

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 11

May Summer Never End

by Esther J. Perne



A picture of our Grandson Liam, his brother Jameson in the background...having a blast on Great Pond.

Photo by Jean Wilcox

May there always be one more big fish to catch, to release, to dream about. May there always be clear lakes to jump into, to canoe in, to linger beside.

May there always be soft breezes to cool, to refresh, to calm. May there always be lofty pines to protect, to shade, to be sentinels over these beautiful lands. And, may there always be memories from summer.

As the summer of 2026 winds down into a burst of brilliant foliage, invigorating air and departures of summer residents, once again it's time to recognize that although the season may change and,



My son, Mike Slattery, who was visiting from Maryland, caught this Brown Trout in Great Pond on July 3, 2026. He was using a Mooslook Warbler in deep water and estimated it's weight between 8 and 9 pounds.

It was a bit over 25 " long. Photo by Ed Slattery

this year in particular, the world away may seem charged with uncertainty, summers spent here do not go away.

We return to summer in the Belgrades and the magic is that we can return and there will still be something special that never left.

As the Belgrades most iconic visitor and spokesperson E.B. White wrote at 84 years of age, upon retuning once more to the shores of Great

Pond where he first visited in 1904,

"There is a certain security here that heals my spirit," adding " and I can still buy Moxie in a tiny supermarket six miles away."

White, to be sure, also had his 15-foot Old Town canoe on the top of his car and went fishing for bass after dinner.

There's always one more big fish to dream about! May summer never end...



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Summer’s Annual Lake Meetings: What Are They All About?

For decades lake-lovers on each of the Belgrade Lakes have gathered each summer, sometimes a handful, sometimes a hallful to learn the latest news, reviews and future projects and prospects of each unique lake and, increasingly in recent times, the condition of the shared waters of the chain.

In 2026, the oldest (1908) of the five lake associations, the Belgrade Lakes Association (BLA), which includes Great Pond and Long Pond, reached an attendance record of 170 at The Belgrade Center for All Seasons.



Dick Greenan reports on the Loon Project.



7 Lakes Alliance Sharon Mann gives an invasives aquatic update.



Dr. Danielle Wain, 7 Lakes Alliance presents an overview of water quality.



Left: A record 170 attendees!
All Photos by Dick Greenan



Unabashedly



The cast meets the playwright for the

The world premiere production of Mike Teverbaugh’s comedy/romantic play Unabashedly, part of the American Association of Community Theatre’s NewPlayFest 2026, will be performed 8/28-9/6 at the Waterville Opera House.



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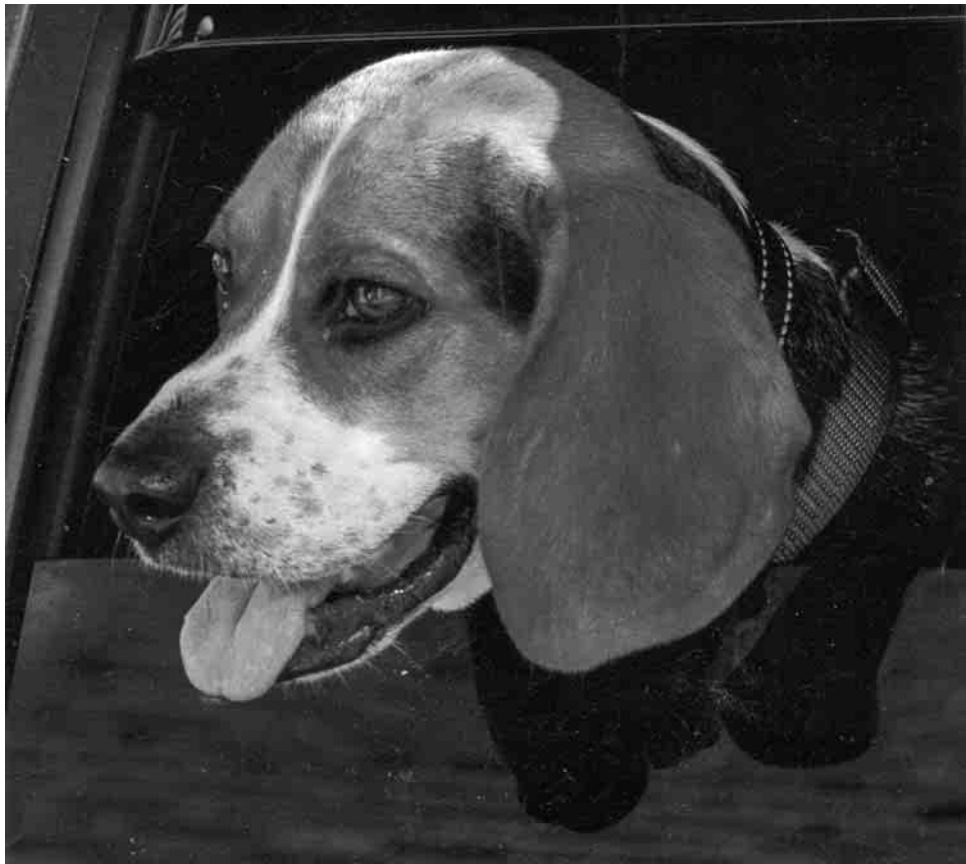
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End of Season Letter

Dear Summertimers -



Don’t forget a pet - your pet, someone else’s pet, pets with loving homes that are struggling to buy food for them, pets in rescue facilities waiting and longing for a forever home. Remember, all our rescue and humane facilities have Wish Lists, all of them need volunteers, all of them have pets that offer love, companionship, therapy.

Photo by Ethan Perne

Now comes the best part of the busy, vibrant summer season - the winding down when there is at last time to award the many thanks that are due.

First of all, thank you to all of you who are reading this newspaper and to the many other people who seek out, read and appreciate Summertime in the Belgrades.

Thank you to our advertisers for making Summertime in the Belgrades a reality, to our columnists who are the core of our editorial content, to our contributors who submit a mix of interesting features and to all the people throughout central Maine who send us their events, activities and comments.

We are all privileged to be in a region where the outdoors, the history, the feeling of community and an awareness of responsible conservation connect us. A special thanks to the associations, organizations, towns and individuals that are stewards of these lifestyle qualities.

