

Summertime in the Belgrades



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

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 2

Smithfield Celebrates the Nation's Birthday

by Jodie Mosher

AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY
COSTUME PET PARADE
RAIN OR SHINE!
SMITHFIELD MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
JUNE 27, 2026

EVENT SCHEDULE
10:00 AM – Registration Opens
10:45 AM – Parade Lineup
11:00 AM – Parade Begins

JUDGING & PRIZES
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★ Best Patriotic Theme

COSTUMES FOR PETS & OWNERS!
Dress in your best **RED, WHITE & BLUE!**

\$5 SUGGESTED DONATION
Proceeds Benefit the
Somerset Humane Society

BRING YOUR PETS & JOIN THE FUN!
A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY & PATRIOTISM!

SMITHFIELD CHICKEN BBQ
JUNE 27TH
11:00AM TILL SOLD OUT!
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT!

— CELEBRATING —
AMERICA 250
1776 ★ 2026
250 YEARS OF FREEDOM

To help celebrate America's 250th Anniversary, the Town of Smithfield is hosting a Costume Pet Parade on June 27, 2026, 10am registration, 10:45am line up and 11am parade!



Judges are looking for the Most Festive Outfit and Best Patriotic Theme so get out your red, white and blue!

Owners/handlers are encouraged to dress up as well! This event is designed to be a fun family friendly event open to the public!

It takes place at the Smithfield Municipal Complex at 926 Village Road. Judges will award cash or gift card prizes! \$5 suggested donation - all proceeds will go to Somerset Humane Society (SHS) in Skowhegan. SHS will have an adoptable pet or 2 participating in the parade as special guests!

This event takes place in conjunction with the Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department's

Continued on page 2

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Annual BBQ at the fire station. There is even more family fun with Maine Potato Races (potatoes and wheels are provided), Kids Obstacle Course, Touch-a-Truck and Raffles!

Also on Saturday, June 27 in Smithfield, the North Pond Association is sponsoring a Buff Enough Workshop - how to build a better buffer to protect lakes and ponds (in this case North Pond and Little North) - from 10 am-noon at the Fairview Grange. This is a family event and will feature free ice cream and hands-on demonstrations.

...Continued from page 3

Milky Way. Artificial light at night affects migratory birds, insects, fish, and shoreline wildlife. Loons, in particular, are sensitive to nighttime disturbance during nesting season.

Preserving dark skies also helps maintain the quiet character and natural beauty that have long defined the Belgrade Lakes experience.

Maine recently adopted new standards for certain public outdoor lighting projects, and many communities are beginning to revisit local lighting ordinances as well. But preserving dark skies is ultimately a shared responsibility. Thoughtful lighting choices by individual property owners can go a long way toward protecting one of the region's most treasured natural resources: a truly dark night sky.

Resources for Residents, Visitors, and Families to Enjoy Throughout Central Maine

Central Maine offers a unique opportunity to connect with the natural world, both day and night. Here are some resources to help you explore and appreciate our beautiful dark skies, extending beyond the Belgrade Lakes region:

- Defending the Dark, a film by Tara Roberts Zabriskie. This compelling short film (28 min) highlights ongoing efforts to save Maine's precious dark sky heritage. In January, 7 Lakes Alliance hosted a screening of the film by Nancy Hathaway, president and founder of Dark Sky Maine. This inspirational film can be streamed on the Dark Sky Maine website:

<https://darksourcemaine.com>

- Regional Star Parties and Events, Astronomy Clubs, and Maine Planetaria: For those eager to delve deeper into the wonders of the cosmos, Dark Sky Maine provides a comprehensive list of resources for the entire state. You can find information on upcoming star parties where you can observe alongside experienced astronomers, connect with local astronomy clubs (such as the Central Maine Astronomical Society), and discover planetarium shows that bring the universe to life at institutions like the Challenger Learning Center at Pine Tree Academy in Freeport or the Southworth Planetarium at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. Visit their website:

<https://darksourcemaine.com>

- Educational Materials and Dark Sky Approved Lighting: DarkSky International is the leading authority on light pollution, offering a wealth of information for homeowners, communities, and policymakers. Their website is an invaluable resource for understanding the impacts of light pollution, learning about responsible lighting practices, and finding certified "Dark Sky Approved" lighting fixtures that meet their stringent standards for minimizing skyglow. Explore their resources at: <https://darksourcemaine.com>

- Local Nature Preserves and Public Lands: Central Maine boasts numerous conservation lands, state parks, and public access points that offer fantastic opportunities for stargazing away from artificial light.

Continued on page 6...

Day's

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Exterior Lighting: Best Practices & Etiquette for Lakefront Properties

by Jeff Worthington

For generations, the Belgrade Lakes region has been known for its dark, star-filled skies. In recent decades, however, light pollution has steadily increased. Growth in surrounding communities, new local commercial development, and the explosion of residential outdoor lighting have all contributed to brighter night skies and the gradual loss of the stars above us.

Outdoor living has become an important part of lake life, and advances in lighting technology now offer endless options for illuminating our properties — landscape lighting, string lights, dock lights, decorative solar fixtures, floodlights, and more. While these lights may enhance convenience and ambiance, they can also spill across the water, affect neighboring properties, and diminish the natural darkness that makes the Belgrade Lakes so special.

Fortunately, a few thoughtful choices can make a meaningful difference.

DarkSky International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing light pollution, promotes several simple principles for responsible outdoor lighting:

1. Shield and direct lights downward.

Exterior lights should illuminate only the area intended. Ensure all exterior lighting is fully shielded so the bulb itself is not visible. Properly shielded lighting prevents glare and reduces light spilling across the lake or into neighboring properties.

2. Use warm-colored bulbs.

Choose warm or amber-toned bulbs (3000K or lower) instead of harsh blue-white lighting. Warmer light is less disruptive to nocturnal wildlife and creates a softer, more natural nighttime environment.

3. Add timers and motion sensors.

Dock, deck, and landscape lighting generally does not need to remain on all night. Timers and motion sensors help reduce unnecessary lighting while still providing safety when actively navigating the property.

Good lighting practices also come down to courtesy and common sense:

- Observe a “light curfew.”

Consider turning off nonessential exterior lights such as dock, deck, string lights and decorative displays by 9:00 PM or 10:00 PM so neighbors — and wildlife — can enjoy the natural darkness of the lake.

- Be cautious with solar lighting.

Keep solar lighting to a minimum, particularly on docks, dock platforms, paths to the water, and decks. Most solar fixtures remain illuminated dusk to dawn or until the battery dies – long after properties are quiet for the evening.

- Watch your flashlights.

Avoid shining bright white flashlights or phone screens toward the water or across the lake, as they severely disrupt night vision and disturb nesting loons and other wildlife.

- Use red light at night.

When navigating your property, walking to your dock, or stargazing, consider using a red-light headlamp or flashlight. Red light preserves human night vision and is far less disorienting to nocturnal animals.

Why It Matters

Reducing excessive lighting is about more than preserving views of the

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Summertime in the Belgrades

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McGRATH POND - SALMON LAKE ASSOCIATION

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

North Belgrad Community Center

Protect what makes the Belgrade Lakes extraordinary!

7 Lakes Alliance conserves the lands and waters of the Belgrade Lakes for all.

Subscribe to the 7 Lakes Alliance email list to get the latest on land conservation, water quality, and community events directly to your inbox. Sign up today at 7lakesalliance.org/newsletters.

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7 Lakes Alliance Launches Junior Ranger Program: Learning and Fun for All

by Doug "Woody" Woodsum

I became a park ranger in the summer of 1980 at Crescent Beach State Park in Maine. It was a fine job, mostly mowing lawns, hauling trash, and helping with crowd control. Worthy work, no doubt, but looking back, I wasn't learning a whole lot about the natural world I was being paid to protect.

Decades later, I was "demoted" when I became a JUNIOR ranger at Kenai Fjord National Park in Alaska in 2017. And I must tell you, being a junior ranger was a lot more fun.

