

# Belgrade Bulletin

## March 2021



### **BELGRADE TOWN OFFICE**

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### **TOWN OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Wednesday, Friday  
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Thursday 8 a.m.-7 p.m.

### **BOARD OF SELECTPERSONS**

Melanie Jewell, chair (2022)  
Richard Damren, vice chair (2022)  
Ernst Merckens (2021)  
Kathleen Wall (2021)  
Daniel Newman (2023)

### **STAFF**

**Town Manager**  
Anthony Wilson

**Town Clerk**  
Mary Vogel

**Treasurer, Tax Collector**  
Nicholas Poole

**Deputy Clerk, Registrar**  
Charlene Houle

**Deputy Clerk, Deputy Registrar**  
Sheila Thorne

### **Select Board Highlights**

In spite of constraints because of COVID-19, the board and budget committees were able to meet via Zoom twice to review the 2021 budget. Each spoke to the various funding requests and all questions were resolved. A warrant was finalized, which allows the town to move forward with, and finish up, several projects ranging from road maintenance to pouring a cement pad at the transfer station to stabilize the trailers housing recyclables before they're transported. The budget includes modest pay increases for town staff, merit-based, as well as a second full-time firefighter/EMT, with the cost to be shared between Belgrade and Rome. The decision was made to forego the traditional in-person annual town meeting again this year; voting will be done by written ballot. The date town meeting was set for March 20. Great care was taken in crafting the warrant, minimizing the length, but not the content. The board and town manager worked to combine articles that could be merged without confusion, thus reducing the overall number of warrant articles.

Hopefully the voter turnout will rival that of the November election – nearly 80 percent of Belgrade's registered voters made their voices heard then; let's shoot for 81 percent for town meeting!

Other select board highlights from November to February:

- A moratorium ordinance was proposed, approved by voters in November, to pause applications to the Planning Board proposing cell tower, wind and solar farm construction. It gives the board time to update the ordinances.
- Several items regarding snow removal and sidewalk maintenance in the village were discussed. A 2016 agreement between the Friends of Belgrade Lakes Village and the town, voted on and approved in 2017, allocated electrical costs and maintenance to be provided by a fund established for the purpose and paid by the FBLV. It was reviewed and an amendment proposed to authorize the town to pay the electrical cost of pedestrian lighting and street lamps as well as maintain the sidewalks. The 2016 agreement was voted on by the select board and any amendment will also have to be approved by board.
- Three applications a year are allowed for nonprofit organization bottle donations at the transfer station. An application process and rules govern the boxes. Because of COVID-19, the redemption center that had been corralling the bottles and returning the money to each organization closed. A volunteer from one of the organizations stepped up to handle it, but it is necessary to comingle the donations and split the money equally between the organizations. The deviation from the traditional process was reviewed by the Transfer Station & Recycling Committee, which recommended continuing the process until another redemption center can be found to collect the bottles and separate the donations. It was further noted that the boxes should have signs that reflect the donations are being divided equally.

# Town Manager's Report

My butter-side-up view of the 2021 town meeting, in which every article is on the ballot: It'll likely lead to more resident participation in the town's decision-making.

The butter-side-down view: We'll miss the opportunity during floor discussions to explain the "why" behind the articles.

That concerns the folks who labored on the town's 2021 budget, particularly when there's a gap between what we spent last year and what we propose spending this year. In the case of the town's administrative, facilities maintenance and cemetery budgets, two factors are at play. One was a concerted effort to limit spending in 2020 because of the uncertainty of the pandemic. The second is an expectation the town's governmental activities will return to near-normal levels in 2021.

The divide is most extreme in the Recreation Department budget. Most recreation programs were canceled in 2020. That reduced expenses; it also limited revenue generation. We believe it's prudent to plan on more of our usual offerings this year, such as the Father-Daughter Dance and more robust summer camps. Additionally, we're organizing live music and craft fairs at the Village Green on a regular basis. Conversely, we've budgeted rec revenues similar to what was earned in 2020, in case programming (and expenses) must remain at 2020 levels.