The summer of 2026 was a reminder of the wealth of area activities and of the celebrations of the season. It also was a reminder that summer itself is a celebration.

May you have a great autumn, winter and spring...then summer again.

Summertime in the Belgrades
Esther, Michael, Gregor, Cordell, Ethan



Summertime in the Belgrades

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The Work of Protecting the Belgrade Lakes Watershed Never Stops

By Jean Hazelwood, 7 Lakes Alliance Communication Manager

As summer winds down, the work of protecting the Belgrade Lakes watershed continues. 7 Lakes Alliance focuses year-round on three major challenges facing our watershed: invasive aquatic species, harmful algal blooms, and loss and fragmentation of natural lands. Together, these threats can affect water quality, the overall health of our ecosystem, wildlife, and the experiences that make the Belgrade Lakes region so special.

Your support enables 7 Lakes Alliance to protect the Belgrade Lakes watershed today and for generations to come through a broad range of conservation efforts, including:

- **Combatting Invasive Aquatics:** More than 10,500 courtesy boat inspections have been conducted so far in 2026. Many of these boats travel between lakes with known invasive plant infestations, creating opportunities for invasive species to spread. For example, it takes just a one-inch fragment of variable-leaf milfoil with a whorl of leaves to start a new infestation. Our dive team continues invasive plant remediation on Great Pond, North Pond, and the Serpentine between North and East ponds into late fall. Variable-leaf milfoil treatment is underway on Messalonskee Lake.

- **Monitoring Water Quality:** Monitoring continues year-round on all seven lakes. While the results of this work are not always immediate, consistent monitoring provides the data needed to understand changing lake conditions and guide long-term protection efforts, such as the alum treatment planned for North Pond in 2027.

- **Watershed Protection Planning:** We have comprehensive watershed management and protection plans in place for all seven lakes and are now developing a new 10-year Watershed-Based Protection Plan for the Salmon Lake-McGrath Pond watershed.

- **Land Conservation and Stewardship:** The Bomazeen Conservation Fund represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to conserve a 280-acre property with significant natural and ecological value. It also reminds us that protecting the Belgrade Lakes depends on the commitment and support of our entire community.



7 Lakes Alliance surface crew member supports a diver removing invasive aquatic plants as part of ongoing watershed protection efforts.

We Cannot Do It Alone

7 Lakes Alliance is a nationally accredited land trust with a year-round staff of 15 conservationists, scientists, and educators and nearly 80 seasonal employees who work together to protect the lands and waters that we all care so deeply about today and for generations to come.



Belgrade History Beyond Belgrade - Early Education in Belgrade Schools

Submitted by BHS member Rod Johnson



Of the many changes during the last seventy years or so, let's talk about early education in our small town of Belgrade, Maine. I'm using early education, as I'm one who went through it and can remember some high points. The lower grade schools were located in each of our three small villages. Just for fun, let's step back to 1952 and head off to "junior primary" in the Belgrade Lakes grade school. I suspect this was not so different in any of our other villages or neighboring towns.

We walk over to School Street from wherever we lived in our small village. There were no buses needed. Along the way, we join up with others, and mosey along our merry way with goofing, laughter, and whatever else kids can think of. The faded green cedar shingled building with the belfry awaits us on School Street as it has for several generations.

Keep in mind here that grades Sub Primary through 5th grade in the two (2) room schoolhouse. Any given class may have from one up to six or eight children. My class seems to have more than others, and I later

learn that we are a group known as "war babies," a result of men and women returning from World War II.

As our small group joins others in the yard, perhaps playing marbles or riding the teeter-totter, the bell soon clangs, and we move inside to our respective room and desks. Whoever has bell ringing duty is manning the long hemp hawser with knots that dangles from the front hall ceiling. We have been forewarned that goofing or riding the rope up and down as the bell rings is not allowed. Of course, we are doing it anyway when Miss Stevens is busy elsewhere. The bell will ring again at recesses and lunch hour, as well as the end of the school day.

The bell has a long history and was previously located at the first Belgrade Lakes schoolhouse on Main Street. For reasons unknown, a new 2-room school was built, and the Main Street location sold to the American Legion. Since then, several businesses have operated there, currently "The Cork and Cow." The bell is retired now and is on display at the Belgrade Town Office. The engraving shows 1887 and the name C.M. Pray, that was perhaps the donor or the school superintendent.

The desks are a mix of various older types. Some have a chair and writing area all in one metal frame. The newer type is a separate desk and chair. They all have writing or carving on them, mostly initials from past students. We are told not to do that, but of course we do it a little, or pencil in the grooves of the existing letters. Our teacher warns us of "getting the paddle" if we misbehave. The paddle is an oak slat kept at the end of the teacher's desk. Several of the boys goof off enough to get a paddle on their butts. The newer desks have flip-up tops with book storage underneath. They are deemed the best by the boys, as we can hide behind them while signaling to others or cheating. Somehow, we get through the years there until it's time to go to the "big" school in Belgrade Depot and enter the higher grades. A new chapter begins there, but that is another story.

I hope you have enjoyed this little flashback memory of a simpler time and place.





— 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 but if you are reading this,



Bass in the surface layer feeding on alewives below.

I have been seeing turkeys everywhere and lots of deer sign, 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 in Great Pond and Long Pond) 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 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. There are still some rainbow trout and brown trout down deep (right around 28-ft in the upper basin and below 35-ft in the lower basin). Great Pond is similar to LP upper basin.



Nice smallie 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



McKenna with MCC Volunteers (blue shirts) 7-Lakes YCC (green t-shirts)
Ha ha, can you pick out the colors in these grays???

See You Next Year

By Peter Kallin

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.



Enjoy the rest of the summer. See you next year. In the meantime, *Carpe skiem!*

As we discussed last week, the 7-Lakes Stewardship team continues to improve the safety of our trails. McKenna Thompson, an AmeriCorps volunteer working with the Maine Conservation Corps (MCC), has been interning with Dan and overseeing various planting projects this summer while her fellow MCC teammates have been camping out and working on trails in the Kennebec Highlands. She organized a volunteer workday on

Continued on page 15 ...