My first badge came the hard way, or rather, the spectacular way during a six-hour, 105-mile ranger-guided cruise aboard the Spirit of Adventure out of Seward, Alaska. Alongside a group of all ages, I raised my right hand and pledged to protect parks, communities, and the Earth. I learned about glaciers, wildlife, geology, history and conservation. Most importantly, I rediscovered the joy of learning about the natural world (or something else in your words).

My second badge was earned several years later on the Schoodic Peninsula at Acadia National Park. Once again, I completed activities, answered questions, made observations, and explored the natural world with a Junior Ranger Activity book. (Did you do this one with your sister?) By the time I earned my badge, I realized that I learned more about nature in the fun, educational, and interactive junior ranger programs than I ever had as a young park ranger.

That experience planted a seed. What if I help to create a Junior Ranger Program right here in the Belgrade Lakes region?

While our area is blessed with extraordinary lakes, forests, wetlands and wildlife, we don't have a state or national park offering a Junior Ranger experience. 7 Lakes Alliance embraced the chance to change that.



Over the winter, I worked with a team of four professional conservationists at 7 Lakes, who enthusiastically joined me in tapping into the children within us. We had fun planning and officially creating the 7 Lakes Alliance Junior Ranger Program. Along the way, we discovered something important: adults and kids alike will have fun discovering new ways to observe, think about, and enjoy nature.

Designed primarily for ages 4 to 12, the program encourages young explorers to observe, journal, sketch, identify plants and animals, solve puzzles, answer questions, and think critically about the natural world around them.

For older children, the activities become a bit more challenging, encouraging deeper exploration and understanding. Most importantly, the program inspires curiosity, stewardship, and the lifelong connection to nature.

Participants who complete their activities will earn an official 7 Lakes Alliance Junior Ranger badge as a symbol of their commitment to learning about and caring for the lakes and lands of the Belgrade Lakes watershed.

Whether you're a local family, a summer visitor, a parent or grandparent looking for an adventure with children, this program offers a fun new way to experience the nature world in our remarkable region.

As the circus ringmaster would say, "Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages," come to 7 Lakes Alliance in Belgrade Lakes, Maine to get your activity book and start your outdoor adventure.

As for me, former Park Ranger Woody has continued his educational journey of the world around us by enrolling in the Maine Master Naturalist Program - a sort of Junior Ranger program on steroids for adults who never outgrew their curiosity about the natural world.



Belgrade History Beyond Belgrade

Submitted by BHS member Dianne Dowd

Not only is Memorial Day weekend the start of summer, it is also the start of summer camping season. It is common to see motor homes and vehicles towing all sorts of camping trailers traveling Maine highways as folks head to campgrounds throughout Maine. Many people may remember that Belgrade for decades had a campground just off Route 27 on the shore of Great Pond. In the mid-1960s, Ken Bartlett purchased the land that had once been the Dalton Sawmill and Ice Company and established the Bartlett Campground. The grounds were transformed to provide 50 camp sites with amenities such as bathrooms, showers, and a camp store. The campground evolved over time with new owners, an inground swimming pool and a name change to the Great Pond Campground. In 1998, a proposal to purchase the property and build a year-round community center on the site was presented to the town. Eventually the campground was demolished to make way for the Center For All Seasons.

I remember the Great Pond Campground very well as my husband and our three-year-old daughter had an ill-fated camping trip there in 1987. We had acquired a small pop-up camping trailer, and eagerly looked forward to our first camping adventure. Having spent several vacations in Belgrade, we decided to reserve a camping site for the weekend at the Great Pond Campground. We packed up our pickup truck and hitched up the camper and set out on what we thought would be a fun weekend.

However, sometimes no matter how well you prepare the best laid plans



can go awry. Although we had left in plenty of time to make the trip from Massachusetts to Belgrade, we got stuck in a horrible traffic following an accident on the Maine Turnpike. Consequently, we got to the campground much later than we expected. Unfortunately, our site was narrow, and my husband had difficulty backing the trailer into the space. He had trouble with his spatial awareness and managed to hit a boulder and dent the front right bumper. We managed to get the camper set up without too much difficulty and settled in for the evening. Unfortunately, our daughter who had napped during the long traffic jam was not interested in going to sleep at her

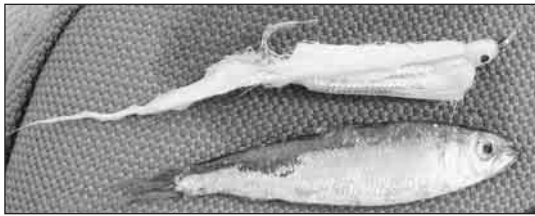
regular bedtime, so it took much longer than usual to get her to sleep, and my husband started complaining of not feeling well. None of us got much rest that night. We were all awakened extremely early the next morning by someone using a wheelbarrow with a loud squeaky wheel in desperate need of oil working on the construction of a garage next door. At 5:30 AM that piercing squealing sound felt like it was driving into my brain. To this day I can hear that sound in my head. The noise seemed to go on forever. I can't imagine how anyone could use that wheelbarrow. By mid-morning, we were two bleary eyed parents (one still not feeling well) and one cranky three-year old, and the weather forecast was calling for thunderstorms. We made the decision to pack up and head home. While we did eventually have some successful camping trips, we never returned to the Great Pond Campground.





— Take It Outside —

Like last year, this has been a cool, wet, and windy transition to summer, with some occasional, very hot days. The fishing has continued to be productive, especially early in the morning and late in the evening. I love fishing these crepuscular periods when the lake is typically dead calm, and it is easy to spot fish feeding on or near the surface. Surface feeding fish often indicate an insect hatch taking place with some fish (often trout or small bass) sucking the bugs off the surface, creating dimples. Often larger fish will be just below the smaller fish at the surface, eating the smaller fish or the nymphs (insect larvae) just below the surface waiting to emerge. In our lakes, we also get schools of landlocked alewives disturbing the surface while spawning in relatively shallow (less than about 25 feet) coves. Often these schools are being chased by larger fish and you will see occasional large splashes, as a bass or brown trout picks a spawning alewife off. For this situation I like to keep one of my flyrods rigged with a White Zonker, a streamer that nicely mimics the landlocked alewives in the lake. It's usually easy to catch several nice bass or white perch under these conditions. A spinning rod (I prefer an ultralight) rigged with almost anything silver, such as a small jerk bait (such as a Rapala), Mepps spinner, or Weeping Willow spoon is also quite effective. Recently, one of my former college roommates, Dr. Larry Hawley of Birmingham,



White zonker fly next to landlocked alewife.



Larry Hawley with nice smallmouth caught on a White Zonker.

Alabama visited for a few days. He caught several nice Long Pond smallies on a White Zonker fly. By the time this article is published, the water temperatures will be over 70F in the lakes and the bass will be in the shallows either sitting on their own beds or chasing the sunfish on theirs. It is a fun time for fly fishermen to catch a lot of fish on streamer flies or surface poppers, especially at dawn or dusk. Spinning gear also works well with surface lures, especially at dusk. It can be a great time to teach a youngster how to fish because the action is fast. A worm-baited hook and bobber off the dock is especially effective in getting kids "hooked on fishing."



Nate and Stephanie VanSoest with their girls.

Recently, I stopped off for a quick hike at French Mountain after a rain event to check on the effectiveness of some of the erosion control work the 7 Lakes Stewardship Committee did recently. I met the VanSoest family from Mercer getting ready to hike with their young girls (ages 2 and 5). Originally from MI, Nate is a former AT through hiker who has been "taking his kids outside" since they were born. He and Stephanie are frequent hikers of 7-Lakes trails and their 5-yr old described French Mountain has her "favorite go to hike." Nate may look familiar to many as he is the bartender at the excellent 122 Corson Farm Restaurant in Mercer.

I also met a young family from Oakland getting ready to hike French

Crepuscular Fishing

By Peter Kallin

Mountain with their 7-yr old son, Braxton for the first time. Braxton was wearing a Batman T-shirt, and his dad, Montana was wearing a Gotham City Police Chief T-shirt.