In the case of public works, new Road Commissioner Jason Stevens couldn't take over the post until after a delayed election in July. As a result, we spent about \$14,000 less than was budgeted in 2020. This year, we've boosted road maintenance by \$20,000 – funded by cash on hand rather than additional taxes – to prep roads for the 2022 paving project.

We also spent about \$40,000 less than was budgeted in 2020 on road sand and salt because of relatively mild winter weather at the beginning and end of the year. We've reduced the sand/salt budget to \$101,600 this year.

Conservative budgeting and spending in 2020 helped the town weather the economic downturn. Because economic conditions remain uncertain, we're taking a conservative stance again this year. There are no new major initiatives. We've also sought to strategically use cash reserves to limit taxation.

The budget, annual report and town meeting warrant are posted at [townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting](http://townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting).

The ballot also includes a moorings ordinance that proposes two new regulations for Belgrade's lakes. First is a prohibition against houseboats staying on the lakes overnight, while still allowing overnight stays on personal recreational boats. Second is a limit on the number of moorings that property owners may have, based on the length of their lake frontage, to prevent moorings from impeding navigation and detracting from the lakes.

You can read the full ordinance at [townofbelgrade.com/lakescommittee](http://townofbelgrade.com/lakescommittee). The moorings ordinance is meant to help preserve the character and integrity of Belgrade's greatest economic, aesthetic and recreational asset – our lakes.

We hope you'll read the annual report to help inform your town meeting vote. (Please vote!) If you have questions about what's proposed and why, please call me.

*Anthony Wilson, Town Manager, 207-495-2258, [townmanager@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:townmanager@townofbelgrade.com)*

## Select board highlights, continued

- The Salt Well Remediation Committee has made recommendations to the board. Many solutions were discussed and pros and cons of each considered; a test well was drilled near an affected property to see if the well would generate enough potable water to be a shared source (it did not). The final decision is that the only viable long-term solution is to build a public water supply to be shared by the affected homes and businesses. The board is working with DOT on the parameters of the proposal and will negotiate the terms until an agreement is reached. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022.
- The Transfer & Recycling Committee is moving forward with a request for proposals to pave a section that holds the large containers corraling recyclables until transport, which has shifted. The paving was approved by voters in 2019

and postponed by the board in 2020. The decision was made to move forward with this RFP.

- Irregularities have been noted in water testing at the Center for All Seasons and Dalton rental units. Affected parties have been notified and a course of action has been discussed with the town plumber. Potential remedies include an under-the-sink water filtration system at the rentals and a larger one at CFAS.
- The board reviewed and updated employment guidelines and approved an updated library policy manual.
- Residents who are part of the Carbon Cash Back 4 ME will collect signatures to get the initiative on a future town meeting warrant after they presented to the board. The program, which is before the state Legislature, and has received support from other towns, charges fossil fuel producers

for carbon pollution and rebates the money collected to residents equally with monthly dividend checks. The group sought town support for the initiative, and after discussion, the board agreed town voters should decide. The CCB4ME initiative representatives were asked to submit a petition to the town with the required number of signatures to put the item on the 2022 town meeting warrant.

- Multiple first-time appointments and several reappointments to town committees and boards were approved.

As always, the board remains thankful to residents who volunteer countless hours to ensure the success of our community. If you are interested in serving, an application is available at [townofbelgrade.com](http://townofbelgrade.com). We would welcome your input!

*Melanie Jewell, Chair, Select Board*

## Meet the Candidates!

Three candidates are running for two select board seats in the Saturday, March 20, town election.



**Cory Alexander**

**Education:** 1984 Messalonskee High School graduate

**Work experience:** 17 years at Kennebec County Sheriff's Office in corrections, patrol deputy, 911 operator, head of maintenance; nine years Central Maine Motors as head of maintenance

**Political experience:** None. I have been an informed voter for many years on all levels of government.

**Why are you running for this office?** I believe government accountability begins on the local level. Every decision made affects our citizens and I want to represent them.

**What qualifies you for the position?** Being born and raised in Belgrade, and knowing the challenges of being a full-time resident in a vacation community.

**What do you view as the biggest challenge facing the town of Belgrade?** Cost of living in the town. Our taxes have gone up significantly over the years. Many of our oldest residents, who have lived here their entire lives, struggle on fixed incomes to continue living in their homes.

