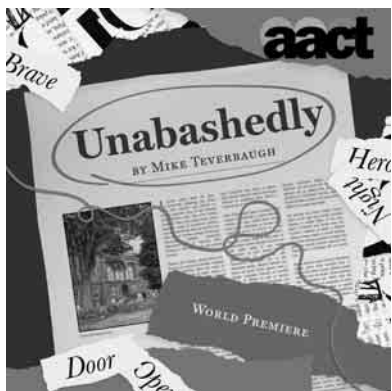
...Continued from page 7

Robert—Joshua Veilleux
Helen—Katherine Myers
Amy—Caroline Chung
Catherine—Lucy Poland
Young Person—Rebecca Bendheim
Mother/Ensemble—Mollie Sharples
Father/Ensemble—Josh Fierley

Unabashedly opens Friday, August 28, 2026 at 7:30pm. Ticketholders can enjoy an opening reception with the playwright before the show starts at 6:30pm. Evening performances at 7:30pm follow on August 29, September 4, and September 5, as well as 2pm matinees on August 30 and September 6.

Reserve tickets at watervillecreates.org/unabashedly.

This production is sponsored by Marie Cormier, the Colby College Museum of Art, the Jack K Ayre and Frank Ayre Lee Theatre Foundation, One River CPAs, and the Maine Community Foundation.



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Notebook

Augusta: Guided Labyrinth Walk

• A labyrinth is a path to a central point, an ancient meditation to help calm and clarify thoughts. It is usually walked in silence, offering centering and integration. Walks are held weekly at the Alfond Center for Health in Augusta and are free. Pre-registration is encouraged although drop-ins are welcome. Walks are held only in good weather. For days, times, leadership and more information call 872-4102.

Skowhegan: State Fair is "The Place To Be"

• A favorite summer tradition, The Skowhegan State Fair, August 13-22, offers a huge calendar of activities for 10 full days. Highlights include a midway, nightly live entertainment, harness racing, drag racing, truck pulls, horse pulls and exhibits and competitions for youth. There are several large exhibition halls, a covered arena and opportunities to visit livestock barns and displays. Special days include Senior Citizen Days (62 and older \$5 gate admission) on August 17 and 20. The Skowhegan Fairgrounds are on Madison Avenue. Parking is \$5 per car per day; rides open at 1 pm.

Sidney: Church Celebrates 220 Years

• On Saturday, August 8, at 6 pm, the Second Baptist Church of Sidney, 3022 West River Road, is celebrating its 220 year anniversary with music, speakers, photos, refreshments and more. There

will be a raffle for a painting of the church. For more information cal 547-3376.

Manchester: 20th Year of Designing Women Show

• Seventeen exhibiting artists will be showcased on Longfellow's Greenhouses grounds on Saturday, August 29 for the 20th year of the Designing Women show, 9:30 am-4 pm. In addition to the range of artistic skills represented, there will be live music by Twisted Strings and representatives of the Maine Crime Writers. A \$2 donation is suggested to benefit the Winthrop Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center serving Kennebec and Somerset counties. In the event of rain, the exhibit will be held inside a greenhouse. 713-4248

Mercer: Little Free Gallery

• Little Free Gallery in the Woods, 832 Rome Road in Mercer is open to the public free but any donations benefit the Somerset Humane Society. Owned by artist Cindy Bolduc, the cabinet by the road at the end of her driveway displays her work - paintings, jewelry and other creative crafts - and invites visitors to take what they want and leave a donation if they want.

Gardiner: Awesome Artwalk August 14

• In 2005, Artwalk Gardiner was launched by Artdogs Studios and a handful of artists in Gardiner. Now in its 21st year, the group schedules 3 Artwalks annually, matching artists with downtown businesses where they will set up their displays. The next Artwalk Gardiner is Friday, August 14, 5-8 pm on Water Street in historic downtown Gardiner.

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Kevin Couture Photography, HS Seniors, Weddings, Families, Aerial drone images, 474-0754, 858-5382, www.kevincouturephotography.com

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Dockside Physical Therapy, 212 Depot Road, Belgrade , 660-2546,

PIANO LESSONS

Dianne Gorman, 191B Bartlett Road, Belgrade, 495-3222, Gorman3366@roadrunner.com

REALTORS

Coldwell Banker Plourde Real Estate, 143 Silver Street, Waterville, 660-4001, 872-7650, cbplourde.com

Ellen Wells, Coldwell Banker Plourde Real Estate, 649-147, cbplourde.com

John Blouin, Laer Realty Maine, 103 Water Street, Suite 202, Hallowell, 446-7708,

<https://www.laerrealty.com/agents/118618-john-blouin>

Liz Fontaine, Lakehome Group Real Estate, 75 Main Street. Belgrade Lakes, 495-2500, lakehomegroup.com