CHINA LAKE



CHINA LAKE - Step back in time and enjoy the charm of this historic 1835 former parsonage, beautifully situated on the shores of China Lake with 115 feet of private water frontage. Surrounded by stunning perennial gardens, this special property blends timeless character with thoughtful updates and a picturesque lakeside setting. Recent improvements include updated vinyl windows, added insulation, and durable Hardie Plank siding, enhancing comfort and efficiency while preserving the home's historic appeal. The spacious renovated kitchen opens to a spectacular great room featuring cathedral ceilings accented by exposed beams reclaimed from the property's original attached shed. Filled with natural light, the great room overlooks the lake and includes a pellet stove and atrium doors leading to a large deck--perfect for entertaining, relaxing, or taking in the beautiful water views. Offering 3 bedrooms and inviting living spaces filled with period charm, the home showcases its rich history while providing comfortable year-round living. A cozy wood stove in the living room adds warmth and ambiance during cooler months. Relax on the lovely wide covered side porch, an ideal spot for morning coffee, evening gatherings, or simply enjoying the peaceful surroundings. Whether you're looking for a year-round residence, a seasonal retreat, or a piece of local history, this unique waterfront property offers historic charm, beautiful gardens, and exceptional frontage on one of Central Maine's most desirable lakes. **\$745,000**



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Calendar

Thursday 8/20 - Lakeside Libations & Celebration, 25 years of protecting the Cobscook watershed, light fare, cocktails, DJ Jason Everett, live and silent auctions, RSVP 395-5239 to register, 5:30-9 pm, Y Camp of Maine, Winthrop Center Road, Winthrop.

Through Saturday 8/22 - Skowhegan State Fair, food, fun, exhibits, livestock events, live bands, daily shows, harness racing, pulls, demolition derbies, parking \$5 per car per day; \$10 or \$15 gate admission, kids 10 and under free, \$25 ride bracelet, Skowhegan Fairgrounds, Route 201, Skowhegan.

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

Through Sunday 8/23 - Madison-Anson Days, "250 years of Freedom, Together We Rise," food, fun, competitions, sales, land parade, boat parade, fishing tournament, children's activities, carnival and much more, towns of Madison and Anson.

Friday 8/21 - Guided Paddle, please call 495-6039 for meeting location and RSVP, 7 Lakes Alliance, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Friday 8/21 - Bailey's Mistake, a Celtic-American, four-piece folk band, free admission, 2 and 7 pm, 946-5311, Sawyer Memorial, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

Friday 8/21 - Shelby Cobb, Johnson Hall Free Waterfront Concert, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park on the Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Friday 8/21 - Augusta Symphony Soiree, chamber music concert, conversation and community, the ASO's only ticketed event of the year to raise funds to support the orchestra's providing free admission to its regular season concerts, \$40 includes admission, catered light bites and soft drinks, cash bar available, 441-3172, 7 pm, Randall Student Center - Fireside Lounge, University of Maine at Augusta.

Saturday 8/22 - Church Supper, 5:30 pm, Smithfield Baptist Church, downtown Smithfield.

Saturday 8/22 - "Adventure Stories," Open-Mic Storytelling, hosted by Michael Cooper, step up to the mic and share your favorite, all ages welcome, donations appreciated, 7 pm, Chesterville Center Union Meeting House, Chesterville Center.

Sunday 8/23 - Belgrade Lakes Farmers' Market, 8 am-1 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance Parking Lot, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Sunday 8/23 - Katie Daggett and Ed Desjardins, Concert at Norcross Point, free, 2-4 pm, Winthrop.

Sunday 8/23 - Pam and Kevin Rhein, a selection of love songs, free concert, 5-6 pm, 392-9430, historic Tiffany Chapel, 544 Tiffany Road, Sidney.

Sunday 8/23 - Skowhegan Community Band, Concert in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

Monday 8/24 - Western Maine Foothills Band, Concert in the Park, 7-8:30 pm, Meetinghouse Park, downtown Farmington.

Tuesday 8/25 - Mushroom Talk, RSVP 495-6039, 5-6 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance, 37 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Tuesday 8/25 - Don Boudreau (Elvis), Oosoola Park Music Series, food trucks, 5-7 pm, Oosoola Park, Ferry Road, Route 2, Norridgewock.

Tuesday 8/25 - Rock on the River Concert, Bandstand, Water Street, Hallowell.

Wednesday 8/26 - Invasive Aquatic Plant Identification Workshop, 1-2 pm, please RSVP at 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Wednesday 8/26 - House and Garden Tour, Vaughan Woods and Historic Homestead, 10 am, \$10, kids 12 and under free, 622-9831, 2 Litchfield Road, Hallowell.

Thursday 8/27 - Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, Downtown Waterville.

Thursday 8/27 through Sunday 8/30 - Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival, 10 bands, Sunday gospel, large spectator tent, field pickin', camping, concessions, www.blisteredfingers.com for ticket prices and schedule, Litchfield Fairgrounds, Litchfield.

Thursday 8/27 - Cruise-In, 5-7 pm, Waterfront Park, Kennebec River, Gardiner.

Thursday 8/27 - Katie Daggett Band, Village Green Music Series, 6-8 pm, 495-3481, recreation@townofbelgrade.com, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

Thursday 8/27 - Saturday 9/5 - "The Second to Last Chance Ladies League," Lakewood Theater, 474-7176, Madison Avenue/Route 201, Madison.

Friday 8/28 - T-Acadie, traditional folk trio, 2 pm and 7 pm, free admission, 946-5311, Araxine Wilkins Sawyer Foundation, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

Friday 8/28 - Angelikah Fahray, Johnson Hall Free Summer Waterfront Concert Series, 6-7:30 pm, Waterfront Park, Gardiner.

Friday 8/28 - The Porch Party Mamas, celebrating 20 years of songs that make you laugh and cry, 7 pm, \$20, children free, 293-4321, Vienna Union Hall, Route 41, Vienna.

Friday 8/28 through Sunday 9/6 - "Unabashedly," world premiere as part of the American Association for Community Theatre's NewPlayFest 2026, \$32-34, ASL interpreted performance August 30, 873-7000, Waterville Opera House, 1 Common Street, Waterville.