**How would you seek to address that?** I think all items brought before the board need to be closely scrutinized as to how it's going to affect the lives of all Belgrade citizens.

**Name two other priorities and what you propose to do about those.** One would be to make sure assistance programs for the town are readily available to those in need. I am sure residents will give me many ideas as to what needs to be addressed with many great ideas on how to take care of the issues.

**What's the one thing you want voters to know about you?** I want the voters to know I will stand up for what's best for the town as a whole and not just for a select few. I haven't been approached by anyone to fill a certain need, and certainly have no agenda.



**Barbara J. Allen**

**Education:** MA, New York University, management; BA, Vassar College, music

**Work experience:** 20 years fundraiser for arts and education organizations, including Waterville Opera House and UMF; 20 years founder/director of Creative Movement Program for families with young children

**Political experience:** 20 years service on local boards and committees

**Why are you running for this office?** I have greatly enjoyed living in Belgrade and being involved in many aspects of our community. This is a natural next step.

**What qualifies you for the position?** A 34-year resident of Belgrade; first-hand experience with our schools as a parent of two children; an active member of organizations that improve our quality of life (Belgrade Public Library, trustee since 2017, board chair 2019-21; Friends of Belgrade Lakes Village, committee member since 2018; McGrath Pond-Salmon Lake Association, president 1996-98, 2002-04; Belgrade Central School, Arts Enrichment Program, co-chair 2000-2005). I achieve results through collaboration and perseverance.

**What do you view as the biggest challenge facing the town of Belgrade?** Holding property taxes down by keeping the lakes clean. In protecting the town's natural resources, we can preserve Belgrade's unique character and vital tax base.

**How would you seek to address that?** Working with lake organizations and neighboring municipalities to identify and reduce threats to water quality.

**Name two other priorities and what you propose to do about those.** 1. Economic development – supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses to both enhance our community and bring in new taxes. 2. Fiscal responsibility – ensuring we maintain services without increasing the tax burden on residents. Improving services whenever possible.

**What's the one thing you want voters to know about you?** I am a catalyst for action. If I see a need, I work to find a creative solution.



**Ernst A. Merckens**

**Education:** Maranacook CSD graduate, 1982; BA, speech communication, Ithaca College, Ithaca, N.Y., 1986; MDiv Scholar, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., 2021

**Work experience:** 35 years in transportation, construction, forestry, property management fields

**Political experience:** Current Belgrade select board member. Served terms on town budget, appeals, library, transfer station/recycling and building committees.

**Why are you running for this office?** To serve wisely, assisting with frugal allocation of taxes, hiring/retaining of competent staff, addressing issues productively, continuing the tradition of Belgrade being a wonderful place to live.

**What qualifies you for the position?** Grateful to "give back" to the town I first met as a fourth-grader. I make decisions based in reality, communicating why, changing ways to be more productive/economical and deal head-on with problems that will not disappear when ignored.

**What do you view as the biggest challenge facing the town of Belgrade?** Articulating Belgrade's desire to control education spending and county apportionments that make up the largest part of our budget, magnifies how important town expenditures must be most beneficially utilized as inventively as possible.

**Name two other priorities and what you propose to do about those.** Issues like the current salt well contamination area of town and future Fire Department personnel, equipment and structures are looming as the most pressing financial concerns the Town must focus upon. Learning best costs and outcomes for dealing with long-term problems needing solutions serves to keep the same problems from returning, costing more to solve later.

**What's the one thing you want voters to know about you?** I communicate directly, not obfuscating who I am, with humility, fearlessly with ease; I love and respect my neighbors as myself.

## Town Clerk's Report

The town will vote on the annual town warrant on Saturday, March 20. The entire warrant will be a secret ballot referendum. Absentee voting has started, and you may call 207-495-2258 to request a ballot be mailed to you, or you may come to the Town Office, 990 Augusta Road, to vote absentee. We encourage you to look at the ballot in advance. While there are fewer articles (because of consolidation), they still total 29.

A recording of the Feb. 16 public hearing on the town warrant is posted at [townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting](http://townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting). You can also call Town Manager Anthony Wilson at 207-495-2258 or email him at [townmanager@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:townmanager@townofbelgrade.com) with questions about the warrant.