Dan McCarron, Portside/Lakepoint Real Estate, 221 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, 495-3700, 888-495-3711, www.belgradelakepoint.com

Trisha Cheney, Portside/Lakepoint Real Estate, 716-6494, trisha@belgradelakepoint.com

Stephanie Yeaton, Portside/Lakepoint Real Estate, 495-4046, 592-5577, stephanie@belgradelakepoint.com

RECREATIONAL VEHICLE AND TRAILER STORAGE

Belgrade Lakes Marine & Storage, 366 Augusta Road (Rte. 27), Belgrade, 495-2378, www.belgradelakesmarine.com

ROAD REPAIRS

NB Earthworks & Forestry, gravel roads and driveways, DEP certified, Sidney, 458-3193, nbeearthwork@gmail.com

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Acme Land Surveying, 108 Fairbanks Road, Suite 5, Farmington, 778-4081, 800-778-408, www.acmelandsurveying.com

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Call of the Loon
Too Many Adults??



The week of July 18th has been another busy week for Loons! It all started on the 18th with our 2026 Maine Audubon Loon Count. As this years' Loon Count is still being tabulated, we assume we're on par with past years. Looking at the below Counts, the numbers can be a bit misleading. Great Pond actually started out last year with 8 chicks, but as you can see below, by the day of the physical Count, we had lost every one of the chicks due to a myriad of causes, loon territorial disputes, siblicide, bald eagles, snapping turtles, etc. Long Pond had also started last year with 8 chicks, but by the Count on July 19th we were down to just 2 chicks and by the Great Fall Flyoff, we had lost another one. So, for 2025, out of a total of 16 chicks, both Great and Long Ponds produced just one chick that made it to the Fly Off!

2020 - 2025 Great and Long Pond Audubon Loon Counts

Year	Great Pond Adults	Great Pond Chicks	Long Pond Adults	Long Pond Chicks
2025	70	0	28	2
2024	52	2	27	1
2023	48	1	28	5
2022	76	3	32	0
2021	73	5	42	3
2020	53	0	31	0

As I pen this week's column, we still have 8 chicks on Great Pond (like last year!) but we are down to just one chick on all of Long Pond. We also have six abandoned eggs so far that obviously should have been chicks. In trying to make some sense out of these numbers, we must keep in mind that the 40 year old Maine Audubon Loon Count tallies only adult and chick observations during a 30 minute period in time from 7:00 – 7:30 am on a Saturday morning. The morning in question could have been rainy, windy, waves, fog, etc. Under any of these conditions, our dedicated volunteer observers would be certainly handicapped.



The Great Pond's Class of 2026!

basis for the past eight years by our two full-time Colby College Loon Interns in addition to numerous dedicated volunteers. One question that we are now pondering is “do we have too many adult loons for the twelve or fourteen loon territories in each of our two lakes?” We know that we have the water quality, clarity and fisheries population that make the Belgrade Lakes attractive to not only our residents and visitors, but our eagles, osprey and loons as well! We are observing numerous territorial disputes resulting in the loss of both adults and chicks. Are we seeing more today than in years' past? We can't say but it's worth further study.



A 'typical' altercation between a breeding/nesting pair and an intruder!

If you have a particular questions regarding our Belgrade loon population, please email your inquiry to: info@blamaine.org and we will try to answer your question either in this column or via email. We still have a lot of Summer left, so we hope you'll continue enjoying the “Call of the Loon”! We are so fortunate to summer here in the Belgrades!

Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project





... Continued from page 5

now, there is good cold-water fish habitat throughout the water column in the lower basin once you get below the warm (70° F +), 6 M (~20 Ft). The upper basin is beginning to lose oxygen near the bottom and the cold water fish are below 20 ft and above about 40- ft.

Recently, I was out taking profiles the day after a storm, and as I moved between test sites, I spotted a school of alewives at the right depth for trout. I happened to have my flyrod rigged with a sinking tip line and a fly that resembled an alewife (White Zonker). I cast out and let the fly sink to the appropriate depth and brought it in twitching it slowly. I was quickly rewarded with nice 45-cm (about 18") Rainbow Trout. A highlight this week was the appearance of at least three loon chicks on Long Pond. The new generation is beginning to appear at all of our lakes and it is a special time to watch the parents nourish their young and teach them to survive on their own. Bring a pair of binoculars so you don't get too close. I will be talking more about loons in a couple of weeks after the annual loon count on July 18th.

Check the 7LA Website (<https://7lakesalliance.org/events>) and FaceBook site for upcoming events. Events scheduled starting August 7 include a Guided Paddle, a Guided Hike and a Lake Science Education tour. We continue to offer Invasive Plant 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.