Saturday 8/29 - Monday 9/7 - 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.

Saturday 8/29 - Family Fun Day, Mount Vernon Fire Department, dunk tank, bounce house, games, 50/50 raffle, pony rides and more, 9 am-3 pm, 458-9140, downtown Mount Vernon.

Saturday 8/29 - Designing Women Artist Market, over 20 artists, joined by Maine Crime Writers, live music by Twisted Strings, food trucks, \$2 suggested donation to benefit Winthrop Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center, 9:30 am-4 pm, 713-4248, Longfellow's Greenhouses, Puddledock Road, Manchester.

Sunday 8/30 - Kelyana Marie Trinidad, pop singer/songwriter, Concerts at Norcross Point, 2-4 pm, free, Lake Maranacook, Winthrop.

Sunday 8/30 - Christine Poulson, Concerts in the Park, 5-6:15 pm, Coburn Park, Skowhegan.

Tuesday 9/1 - River Town, Oosoola Park Music Series, 5-7 pm, free, food truck, Oosoola Park, Ferry Road, Norridgewock.

Thursday 9/3 - The Magnie Fam-Family, Village Green Concert Series, 6-8 pm, free, downtown Belgrade Lakes.

Saturday 9/5 - Hallowell Artwalk, displays of art by local artists, live music, food trucks, 10 am-4 pm, rain date August 31, Water Street, Downtown Hallowell.

Saturday 9/5 - Monday 9/7 - Oosoola Days, fun and games, food trucks, live music; Saturday fireworks at the airport; 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.

Saturday 9/5 - Skowhegan Craft Brew Festival, a riverfront celebration, brews from 30 Maine crafters, local food vendors, tours of Maine Grains and sections of the Langlais Art Trail, live music, starts 10 am, general admission, pouring 3-7 pm, \$55, designated driver \$15, historic downtown Skowhegan.





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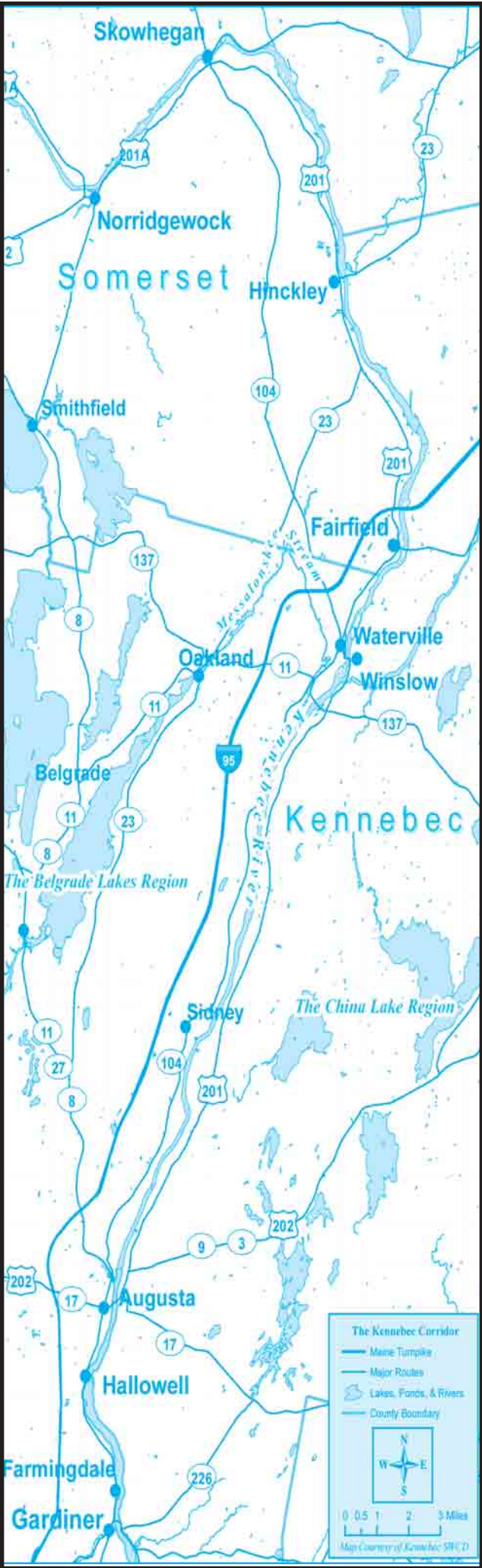
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Memories of MIFF: Waterville is a Star



“We wanted to premiere somewhere that had a good community presence,” describes Kaylin Allshouse, Director of *Still Ohio*, which had its world premiere at the Maine International Film Festival 2026 in Waterville. *Still Ohio* is Kaylin’s first feature movie, MIFF her first film festival.

“We wanted to make it a partnership,” Kaylin describes of the community that was instantly welcoming, “and we wanted to do our part to bring people here.” Kaylin’s part of the partnership, her team, included friends from her home state of Ohio where the movie was filmed, the film’s cast and Kaylin’s fellow directors from California where she lives and writes, her mother from Colorado, her godfather and other family connections and Kaylin’s teacup poodle, Winnie.

In Waterville for two screenings that were scheduled a week apart, the team set out to see as many movies as possible, explore the town, spend a day on Long Pond in Belgrade and talk to as many people as possible. Although the MIFF audience for *Still Ohio* was a mix of older and younger viewers, being a young (late twenties) film crew definitely had networking advantages in the Colby College town. Kaylin and her crew integrated with the students, inviting them to the *Still Ohio* screenings and other MIFF films. The students, she observed weren’t particularly aware of

the MIFF opportunities.

Still Ohio is a young person’s thriller, written by Kaylin when not working her early morning shift at Home Depot. The plot is about 4 college students trapped in a sinister time loop through the back roads of Ohio. The cast is comprised of aspiring actors, all young, all from LA, eager to get their careers and the accomplishment of the film off the ground.

The result is a tale of self-financing, with a lot of help from the film community and from the state of Ohio which has 5 film commissions. After Waterville, Kaylin plans to continue screenings, do an independent theatre run, bring the film to as many places as possible, maybe get picked up by a distributor.