You must be a registered voter to participate. You may register by completing a voter registration card, which requires a photo ID and proof of residency, such as a Maine driver's license with a Belgrade address, a utility bill with a Belgrade service address, a copy of a lease or rental agreement or an oath of residency.

### Dog Registration

We registered 323 dogs in January. Because of the pandemic, the state has waived the \$25 late registration fee until June 3. You can re-register your dog online at [TownofBelgrade.com/OnlineServices](http://TownofBelgrade.com/OnlineServices). We can also re-register your dog by phone if its rabies vaccination is current.

### Vehicle, Boat Registration

When you register your vehicles or boats, please bring your current registration, your proof of insurance and your mileage. If the vehicle is new to you, please bring the Monroey label (if applicable), a complete bill of sale, proof of sales tax paid and a completed title for private sales. We don't mind looking up your registration if it was previously registered here, but bringing these items expedites our service, which is important given current health concerns.

*Mary Vogel, Town Clerk, 207-495-2258, [townclerk@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:townclerk@townofbelgrade.com)*

## Code Enforcement Officer Report

Residents seeking building permits begin that process by getting an application packet at either [townofbelgrade.com/codeenforcement](http://townofbelgrade.com/codeenforcement) or the Town Office, 990 Augusta Road. The process can be expedited by carefully studying the application form and completing it. As the code enforcement officer, I can be a resource for applicants who have questions about the application, but it's the applicant's responsibility to complete the paperwork.

Building permit applications must include a scale drawing of the site where the structure will be built. Graph paper is included in the application packet. The site plan will show how far the structure or addition will be from property lines.

When I get an application, I check it for completeness and determine whether I can issue the permit administratively or whether it requires Planning Board review and approval. Planning Board approval is required if construction is in the shoreland zone and involves a nonconforming structure, a nonconforming lot or both.

If planning approval is required, we notify you when the application is placed on the agenda. The board meets via Zoom at 6 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of the month. Agendas are posted on the Friday before a meeting at [townofbelgrade.com/planningboard](http://townofbelgrade.com/planningboard).

The Planning Board typically has a backlog of applications. Applicants should expect and plan for a lag between submitting an application and the board considering it. A complete application speeds the process. Depending on an application's complexity, the board may spend one meeting reviewing an application for completeness before considering whether to approve it at the next meeting.

I am available by phone or email to answer questions about the permitting process.

*Gary Fuller, Code Enforcement Officer, 207-495-2258, [ceo@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:ceo@townofbelgrade.com)*

## Town Election Info

Polls are open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 20, at the Center for All Seasons, 1 Center Drive .

Absentee ballots are available at the Town Office through March 16. To request a mailed ballot, call 207-495-2258. Absentee ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. March 20. A secure drop box to return ballots is available on the north (porch) side of the Town Office.

Visit [townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting](http://townofbelgrade.com/townmeeting) for:

- Annual report.
- Warrant.
- Sample ballot.
- Mailed ballot application.
- Proposed mooring ordinance.
- When, where and how to vote.

## November Election Results

A record 80 percent of Belgrade's registered voters cast ballots in the Nov. 3 election, 2,234 ballots cast out of 2,867 registered voters.

The results are:

**President:** Biden (D) 994; Trump (R) 1,166

**U.S. Senator:** Collins (R) 1,305, Gideon (D) 780

**U.S. Representative, District 2:** Crafts (R) 1,045, Golden (D) 1,168

**State Senator, District 17:** Black (R) 1,196, Collins (D) 989

**State Representative, District 76:** Emery (D) 822, Newman (R) 1,361

**Sheriff:** Mason (I) 1,237, Sayers (D) 865

The moratorium on subdivisions, cell towers, and solar and wind farms passed 1,304 to 845. That means the town has paused accepting permit applications for 180 days, which ends May 3.

### Committee Vacancies

Board and committee vacancies:  
Appeals Board  
Communications Committee  
Comprehensive Plan Implementation Oversight Committee  
Parks and Recreation Board  
Planning Board

Applications are available at [townofbelgrade.com/boardapplication](http://townofbelgrade.com/boardapplication) or at the Town Office contact Town Manager Anthony Wilson, 207-495-2258, or [townmanager@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:townmanager@townofbelgrade.com).