UNION CHURCH PIANO CONCERT



**Featuring Acclaimed Concert Pianist
Carolyn Enger**

Tuesday, August 11 - 7:00 PM

**Union Church - Route 27 in Downtown Belgrade Lakes
Donations gratefully accepted**

UNION COFFEEHOUSE



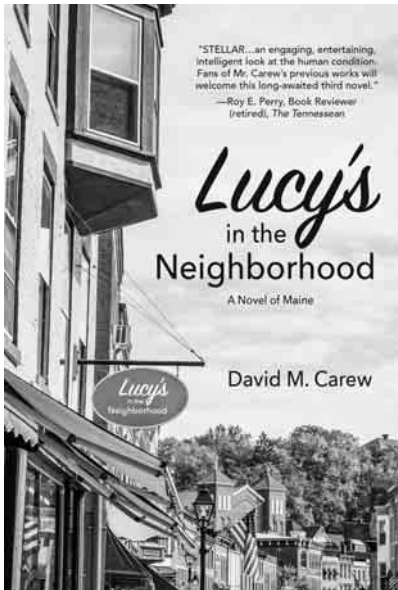
**Featuring Singer/Songwriter
Carole Wise**

Followed by Open Mic Hour

Saturday, August 8 - 7:00 PM

**Union Church - Route 27 in Downtown Belgrade Lakes
Refreshments \$10.00 Donation at the Door**

Author Chats & Live Music Coming to Belgrade Lakes



Attention all who love author presentations and wonderful live music! On Tuesday, August 11 at 5 p.m., the Lakehome Group (75 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes) will host a very special literary-and-live-music fest featuring the return to the village of beloved Oliver & Friends Bookshop owner Renee Cunningham, lively book talks by three local Maine authors, and vibrant pop / blues live music from Dave Deas & Friends.

Featured in the author presentations will be children's book author Jeanine Deas and illustrator Andrew Bourassa, reading from their acclaimed new children's book "ABC Ducks of Deering Oaks Park," which has been

hailed as "a sweet, engaging book full of energetic duck antics" by children's author Margy Burns Knight.

Next up will be Dave Carew, speaking and reading from his latest novel, the set-in-Waterville mystery/love story "Lucy's in the Neighborhood," which was hailed as "STELLAR ... engaging and entertaining" by long-time "Tennessean" book reviewer Roy E. Perry.

Rounding out the three author presentations will be Bob Steinberg, discussing his "Fill in the Blanks Books," a fun, useful cartoon series designed to help parents, teachers, and mental health professionals spark conversations with young people about their personal history, feelings, and values in areas such as self-esteem, fears, anxieties, friendship, and family relationships.

FREE baked goods, cheese & crackers, and non-alcoholic beverages will be offered to attendees by the host, Lakehome Group. We hope to see you there!

For more information, please contact Bob Steinberg at (207) 458-5817 or Bob@Lakehomegroup.com



MLS# 1673219 7 Camp Relief Lane, Rome \$4.5M

Exceptional south-facing lakefront compound on a private promontory with 700' + of pristine north-shore frontage on Great Pond. This breathtaking property on 2.66 acres perfectly blends timeless elegance with serene waterfront living, offering sweeping lake views throughout with over 5,000 total sq. ft. of living space. This property is truly a rare opportunity in the Belgrade Lakes. The main cottage has a grandfathered footprint right on the lake, and features a dramatic living room with cathedral ceilings and a cozy fireplace, leading to a stunning lakeside screened porch. Cleverly tucked behind the fireplace, a staircase rises to a bright loft office/study overlooking the water. Entertain in the inviting dining room (complete with its own fireplace) and cook in a kitchen equipped with modern high-end conveniences plus a charming, functional antique wood stove. The main house includes a primary ensuite and a second large bedroom suite with a loft, full bath, and custom closets, both of which face the lake. A spacious mudroom offers extensive built-in gear storage. Two separate guest cottages (one 3BR/1BA, one 2BR/1BA) provide premium comfort for visitors, bringing the total count to 7 bedrooms, 4 full baths, 2 half baths, and 2 refreshing outdoor showers. Additional amenities include a carriage house media/game room with a half bath and oversized 2-car garage, two private docks (front and cove, protected by a jetty), and three waterfront outbuildings: one for boat storage, a large dedicated workshop, and a custom golf simulator room. Outdoor living shines with stone walkways, a lakeside fire pit, and expansive flat grassy areas. Relax to the sound of loons or explore the nearby award-winning golf club and Kennebec Hiking Trails, with the Mount Phillip trail head a short walk down the private road.