Two more questions:

- Is Kaylin working on a second film? Yes - Senior Tag about a schoolwide water gun fight. “I love teen and young adult stories,” Kaylin states.
- Did she get to hear the Maine loons? No.

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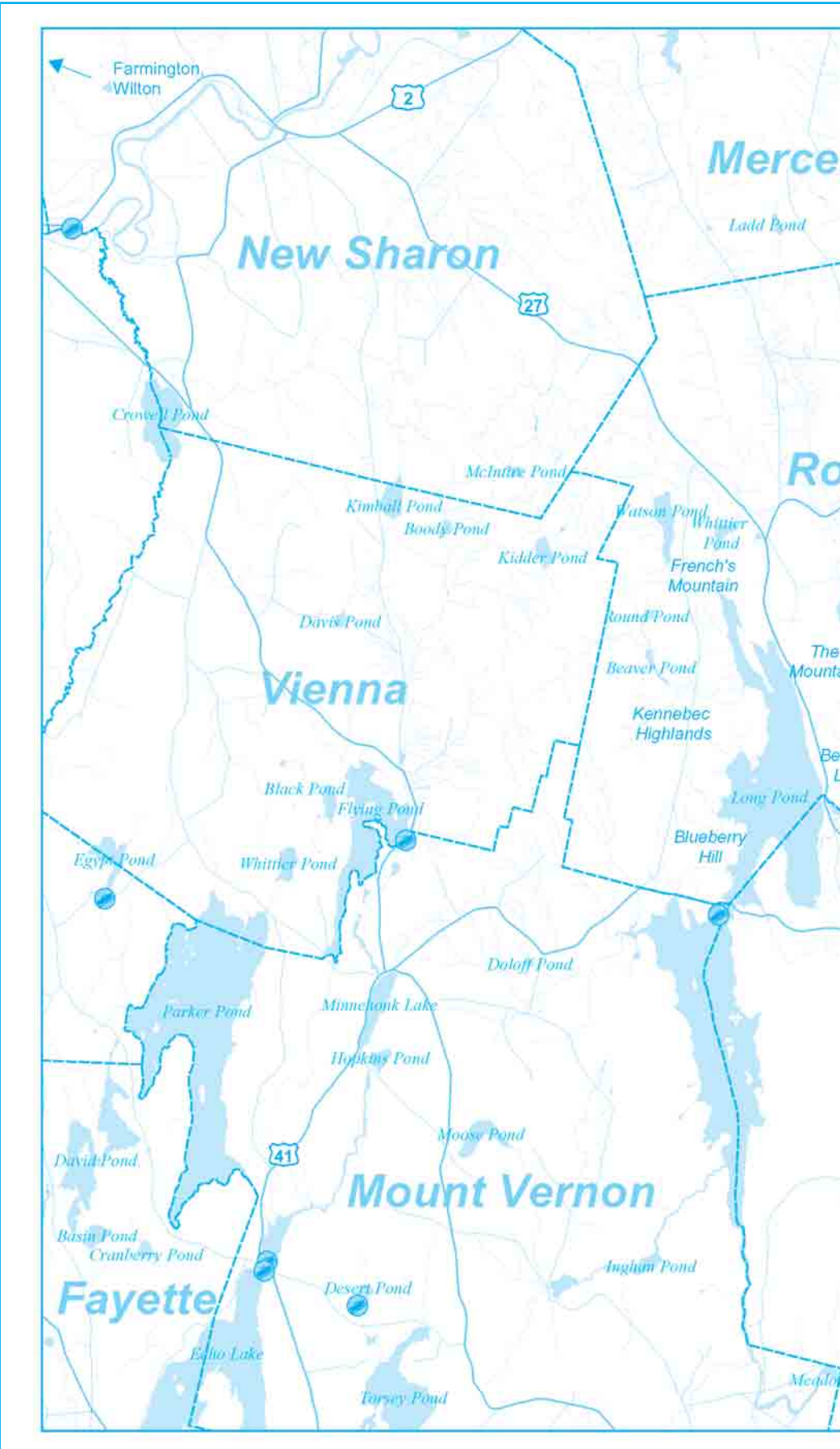