Montana and Kathleen with 7-yr old Braxton.

Mike Guarino, who is the Community Engagement Specialist for the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, still does a bit of guiding in the Belgrades. Now that he has a "real job," Mike guides mostly on weekends, which this year means most of his trips have been on rainy days. One of his regular clients is 9-yr old Ash, who comes up from MA with his dad to visit his Grandfather, Paul, for some



9-yr old Ash with nice crappie and pike from Messalonskee.

Continued on page 11 ...

HARTLAND



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— Calendar —

...Through Sunday 6/21 - Blistered Fingers Family Bluegrass Music Festival, 873-6539, great bands, food, camping, Litchfield Fairgrounds, 30 Plains Road Litchfield.

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

...Through Sunday 6/21 - Pittston Fair, "Maine's Friendliest Fair," midway, strawberry pageant, exhibition hall, many children's activities, historical museum, \$10 age 13 and older, camping available \$25 per night, no dogs or pets, pittstonfair.com, Route 194, Pittston.

...Friday 6/19 - Tom Dimenna: "Story of the 70s," folk-rock, timeless song that shaped a generation, 2 pm and 7 pm, free, air-conditioned, 946-5311, Araxine Wilkins Sawyer Foundation, 371 Sawyer Road, Greene.

...Friday 6/19 - Juneteenth Day, some businesses and visitor attractions may be closed in observance.

...Friday 6/19 - Maine Chamber Music Seminar, Final Concert #1, a diverse showcase of short performances, 7 pm, program lasts 2.5 hours - audience members are welcome to come and go as they please, free admission, Alumni Hall, Snow Pond Center for the Arts, Route 23, Sidney.

...Saturday 6/20 - Yard Sale 2026, rain or shine, 9 am-2 pm, Union Church, Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Saturday 6/20 - Titcomb Mountain Challenge, mountain bike relay races, 9 am, 180 Ski Slope Road, Farmington.

...Saturday 6/20 - Maine Chamber Music Seminar, Final Concert #2 - 2 pm, Final Concert #3 - 7 pm, free, Alumni Hall, Snow Pond Center for the Arts, Route 23, Sidney.

...Sunday 6/21 - Father's Day, time to do an outing with Dad - fishing hiking, jokes, ice cream.

...Sunday 6/21 - Belgrade Lakes Farmers' Market 8 am-1 pm, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Sunday 6/21 - Summer Solstice, first day of summer, longest day of the year.

...Monday 6/22 - Guided Birding Walk, 10 am-12 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, meet at Homestead Nature Education Center, Watson Pond Road, just across from Wildflower Estates and the Round Top Trailhead parking lot, Rome.

...Monday 6/22 - Western Maine Foothills Band, 7-8:30 pm, gazebo, Meetinghouse Square, downtown Farmington.

...Tuesday 6/23 - 5K and Kids Fun Run, 5-7:30 pm, Quarry Road Trails, Waterville.

...Wednesday 6/24 through Saturday 6/27 - Monmouth Fair, "a little fair with a lotta pull!" midway, exhibition hall, bicycle giveaways, pulling contest, stage show every night, free parking, admission 12 and under free, 13 and over \$7, Wednesday seniors free, www.monmouthfair.com, Academy Road, off Route 202, Monmouth.

...Wednesday 6/24 - Aquatic Plant Identification and Interactive Workshop, 1-3:30 pm, please RSVP 495-6039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Wednesday 6/24 - "Working Class," Waterfront Wednesday Concert, 6 pm, Waterfront Park, Water Street, Augusta.

...Thursday 6/25 - Skowhegan Falls Guided History Walk, step back in time and explore why Skowhegan Falls was and continues to be an important historic district in the community, 10-11:30 am, free, rain date June 26, skowheganhistoryhouse.org, meet at Benedict Arnold Park behind the Federated Church, Island Avenue, Skowhegan.

...Thursday 6/25 - Waterville Farmers' Market, 2-6 pm, Head of Falls, Waterville.

...Thursday 6/25 - Art in the Park: Rainbow Flower Crowns, free and open to the public, 3-5 pm, www.watervillecreates.org, Castonquay Square, Front and Main St, downtown Waterville.

...Thursday 6/25 - Predators: Chewonki Animal Presentation, 3-4 pm, please RSVP 495-3039, 7 Lakes Alliance, 137 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes.

...Thursday 6/25 - The Boneheads, free outdoor concert, 6-8 pm, Village Green, Belgrade Lakes.



Belgrade Lakes Seafood & Dairy Bar

495-0926

FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL Fresh Maine Crabmeat Rolls

...continued from Page 2

- 7 Lakes Alliance (<https://7lakesalliance.org>): Focuses on the Belgrade Lakes region, providing information on local hiking trails and hosting events like their Night Sky Tour on Vienna Mountain.

- Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands (<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/index.shtml>): Provides a comprehensive listing of state parks and public lands throughout Central Maine, many of which offer excellent dark sky viewing opportunities.

- Maine Audubon (<https://maineaudubon.org>): While focused on birds and wildlife, Maine Audubon manages several sanctuaries across the state, some of which may offer good dark sky access and educational programs.

- Local Land Trusts: Many towns and regions in Central Maine have their own land trusts that manage conserved properties. Searching for "[Your Town Name] Land Trust" can often lead to hidden gems for stargazing.

- Photography Tips for Astrophotography: For those interested in capturing the beauty of the night sky, resources like Lonely Speck (<https://www.lonelyspeck.com/>) offer excellent tutorials and guides for beginners and experienced photographers alike on how to photograph the Milky Way and other celestial objects. Many local photography clubs in Central Maine may also offer workshops or advice on astrophotography.

By utilizing these resources and embracing responsible lighting practices, we can all contribute to preserving the magic of our starry nights in the Belgrade Lakes region and beyond for generations to come.



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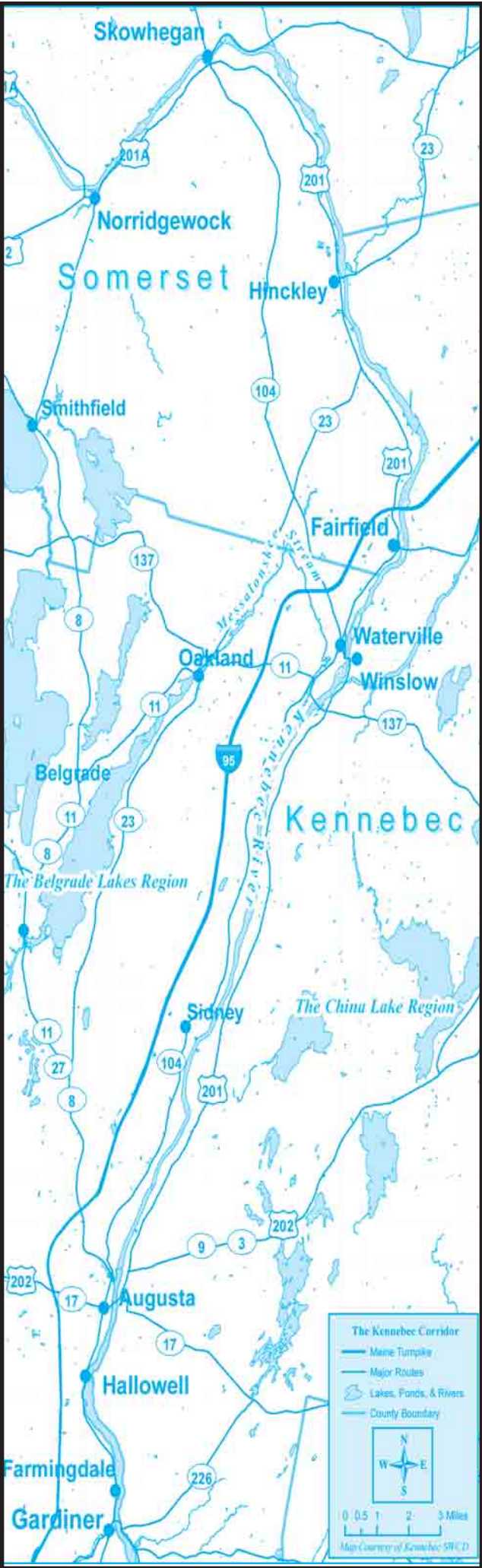
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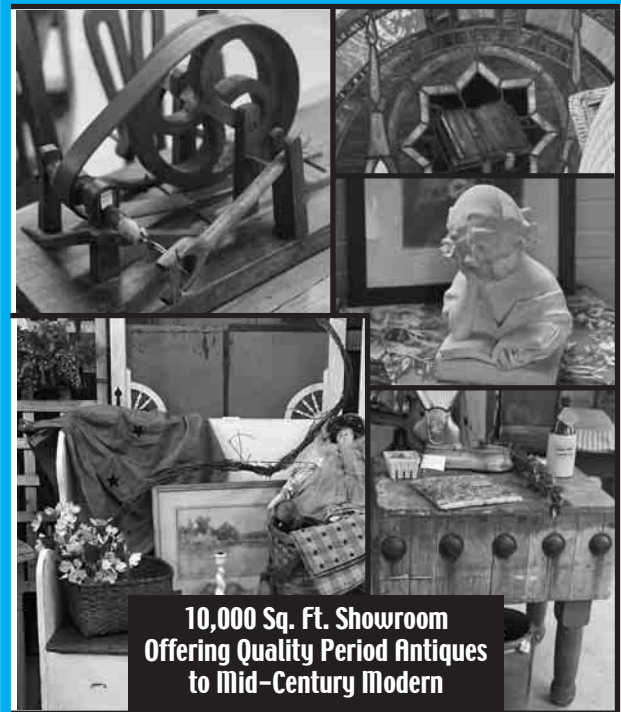
The City of Gardiner invites everyone to mark the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence by joining in a variety of events and activities focused on the Revolutionary War, as well as Gardiner itself during that moment in history!