For more information call or visit
Lakehomegroup.com
info@lakehomegroup.com

75 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918



— Real Estate Update —

Why Summer is the Golden Window to Sell Your Belgrade Lakes Home

Every year as summer arrives, central Maine undergoes a transformation. The clear waters of our seven lakes begin to glisten under warm skies. Main Street in the Belgrade Lakes Village hums with activity, the farmers' markets begin, and boaters set out onto the water. While thousands of visitors arrive seeking vacation memories, smart property owners recognize something else: summer is the ultimate window to sell real estate in the Belgrade Lakes region.

Selling the Maine Summer Lifestyle

Buying a waterfront retreat or a home in central Maine is rarely an impulse decision; it's an emotional purchase driven by lifestyle.

During late spring and summer, buyers don't just see a house, they experience cocktails on the dock, swimming and fishing in the waters, and their own boat on their dock. They walk to Day's Store, Hello Good Pie, and boat their way to Sadie's. They explore the nearby Kennebec Highlands trails, play a round of golf at the Belgrade Lakes Golf Club, or watch the sunset over the lake. In winter or mud season, a buyer must imagine what life on the lake feels like. In summer, the property sells the dream for you.

Vacationers Become Motivated Buyers

Summer brings a major influx of visitors from across New England,

New York, and beyond. Many of these tourists fall into high-intent buyer categories. Repeat vacationers who have rented for years decide they are ready to take the plunge. Second-home seekers search for their summer getaway or a future retirement spot. Meanwhile, central Maine residents look to upgrade to lakefront property or expanded acreage while the market is active.

When tourists fall in love with the area while on vacation, their emotional attachment peaks. Listing your home while these prospective buyers are physically present in town creates immediacy that online browsing during the offseason simply cannot replicate.

Pro Tip for Sellers: Stage your outdoor spaces just as deliberately as your interior. Clean off the dock, set up outdoor patio seating, sweep the deck, and highlight lake views from every main window. Buyers are paying for the outdoor experience as much as the indoor square footage. If you have been thinking about selling your Belgrade Lakes home, lakefront cabin, or acreage, summer provides maximum buyer traffic and optimal visual presentation to get top dollar for your property. Contact a LOCAL real estate professional today!

Dan McCarron



The Dams Keeper Report

How do you spell DROUGHT? According to Merriam-Webster, a drought is "a long period of time during which there is very little or no rain". Sound familiar?

The Belgrade Lakes region is in a DROUGHT! Regular column readers will recall that NOAA had forecasted another 26% less precipitation drought for the Summer of 2026. So, as a result, we have once again tried to keep all of our ponds at 3" above full pond for a little breathing room. If you recall, at 3" above full, the water level shouldn't float off any one's dock and more importantly, not flood out any of our native hummock style loon nests.

Unfortunately, the lack of rain has the water level at Great Pond's Village dam down to 1.44" below full pond with the main gate still closed. Long Pond's Wings Mill dam is today on the 29th of July, 5.28 below full pond with both gates also still closed as they have been for the past 6-7 weeks. But, our neighbors on upper Long Pond, a full 9 miles north of the Wings Mill dam, are a full 7" below full pond, or 10" below where we started the summer on Memorial Day! So, another friendly reminder! For those of you with boat lifts, confirm TODAY that you can still get your boat off the lift! It might also be a good time to remove the boatlift canopy from your boat while it is still there for easy access.

Salmon/McGrath is, because of the mandated 1 cfs. 24/7 flow, is now 3" below full pond. Messalonskee, aka. Snow Pond, has as of this writing, dropped slightly down to 5.76" below full.

Precipitation for the past 10 days was barely measurable at 0.42"! And the forecast for the next 10 days is basically the same at 0.48". Remember, we are losing 3/10" to 1/2" a day to evaporation, so you can do the math. Over the next 10 days, we will be losing another 3" minimum! So be particularly careful out there on the lake and stay trimmed up anywhere near the shore. Remember, you read it here first! This just might be the time to invest in marine propellers!

If you have a particular question 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.

Enjoy the Family, what's left of your Vacation and this incredibly beautiful weather and please stay safe!

Dick Greenan Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



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July 30-August 8: Bangor
August 4-9: Union
August 6-9: Northern Maine (Presque Isle)
August 11-16: Topsham
August 13-22: Skowhegan
August 27-30: Acton
August 27-30: Piscataquis Valley (Dover-Foxcroft)
August 29-30: Washington (Pembroke)
August 29-September 7: Windsor
September 3-7: Blue Hill
September 4-7: Harmony
September 10-12: Litchfield
September 10-13: Clinton Lions
September 16-19: Oxford
September 18-20: New Portland Lions
September 20-26: Farmington
September 25-27: Common Ground (Unity)
September 27-October 3: Cumberland County
October 4-11: Fryeburg

Visit www.RealMaine.com for information about individual fairs.