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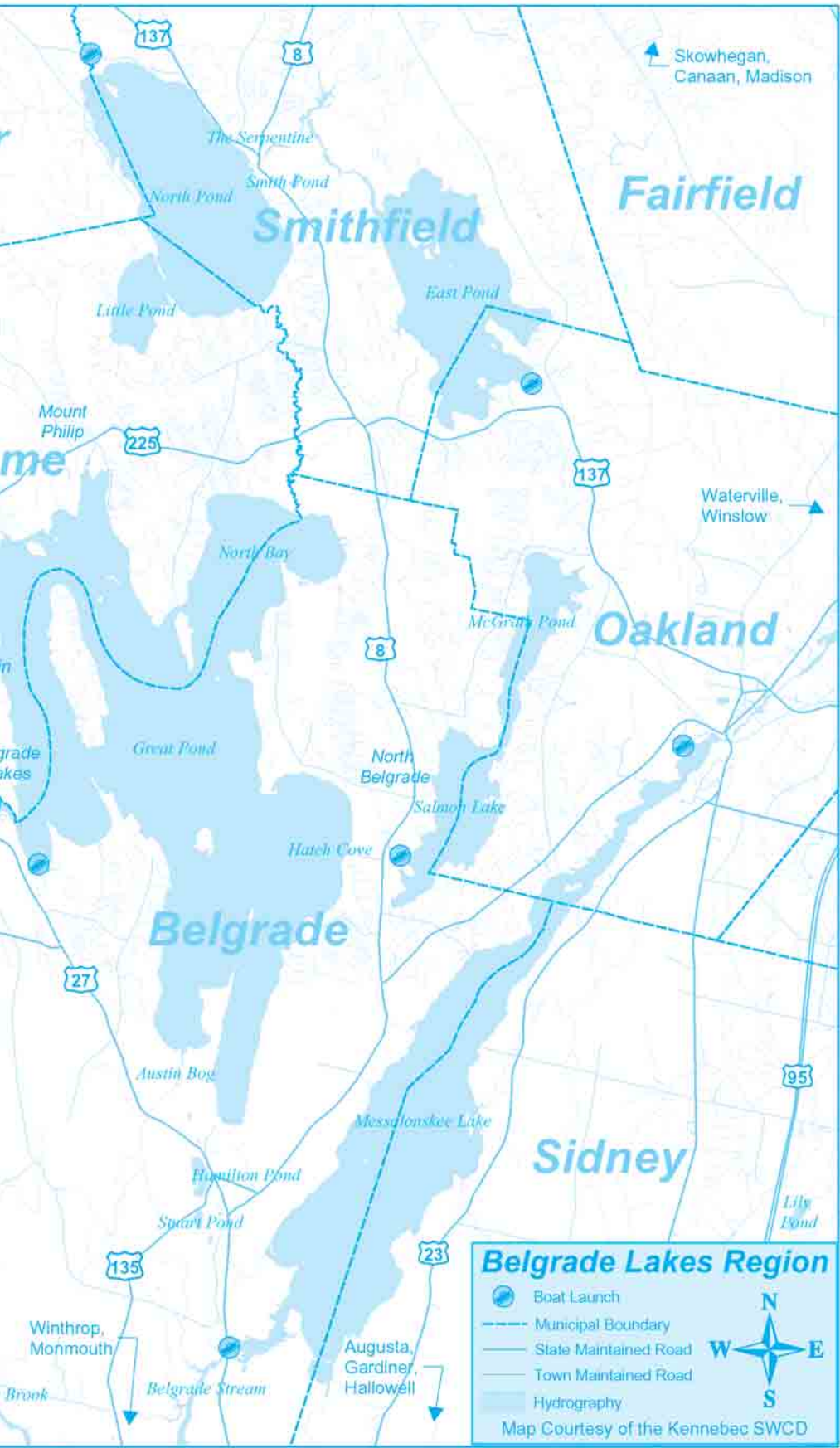
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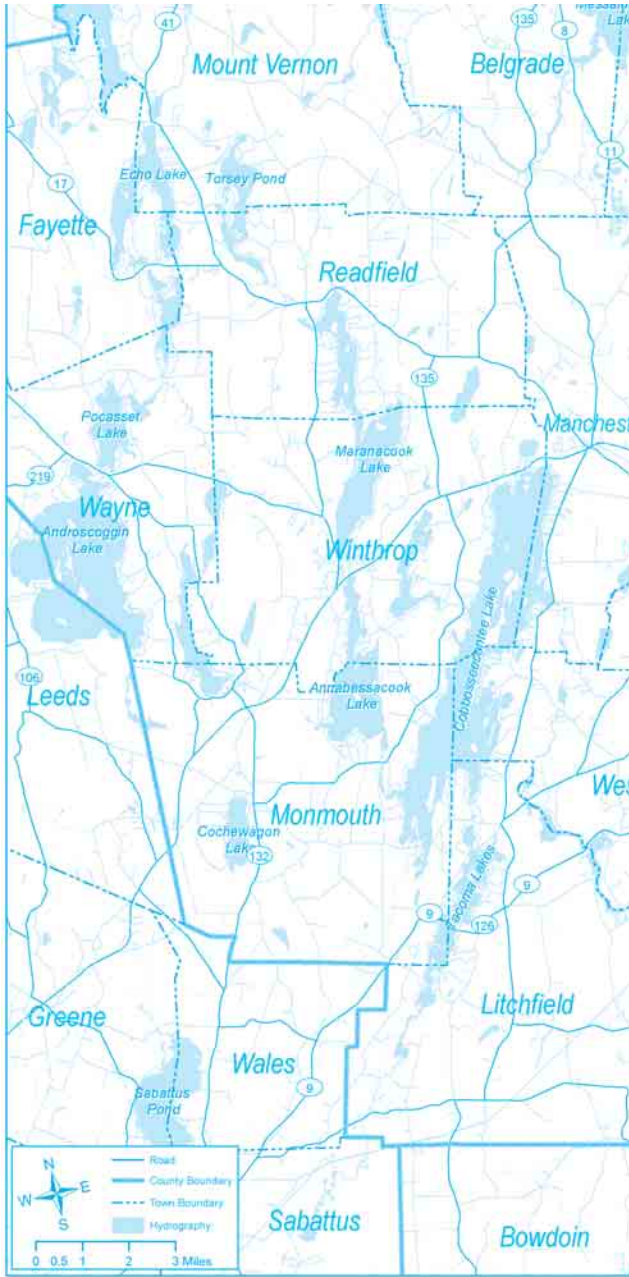
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Winthrop Area Watershed



Julia Ward Howe's Poem

by Martha F. Barkley



"The Battle Hymn of the Republic" poem was first published in The Atlantic magazine February 1862. Julia Ward Howe was paid four to five dollars with no byline (name of poet) as was the custom at the time. The editor James T. Fields gave Howe's poem its grand title, not Julia Ward Howe's decision. Julia had written her words to the very well known tune at the time, "John Brown's Body," a Union marching song that became an official anthem of the Union Army.

Jeffrey Goldberg, editor, writes eloquently about America's Promise in this July 2026 publication of both music and lyrics printed large on the cover of The Atlantic for the first time with the name of the poet as well, finally all these years later, during the 250th of our Declaration of Independence.

The refrain "transfigures you and me" seems to touch most Americans, even today during these troubled times.

The now famous Willard Hotel, near the White House, was where Howe wrote these words quickly during a night of anxiety. She submitted the poem to The Atlantic magazine with this supplication: "Do you want this, and do you like it, and have you any room for it...?" Without a title by Howe it was published the following month in February as "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

As an active abolitionist and suffragist, Howe had great anxieties during those wretched days of Civil War strife in 1862. Sleepless nights and constant tension during troubling times of war while awake.

"Our in-house historian, Jake Lundberg, writes in this (2026) issue that the poem is both an explanation of the promise of America and an exhortation to persevere on behalf of the country...our unofficial national anthem..."

"The Star Spangled Banner" is more difficult to sing and adopted in later years from a minor war at Baltimore's Fort McHenry, poem by Francis Scott Key.