- June 20th: America's 250th Regional Community Parade in Litchfield, 8:30 am
- June 25th: "Keeping with the Crown: The Loyalist Dilemma", talk by Jayne Gordon, Christ Church, 6:30 pm
- June 27th: Downtown scavenger hunt for kids of all ages (time & location TBD)
- June 30th: "Myth vs Fact, The Lives of Benedict Arnold and Paul Revere", movie night at Johnson Hall Opera House, 6:30 pm
- July 1st: "Walking the Cobbossee" (history of uses), talk by Sara Maschino, Gardiner Public Library, 6:30 pm
- July 2nd: "History of Christ Church", talk by State Historian Earle Shetteworth, Jr. at Christ Church 6:30 pm
- July 3rd: Pre-concert mini-celebration at Waterfront Concert, 6 pm
- July 5th: Celebratory Strawberry Shortcake Social, on The Common, 2-4 pm
- July 7th: "Ripples Up North: Slavery Along the Kennebec in Pre- and Post-Revolutionary Times" talk by Scott Klinger & Philip Johnston at Christ Church, 6:30pm

For more information and event updates visit <https://www.gardinermaine.gov/City-News-Updates/USA250> or <https://gardinermainstreet.org/> and follow the event listing on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/events/1681823323036464?active_tab=about

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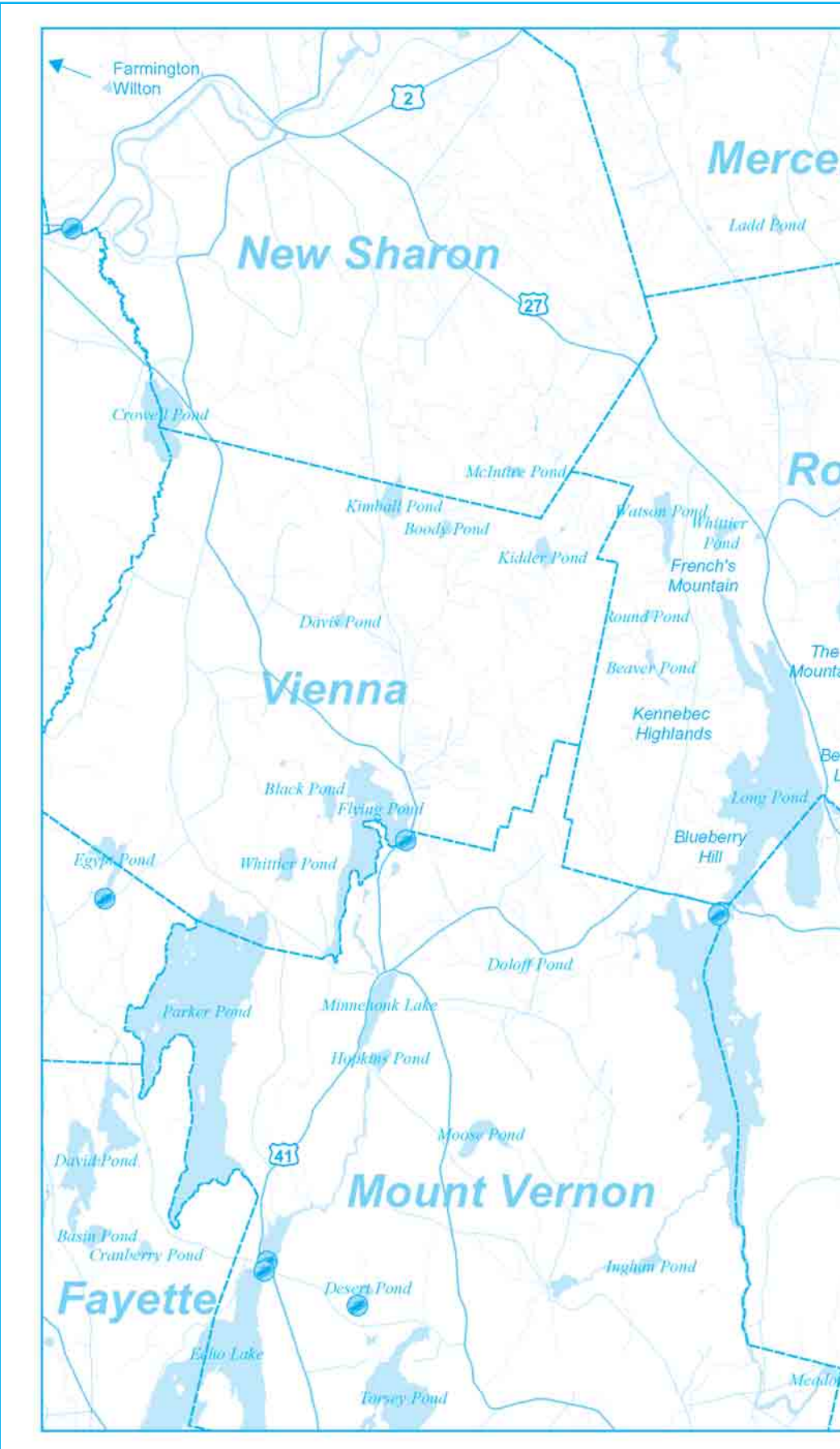
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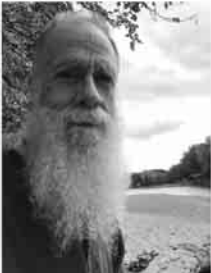




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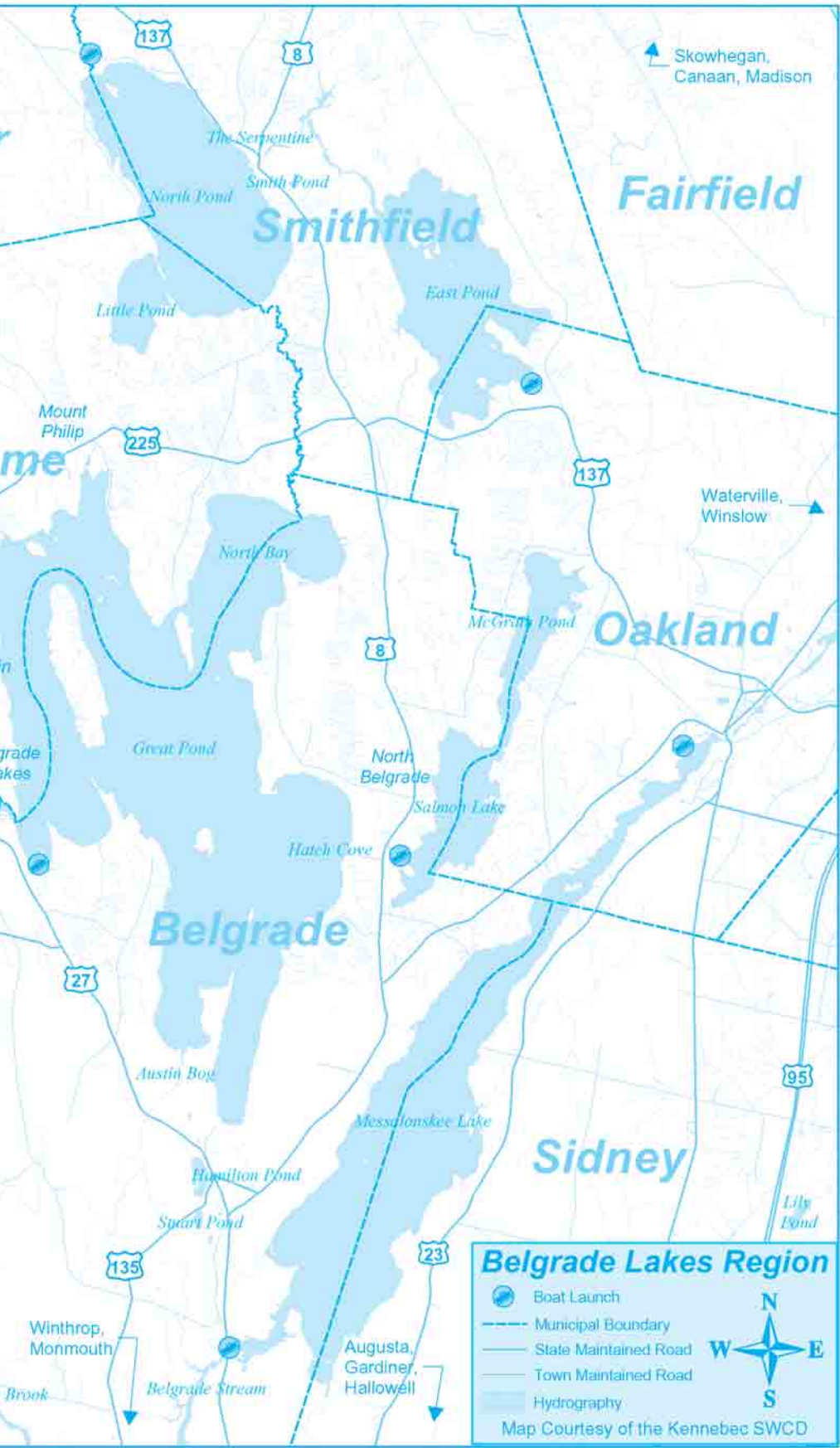
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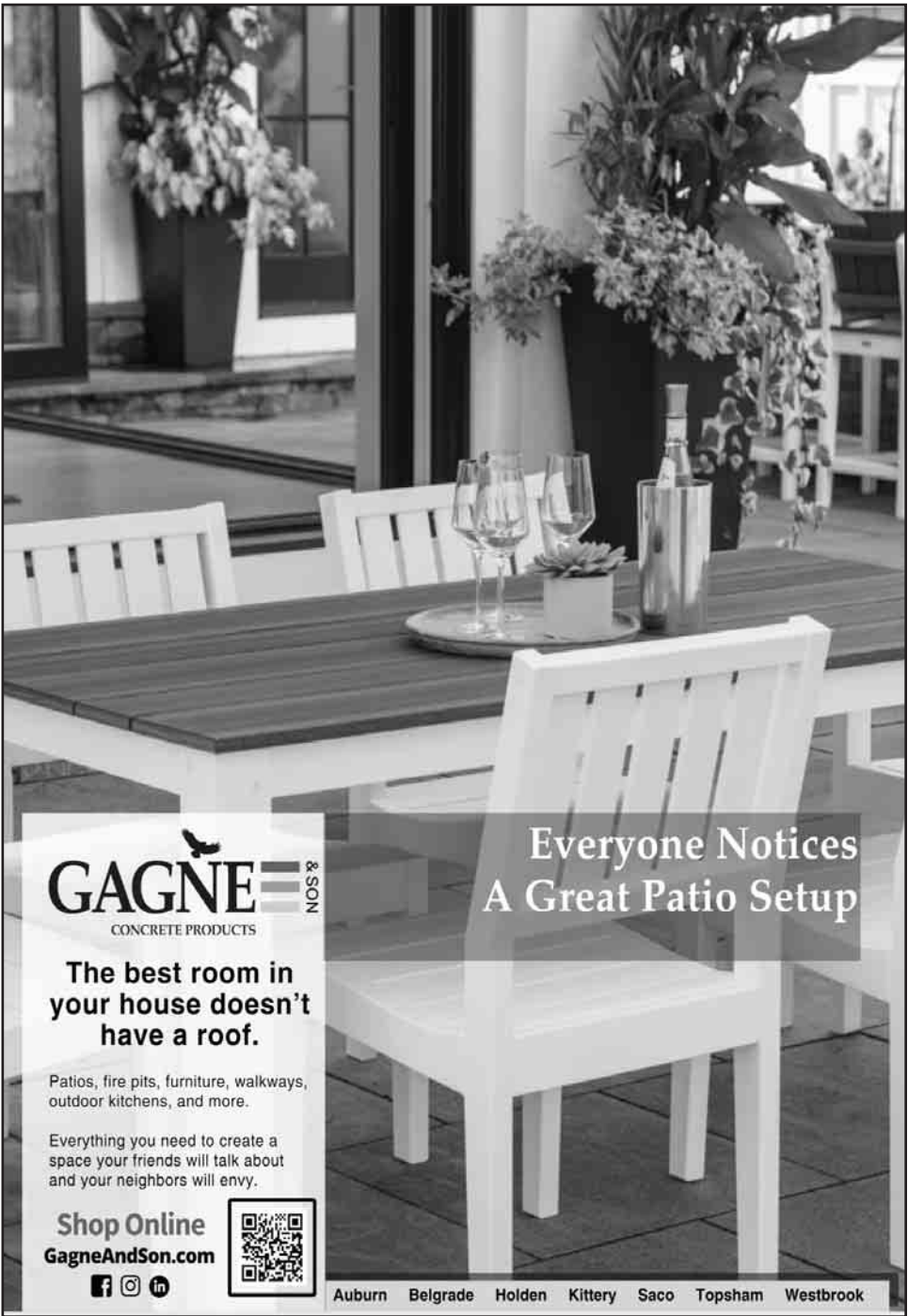
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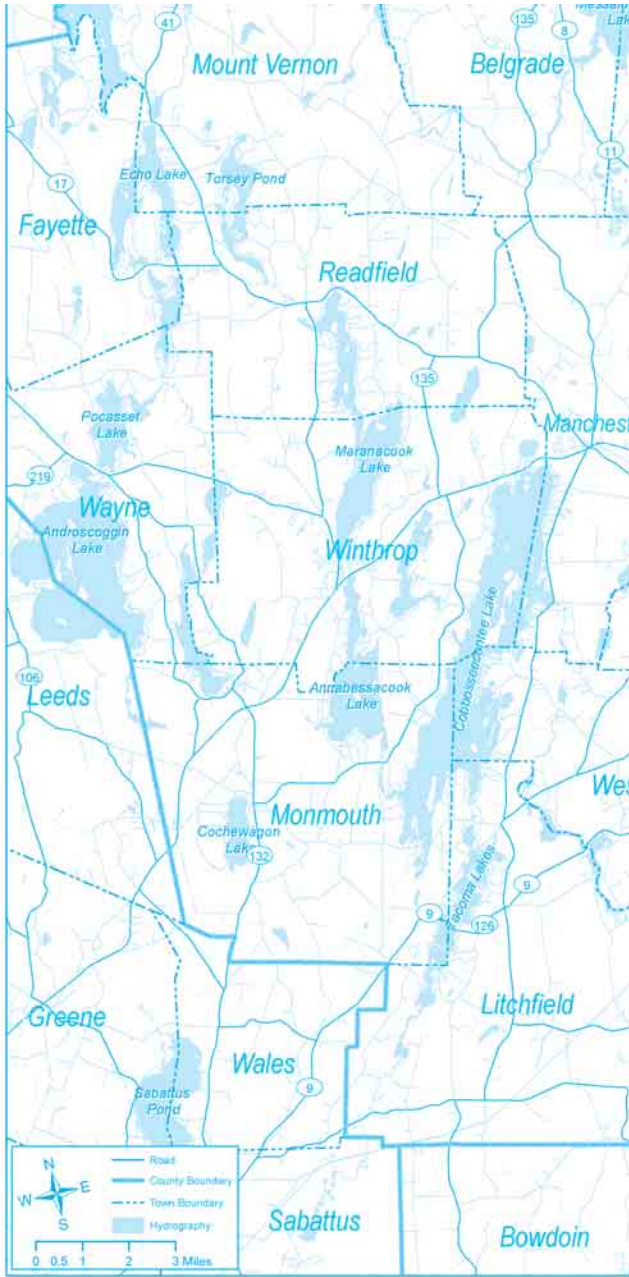
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Winthrop Area Watershed