Howe's life story was written by her daughter Laura Richards and two sisters assisting. The lengthy two volume biography won the first Pulitzer Prize ever given. I read the second volume only which tells of their mother's great activism during the Civil War and later.

Laura Richards was our local Great Pond writer of many books who also ran the Merryweather Camp for boys with her husband.

The Richards family lived in nearby Gardiner and had affiliations with that town's Pulitzer poet Edwin Arlington Robinson. Much to my surprise I learned that Kermit Roosevelt at Merryweather Camp sent Robinson's poetry to his father the President. Literary ventures at summer camp on Great Pond with Latin and Greek tutoring. After morning structured study, they all swam, boated and competed in sports.

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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 we are here regardless.

Last year at this time, Great Pond was down just 1.56” below full pond with both gates completely closed. In 2016, Great Pond at the Village Dam was down 7.56” on this date. Although, we are getting reports of water levels down 6-8” up in North Bay which is an anomaly as the Village Dam registers just _” down below full as of today. This discrepancy will require further scrutiny over the coming days and weeks. We know that North Bay is some five miles north of the Village Dam’s staff gauge, but there is more to this story which is unfolding.

Long Pond’s Wings Mill dam is currently down 6” as of this writing on August 11th, with upper Long Pond at 7.25” below full. Long Pond, back in 2018 was a preposterous 12.36” below full on this date. For comparison in 2016, Long Pond was down this date ‘just’ 10.92” below full which we thought was ‘historic’ at the time. Salmon/McGrath is down 2.4” below full with Messalonskee down 4.2”, also below full. The rain gauge at Wings Mill recorded just 1.52” for the past 10 days and we are forecasted for basically nothing at .09” for the next 10.

This drought is affecting all of the waters in the State in case you were asking. As of this writing, Moosehead Lake is down 1.2 feet below their typical summer level. Sebago is 2 feet below their typical summer target. So, we are not alone!

The Plan now is to try and keep what we have until the Fall Lake Drawdown which 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 drawdown usually begins after the Columbus Day weekend and at this rate it might just be a moot point. We’ll probably already be down to our Fall/Winter Storage levels by then.

Enjoy what’s left of The Summer of 2026 and your vacation! Thank you for your patience during this drought and stay trimmed up! See you next Summer!

Dick Greenan Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



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Call of the Loon

Take the Loon Test



Well, the Summer of 2026 was another interesting and frustrating year for our Loon population. After all was said and done, as of this writing on August 11th, we still have all of our 8 chicks on Great Pond and just the one chick that hatched on Long Pond. We also have seven abandoned eggs in the freezer which will go down to BioDiversity Research Institute in Portland shortly for analysis on possibly why the egg was abandoned. Obviously, we should have had seven more chicks! Last year at this time we had 16 chicks between Great and Long Ponds. In November, we will have a detailed summary of this year’s findings in addition to Maine Audubon’s 2026 Loon Count on the BLA website.

For a little levity after the above stats, I thought we would have some fun with this season’s final column of the Call of the Loon! There’s been so much discussion, myths, and half-truths, etc. regarding our feathered friends so let’s set the record straight today! For the answers, see the end of this article (no cheating!).

Myth #10: The Chippewa Native Americans believed that the cry of the loon was a harbinger of death. True or False?



An adult just moving away from a threat or preparing for take off

Myth #9: Loons lose and then grow all their flight feathers pretty much all at once, instead of one or two at a time. True or False?

Myth #8: Loons have hollow bones like seagulls? True or False



A banded adult male doing the “Super Slinky” while trying to be invisible!

Myth #7: Do both adult male and female loons have red eyes? True or False?

Myth #6: Are the loon legs sold at the Sunset Grill real loon legs? True or False?

Myth #5: Only the female adult loon uses the Yodel as a mating call. True or False?



Local photographer, Alex Wall, even captured a dragon fly getting in on the action!

Myth #4: What is the lifespan of a loon? A. 5-7 years B. 10-15 years C. 20 to 30 years

Myth #3: How many pounds of fish and aquatic life does an adult loon eat each day? A. 1 lb. B. 2 lbs. C. 5-7 lbs.

Myth #2: How fast can a loon swim underwater? A. 8-10 mph. B. 20 mph. C. 30 mph.

Myth #1: How fast can a loon fly? A. 30 mph. B. 40 mph. C. 50 mph. D. 70 mph.

Bonus: And now our Favorite Myth: Do loon mate for life? True or False?



Left: Adult loon fishing during a leisurely breakfast!

Answers: 10. True, 9. True, 8. False, 7. True, 6. False, 5. False, 4. C, 3. B, 2. B, 1. D, Bonus = False. Congratulations – particularly if you got them all!!

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. See you next year!!!