Theater At Monmouth Cancels 2026 Season



In early June, 2026, the Theater at Monmouth issued the following announcement.

A Message from the Board of Theater at Monmouth to our audiences, artists, and friends across Maine and beyond:

Reluctantly, the Board of Trustees has determined that Theater at Monmouth will not present a summer season in 2026. After a careful review of our finances, the Board has concluded that we are not in a position to responsibly mount our productions this year.

This was not an easy decision to make. For more than fifty years, the work of the Theater has drawn generations of Mainers and visitors through the doors of Cumston Hall.

We owe our community honesty about why, and about where things stand. Like many small arts organizations, we have faced rising production costs alongside revenue that has not kept pace. We have reached a point where producing our regular summer season as planned would put the institution itself at risk.

In the months ahead, the Board will be evaluating the path forward, including different operational models for the Theater. We want to be candid that we are not able to make promises about the future at this time, but as we explore our options, we do so with the hope of inviting you all to once again gather in Monmouth.

Historic and architecturally unique Cumston Hall, which is a separate entity is planning to continue Food Truck Fridays during the summer and will develop other entertainment to be presented in the building’s opera hall.



...Continued from page 14

is expected to take 6-8 weeks to complete. The Sidney launch will remain open. Certified Boat Inspections (CBI) managed by 7LA will continue in Sidney.

For the second year in a row, FOM is conducting a fundraising raffle to help in the costs of these operations. Last year, a \$5,000 grand prize was awarded to a lucky ticket purchaser. This year, in addition to \$5,000, other prizes will be awarded, including a scenic seaplane ride, a guided Messalonskee Lake boat tour, a towable tube, a paddle board, and a yard cutter/ trimmer. The drawing for prizes will be on August 30 at noon at the Oakland Park gazebo. Tickets can be purchased online with a debit card on the FOM website, friendsofmessalonskee.com, or by scanning the QR code in our ad in this issue. Tickets will also be sold at the Belgrade Village Green Artisan Fairs on June 28, July 26, and August 1.

The Annual July 4th Boat Parade will be held again at 3pm. Meet at Rock Island for the boat lineup. Fireworks will be provided again this year by Gary Bennett, starting at 9pm. Viewing is from the lake, not from Gary’s property.

Messalonskee Lake will be hosting 8 bass fishing tournaments this year on the following dates: 6/27, 7/18, 8/1, 8/22, 9/18, 9/19, 10/4, 11/18. FOM appreciates that since 2020, all bass clubs participate in standardized training on aquatic invasive species inspections. Trained inspectors conduct inspections on all watercraft associated with a tournament both upon launch and retrieval of the watercraft. This is immensely helpful in preventing milfoil fragment spread as Messalonskee Lake and Belgrade Stream is currently one of the most heavily infested areas in the state. The schedule for Bass Tournaments by water, including Messalonskee Lake, can be found at: <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/docs/bassbydate0402.pdf>

FOM’s annual meeting will be held on August 8, 3:00-6:00pm at Sunrise Bagel, Main St., Oakland. There will be social time and topics will include updates on the herbicide treatment, current DEP 319 Road Construction and Youth Conservation Corps projects, and LakeSmart. Invasive Plant materials will be available. Light snacks and beverages will be provided.



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Notebook

Kennebec River Ramble Waterville to Sidney June 28

• The Annual Kennebec River Ramble, a Community Paddle from Waterville to Sidney will take place on Sunday, June 28, launching at 10 am. Hosted by Main Street Skowhegan and the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, the event is free to the community. Shuttle service is available. Participants will float the scenic 8 miles together and observe the peak of the sturgeon run. Register with mike@midmainechamber.com

Running Festival July 12 between Augusta/Belgrade

• A full/half marathon race and running festival will be held on Sunday, July 12 starting from the Elks Lodge in Augusta to Belgrade Lakes and back on a 10K (full) or 5K (half) course. Runners will be coming from all over the world. Volunteers to help with the race are needed. And everyone is invited to enjoy the day, including festivities after the race. For more information call 694-9184 or email mesamaineinfo@gmail.com

Historic Norlands Estate Provides Living History Experience

• Washburn Norlands is a 400-acre estate with a Victorian mansion, library, meeting house, one room schoolhouse, trails and a rolling farmland setting which provides living history days, tours and special events for families throughout the summer. Tours are at 11 am and 2 pm, Tuesday-Friday. Living History Days are Saturdays 9:30 am-4 pm. For admission and other information call 897-4366 or email norlands@norlands.org

Augusta: Save Your Books

• Lithgow Library is currently accepting donations on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the annual Friends of Lithgow Library Book Sale on August 13-15. Accepted for the sale will be: gently-used adult fiction and nonfiction, audiobooks, Blu-ray DVDs & DVDs, music CDs, and Children's

....Continued from page 5

spring fishing in Messalonskee Lake. Recently, Ash fought through rain and wind and some chilly temps, and caught some nice crappie and pike.

Check the 7LA Website (<https://www.7lakesalliance.org/>) and FaceBook site for upcoming events. Upcoming events include a Jun 14th Spring Ephemeral wildflower walk (10-Noon at Mt

books. The sale will be held August 13-15 with a preview on the 12th at 5 pm for a \$20 fee. 626-2415, 45 Winthrop Street, Augusta.

Belgrade

• The Belgrade Business Group is planning bigger, better, more activities for the 2026 4th of July celebration! Fireworks will be on Friday, July 3 over Long Pond. On Saturday, July 4, the day-long schedule will include kids' activities, food trucks and two parades (boats on the stream at noon and floats on Main Street at 4 pm). The activities will begin at 10 am and continue all day. Shops and stores will be offering specials and there will be music at several venues.

Waterville

• A week of jazz concerts at Colby College! Maine Jazz Camp for middle and high school students offers a solid week of jazz concerts July 12 through 18. Faculty concerts will be at 8 pm, Sunday-Thursday; student concerts at 6:30 pm, Friday 7/17 and 10 am, Saturday 7/18. 718-499-9051, mainejazzcamp1978@gmail.com

Oakland: Oakfest Turns Wild, Wild West

• The theme for Oakfest 2026, scheduled for July 24 and 25, is the Wild Wild West. New this year, there will be a Cornhole Tournament on Friday, July 24 behind Sunrise Bagel with check-in at 6:45 pm. All skill levels welcome; must be 16 years old or older to participate. \$30 per team. Call the Oakland Recreation Department with questions or 465-7357.