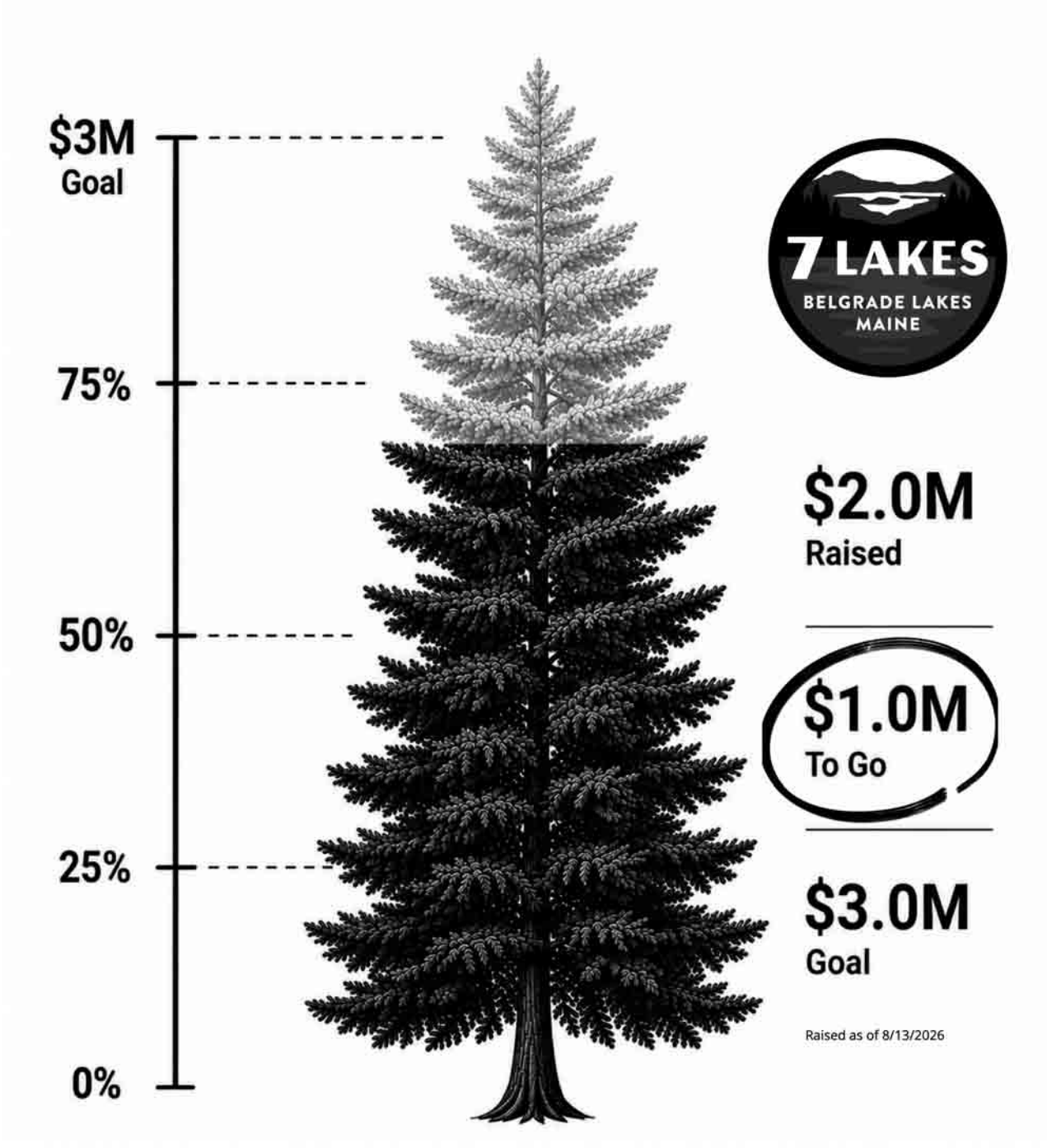
Dick Greenan, Chairman, BLA Loon Preservation Project





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Questions?
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— Real Estate Update —

The Second Wave

Our last column of the season always brings a touch of nostalgia. It marks the official wrap-up of another fantastic summer in the Belgrade Lakes. From days spent boating, tubing, and waterskiing to quick lunches at Day’s Store, cozy dinners at Sadie’s, the Bean Hole Supper, and the Loon Calling contest, so many incredible memories were made.

But it isn't over yet, at least not in the real estate world. The end of the calendar summer actually signals the arrival of our second wave of lakefront sales. While many assume the market cools down along with the September temperatures, this late-season shift is actually one of the busiest, most dynamic windows for local waterfront properties.

Many homeowners decide earlier in the year that this will be their final summer on the water. Rather than listing in early spring and disrupting their plans, they choose to enjoy one last full season of family visits, quiet mornings on the dock, and sunset cruises. Once late August approaches, they are ready to hand over the keys and list their homes while the lakes are still vibrant, warm, and inviting.

On the other side of the transaction are the visitors who spent the summer falling in love with the area. After weeks of lake life, the realization sets in that they want a permanent piece of paradise. Buying during this second wave allows new owners to finalize inspections and close over the winter months, ensuring they are completely set up to launch their boat on day one of the next season.

Late summer offers a viewing experience that spring simply cannot match. Prospective buyers get to see properties in their full glory, with docks in place, accurate water levels, and the lakefront community on display.

Whether you are reflecting on your final summer on the water and considering listing, or sitting on the dock dreaming about making the Belgrades your permanent retreat, this late-season window offers a powerful opportunity to make your next move.

Dan McCarron

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Mt Phillip where her fellow MCC teammates, 7-Lakes YCC and a few other volunteers cleared vegetation and rocks to make the trails safer and more erosion resistant.

It is hard to believe that this is the final 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 every-

one 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!* If our ongoing Camp Bomazeen Conservation Project is successful (still looking for about \$500K as I write this-call Laura Raleigh at 495-6039 if you can help!) we will be creating some new trails later this fall and through the winter.

MLS# 1672672 14 Dry Point Road, Rome \$595K
Beautifully updated Gambrel Colonial within walking distance of Belgrade Lakes Village! Property features a new bright and sunny updated kitchen with an open concept flowing into the dining area and living room. Conveniently located near Long and Great Pond, close to award winning golf, fishing and swimming.

MLS# 1674700 116 Willey Point Road, Oakland \$1.25M
Nestled on the serene shores of Messalonskee Lake in the sought after Belgrade Lakes Region, this beautifully maintained and furnished year-round home offers a perfect blend of tranquil lakeside living and convenient access to urban amenities. The home is conveniently located near the charming towns of Waterville, Oakland, and Belgrade, where you can find shopping, dining, and community events.

MLS# 1656232 90 Quaglia Estate, Rome \$2.210M
Remarkable Classic Maine Camp on 944 feet of lakefront on Long Pond, one of the most desirable lakes in the state! This 10 acre parcel is the essence of natural beauty with abundant wildlife and woodlands. Very private and close to the water with an original boathouse, the main camp has been very well maintained throughout the years. It features a large screened-in porch great for outside dining and relaxing. Create new memories at the lake at this special place!

MLS# 1671530 24 Smith Street, Augusta \$479K
Beautifully maintained home with a gorgeous back yard located on a quiet dead-end street in Augusta! This property has a welcoming feeling the minute you step inside. It is convenient to I-95 and all other amenities and is very easy to maintain. A full farmer's porch frames the front of the house, complemented by nice landscaping. Inside there is plenty of room for everyone to spread out and feel at home with 3 bedrooms and 2 full baths.

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

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