Skowhegan's MCS Gallery Presents 250 Art Exhibit

• "E Pluribus Unum: Maine Artists Interpret A Nation," art that captures the soul of America, is the theme of the 250th United States Anniversary art exhibit at the Margaret Chase Smith Library in Skowhegan. Free and open to the public, the exhibit will be on display through August 7, 10 am-4 pm, Monday-Friday. 474-7133. 56 Norridgewock Avenue, Skowhegan.

Phillip) and a Dark Sky Presentation (9-10:30 PM at the Homestead Nature Education Center). Register at <https://7lakesalliance.org/events> if you are interested. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the wealth of recreational opportunities this area offers. Do like they used to in "the good old days" and take a kid fishing, or on a hike, or paddling in a canoe. It's how memories are made. Or take a parent, so they can become a kid again.

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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

SURVEYING

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

WINDOWS

Hammond Lumber Company, at 34 locations: Auburn, Bangor, Bar Harbor, Belfast, Belgrade, Blue Hill, Boothbay Harbor, Brunswick, Bucksport, Calais, Camden, Cherryfield, Corinth, Damariscotta, Dover-Foxcroft, Ellsworth, Fairfield, Farmington, Gorham, Greenville, Greenville-Lily Bay Road, Kingfield, Livermore Falls, Machias, Madison, Mexico, Old Town, Palmyra, Portland, Rochester, N.H., Rockland, Skowhegan, Waterville, West Enfield, 1-800-HAMMOND, www.hammondlumber.com

WORKSPACE/TECH COACH

Winthrop Workspace, shared office space, classes, workshops, support, 117 Main Street, Suite 10, Winthrop, 395-5019, www.winthropworkspace.com



Call of the Loon

‘Eccentric’ Loon Behaviors



We receive many calls each season about a loon in distress. Fortunately, 99% of these sightings are just loons doing what loons do. The below photograph is a very normal stretching behavior called the “Foot Waggle”! Our Loon Project Volunteers love seeing this as it allows confirmation of a banded bird with its two individually colored bands on both legs. The bands also confirm the sex from our previous study of their feather samples, etc



2026 Great Pond Adult Loon preening while doing a “Belly Roll”.



A 2026 Great Pond female Loon displaying her jewelry! Bands are often confused with a fishing bobber especially if observed during a “Belly Roll”!



Just your classic Yawn!



Left: According to the loon experts at New Hampshire’s Loon Preservation Committee, “the Foot Waggle is a behavior in which loons raise one foot above the water and shake it vigorously. There are many theories as to its function—it could be a comfort movement used when loons need to stretch, it could be used to help loons reduce their body temperatures, or it could have another purpose that we are not yet aware of.”

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

Now, if you add the below example of “bathing” along with a “belly roll”, along with her 4 colored bands, you can easily understand how such activity can be misconstrued as a loon in distress and covered with clear monofilament fishing line and a bobber!

Well, we are right in the middle of our breeding season so keep your eyes peeled for an adult or two with their new offspring. And please, respect their space and keep a distance.

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.

Dick Greenan, Chairman,
BLA Loon Preservation Project



A Long Pond loon bathing!



Rereading and Learning: More About E.B. White

by Martha F. Barkley

E. B. White painted a New Yorker cover, Seahorse holding a bag labeled in Ontario. “Oats,” April 23, 1932.

J.F.K. awarded White The Presidential Medal of Freedom but was assassinated before the White House ceremony was scheduled. Maine’s Senator Muskie later presented that honor on May 29, 1964 to White at Colby College in Waterville on behalf of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

White and his wife Katharine S. White collected American humor in a huge compilation of works, *A Subtreasury of American Humor*, annotated by both and published in 1941. Katharine’s only published book was compiled by her husband the year she died (1977), *Onward and Upward in the Garden*. I loved reading and reviewing her ventures in the garden at their salt water farm on the coast in Brooklin, Maine.

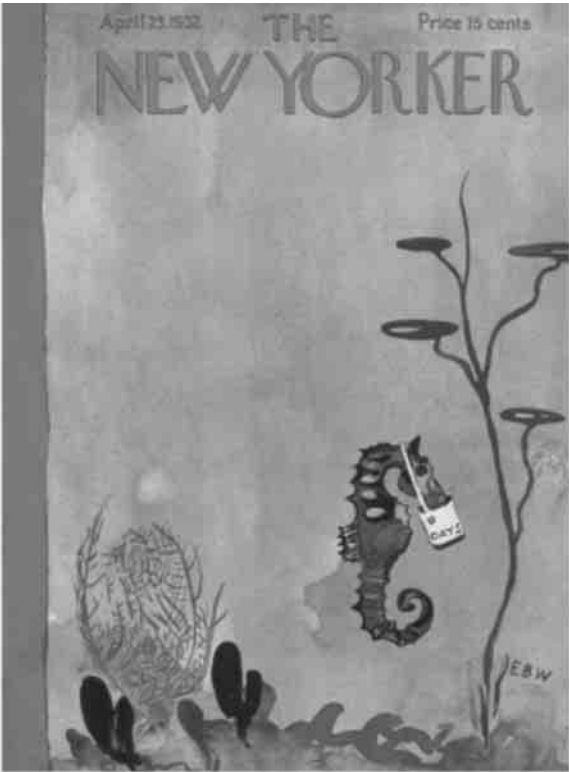
E.B. White received many awards, too many to list, but a lifetime Pulitzer for E. B. White’s works was awarded in 1978. At the girls Camp Runoia on Great Pond there is an E.B. White cottage from Snug Harbor (building moved across frozen Great Pond by camp director Betty Cobb one winter) and placed next to The President’s House for guests at Runoia.

Virginia railroad trips through the Shenandoah Valley brought about the dream of *Stuart Little*, telling this story to little ones before recorded on paper.

The Seattle Times employed White for one year only, then he cruised to Alaska and Siberia. Worked his way back on board ship and then home to NY.

Camp Otter boys camp was a summer job where White was a counselor

During WWI White tried to enlist but did not weigh enough. The New Yorker wanted writers to write “we,” but White insisted on “I.”



One Man’s Meat followed a year of writing for Harper’s Magazine when White remained in Maine for his best inspiration on the coast and at the lake.

The Trumpeter’s Swan “Louis character” was named after the famed Louis Armstrong. White needed money for Katharine’s medical care, so he wrote this children’s novel quickly, not taking years of writing and rewriting like he did for *Charlotte’s Web* and *Stuart Little*.

Aida piano tune played by White, music to his ears, like the tap of the typewriter at a very young age, seven or eight. He loved the blank sheet of paper rolled into the typewriter and the young boy also loved his evening journaling before bedtime. So many daily wonders to record and dream about. Animals and nature kept him curious as a child in Mt. Vernon, NY. There was a barn out back and chickens and animals of every kind. Years of thought and studies of spiders brought the world *Charlotte’s Web*.

So much to learn in rereading *Some Writer! The Story of E. B. White* by Melissa Sweet, Caldecott Honor Winner and neighbor on the coast to Martha White, granddaughter of White and editor of his works, post humously published.

Try a favorite read for a second time this summer and relearn or experience something new from that good old story from years ago.



Friends of Messalonskee News

By Anne Berlind

Early summer has finally arrived! Docks have been installed, boats have been launched, loons are nesting, hummingbirds are settling in around feeders, eagles are fishing, fish are biting, and the magic of Messalonskee Lake continues. Friends of Messalonskee (FOM) is already busy at work on lake health projects and education.

We are in our second year of partnership with 7 Lakes Alliance (7LA) in our milfoil operations. Last year, under 7LA management, 9,000 gallons of invasive variable leaf milfoil was removed from 10 of the 12 most infested areas. This year, with Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) oversight, herbicide treatments will be applied to 4 areas of Messalonskee that are heavily infested with milfoil. A public meeting regarding herbicide treatments was held by DEP on June 3, and treatments are scheduled for July 9.

FOM will continue to contribute to the milfoil removal efforts through 2 new community education programs coordinated by Danielle Boutin, our Lake Education Coordinator. Milfoil Survey Team volunteers monitor designated areas of the lake for new milfoil growth, and report location findings to Peter Koons, FOM’s Data Manager. Peter then coordinates with 7LA, which adds these findings to their database. FOM also has an “Adopt Your Shoreline” program, through which volunteers identify and collect milfoil fragments in front of their properties, preventing future growth. We will conduct an outreach program this year to expand these efforts. Contact friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com if you are interested in participating. In partnership with RSU 18, two plant paddle classes are scheduled for July 13 and August 10. The paddles are free and all equipment is provided.

Lake Smart evaluations are underway. LakeSmart is a free property assessment program that helps prevent toxic sediment runoff into the lake from individual properties. Janna Townsend and Bill Tiernan, the FOM LakeSmart Coordinators, will be conducting LakeSmart property evaluations again this year and developing remediation plans that include the best types and placement of plants to slow runoff. A Conservation Planting demonstration will be held at the Oakland Lakeview Cemetery on June 17 from 1 – 3pm. Park and meet at the Oakland Boat Launch Gazebo, 22 Belgrade Ave.

The Oakland boat launch will be undergoing much needed renovations and repairs this summer. The launch will be closed beginning July 6, and the project

Continued on page 10...



MLS 1658436 110 Windover Drive, Unit #7, Rome \$695K
Welcome to life on Great Pond, where this beautifully crafted 3-bedroom, 2-bath shingle-style home blends classic cottage charm with modern comfort. Located in the desirable Windover community, this turn-key property offers easy lakeside living just minutes from Belgrade Lakes Village. Enjoy boating, swimming, and fishing right at your doorstep.



MLS 1653110 151 Bickford Road, Smithfield \$1.3M
Discover your own slice of Maine paradise with this lakefront retreat. Set on 5.72 acres of private land with 200 feet of waterfront on East Pond, part of the Belgrade Lakes. This 4-bedroom, 3.5-bath home offers the perfect blend of rustic charm and modern comfort. Inside the home feels light and spacious, featuring cathedral ceilings in both the living room and kitchen, and skylights that fill the space with natural light. Both the living and dining rooms open up to a large wrap around deck making it easy to enjoy lake views and the peaceful sounds of nature.



MLS 1666042 65 Lakeshore Drive, Belgrade \$995K LONG POND – This lovely lakefront property is located on pristine Long Pond with 100 feet of private waterfront. Year-round western exposure, a nice lawn area leading to a deck and dock on the lake, and woods on both sides provide a perfect sense of privacy! It is within walking distance to the quaint Belgrade Lakes Village, a popular destination with outdoor concerts in the summer, shops and great restaurants.



MLS 1657827 208 Main Road, Chesterville \$1.295M PARKER POND!!! This exceptional property offers a perfect blend of luxurious features, stunning views and ample space for entertaining and relaxing. The landscaping and hardscaping are perfectly designed to create a beautiful and low maintenance outdoor space. The masterfully crafted cedar timber work throughout the interior and exterior adds rustic charm and sophistication, tying the whole property together. Walk down the composite deck path to find your own 179 feet of private waterfront, complete with two permanent decks and a large dock system.



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

75 Main Street, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918



— Real Estate Update —

Waterfront Homeownership in the Belgrade Lakes Region

Owning lakefront property or a home within a watershed comes with a profound level of responsibility. While our waterways are protected by entities like the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the 7 Lakes Alliance, the ultimate responsibility for their health lies with landowners.

Shoreland Zoning Laws

The first assignment for any shoreland property owner is to understand local rules. The State's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act creates a baseline standard of oversight for land areas within 250 feet of ponds, rivers, and wetlands, and within 75 feet of certain streams. However, in the Belgrade Lakes Region, our municipalities have individual ordinances that go well beyond state guidelines. Because standards vary by town, always review local ordinances on town websites or speak directly with the local Code Enforcement Officer (CEO).

Mandatory Septic Inspections

As real estate professionals, we have a strict duty to inform clients of Maine State Law that mandates a specific protocol when transferring any property within the Shoreland Zone.

Buyers must have the septic system inspected by a State-Certified Inspector prior to purchase, though they have up to 9 months post-clos-

ing if winter weather prevents it. Sellers must provide a written statement disclosing whether the system has malfunctioned during the 180 days preceding the closing. An inspection is waived if the system is less than 3 years old or has a certified inspection report less than 3 years old. If an inspection reveals a malfunctioning system, it must be repaired or replaced within one year of the property transfer.

Protecting Your Investment

The health of our lakes is the primary driving force behind local property values, the economy, and our livelihoods. Dedicated local conservation groups rely heavily on homeowners to fund and execute critical work, including invasive aquatic plant removal, Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI), and soil erosion control.

If you are looking to buy, sell, or maintain a waterfront home, reach out to your lake's conservation group or the 7 Lakes Alliance to see how you can help. Most importantly, verify before you modify. Before making any physical changes to your home, dock, or land, always consult your local CEO. Protecting our shoreline is an investment in our collective future.

Dan McCarron



The Dams Keeper Report

As of this writing, we are happy to report that all of our pond water levels are in great shape if you like water! Actually, a little bit higher than we would like no thanks to these unrelenting showers! It hasn't been exactly Chamber of Commerce weather but close enough for this time of the year. I wish the showers took place at night while I was sleeping, but nooooo. Great Pond's Village dam is currently 3.24" above full pond with one gate opened just 1'. Long Pond's Wings Mill dam is right at 4.68", also above full pond with one gate opened up three feet to bring things back down to 3" above which is our goal for all of the ponds this summer. Salmon/McGrath is now 2.88" above full pond with its calibrated valve set to the mandated 1 cfs. flow. Our neighbors on Messalonskee are actually down 2.23" below full which is just a fact of life with their electricity generation needs. Although NOAA and the 'experts' are still calling for a summer of 26% less precipitation, we'll remain vigilant in our "save the water" mode with all of our gates being closed when at all possible. It is a bit easier to deal with slightly higher water levels than wishing we had!

Precipitation for the past 10 days is just 1" whereas the actual for the past 10 days was 1.13". FYI, our normal weekly precipitation during the summer is supposed to be 0.875. Although the long-term forecast is calling for an average 26% less precipitation which is what they forecasted for the past five years, all remains good news as we pen this week's column for our farmers, wells, gardens and of course, our lakes. We'll take what we can get – as if we have a choice!

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

Enjoy your summer! It's supposed to be beautiful. But I'd keep the Goretex handy if I were you!

Welcome back!

Dick Greenan
Belgrade Lakes Watershed Dams Committee



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Enjoy life on the water to the fullest, with a ShoreMaster dock system from Hammond Lumber Company.





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Welcome to the Lakes!



LONG POND | MOUNT VERNON
3BR/4BA | \$1,360,000 | MLS 1666019
LISTED BY: STEPHANIE GARDNER



192 DEPOT ROAD, UNIT 1 | BELGRADE
2BR/4BA | \$399,000 | MLS 1665502
LISTED BY: SARAH CARSON



GREAT POND | BELGRADE
2BR/1BA | \$499,900 | MLS 1663764
LISTED BY: TRISHA CHENEY



749 WEST ROAD | BELGRADE
3BR/2BA | \$689,000 | MLS 1664986
LISTED BY: EMILY THERIAULT



GREAT POND | ROME
2.25 ACRES | \$999,000 | MLS 1663251
LISTED BY: TRISHA CHENEY



NORTH POND | SMITHFIELD
2BR/1BA | \$178,000 | MLS 1664381
LISTED BY: ELIZABETH BOULTER

221 MAIN STREET | BELGRADE LAKES | 207.495.3700 | BELGRADELAKEPOINT.COM



Oh, To Go To A Fair

Visit one of Maine's agricultural fairs this summer - or visit several of them - for a great, fun family outing.

June 11-14: Springfield

June 18-21: Pittston

June 24-27: Monmouth

July 9-12: Ossipee Valley (Hiram)

July 10-12: Houlton

July 17-19: Waterford

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.