## A Q&A with Belgrade Firefighter Danielle Bedard

Danielle Bedard is a firefighter and advanced emergency medical technician for the town of Belgrade, a position that's shared with Rome. The town now has two full-time firefighters in addition to its volunteer force.

Bedard has been a junior firefighter since 2001, a firefighter since 2003, a basic EMT since 2009, an advanced EMT since 2019, and a full-time firefighter/AEMT since November.

The newsletter recently caught up with her to ask her about her job.

**Why did you want to become a full-time emergency medical service provider and firefighter?** It's in my blood. I enjoy being able to help and to keep my community safe.

**What are the responsibilities of your job?** Keeping the equipment clean and in working order, making sure supplies are stocked, and responding to emergencies – whether medical, a fire or a car accident – when they happen.

**What's the most rewarding aspect of your job?** Being able to see the relief on people's faces when help arrives. Being able to give them comfort on one of the worst days of their lives.

**What's the most challenging facet of what you do?** Keeping up with all the training we must do. Most of the training



is in the evening, after work, which takes time away from your family. I have young kids, which makes it hard for them because I'm not there.

**What about your job might surprise people?** One obvious thing is I'm a woman. Not many women do this kind of job. I mentioned it's in my blood; my father was a firefighter for 20 years. He held the position of assistant chief for many years. My brother is also a firefighter/AEMT like

myself. He started out as a junior firefighter, as well. We wanted to follow in our father's footsteps.

**What's the one thing you most want residents to know about staying safe in the time of COVID?** Social distancing and wearing a mask do help prevent the spread of COVID-19. If we do our part, we will help the people we love and ourselves stay safe.

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### Fire & Rescue Department Report

Belgrade Fire & Rescue responded to 395 emergency calls in 2020. We continue to respond to emergencies in a safe manner with proper personal protective equipment to protect not only our department members, but the community as a whole. We urge residents to protect our community by wearing a mask, avoiding gatherings, maintaining safe social distances and getting vaccinated as soon as possible.

Danielle Bedard has joined the department as its second full-time firefighter and an advanced emergency medical technician. The town of Rome partially funds this position. Having a second full-time responder allows us to provide 10

hours of coverage, seven days per week, year-round. Belgrade is responding to Rome for EMS coverage during those hours.

We continue to plan and work toward a new central fire station to replace the Depot fire station, which would allow equipment and on-duty personnel to be centrally located in town. This will improve emergency response times to the entire community. The current Depot station has no running water and conditions are cramped. We cannot open the compartment doors on the trucks without hitting the walls. We continue to search for land for the new station. If anyone in the Depot area has land available for pur-

chase, reach out to the Town Office.

This year the department will get a new tank truck that voters approved in 2019. The pandemic delayed its manufacturing. This truck will replace a 33-year-old truck, and will remain in the fleet for years to come.

We want to thank the local companies that allow their employees who are members of the department to leave work to respond to emergencies. The department can't do what we do without our volunteers being able to respond to calls for help.

*Dan MacKenzie, Fire Chief, firechief@townofbelgrade.com, 207-495-7739*

## Transfer Station Report

The Transfer Station's pink punch cards expire March 31. Punch cards let Belgrade homeowners dispose of bulk items (tires, sofas, TVs, mattresses, etc.) at no extra cost. New cards should be available in mid-March. Request a punch card from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays and until 7 p.m. Thursdays at the Town Office. More about bulk waste disposal can be found at [townofbelgrade.com/transferstation](http://townofbelgrade.com/transferstation).

The surface around the recycling center will be repaved in June, the first project of a much-needed infrastructure rehab. Construction will occur on days the station is closed and should take two weeks. We are also contracting for construction of a concrete pad for the storage containers in front of the recycling center.

We are also working on a few new recycling programs:

- Oral care products, packaging (e.g. toothbrushes, empty toothpaste tubes);
- Razors, blades, plastic packaging for shaving implements;
- Cellphone cases and packaging.

Details will be forthcoming. The Transfer Station & Recycling Center Committee and the town remain committed to exploring recycling programs that may benefit Belgrade.

### General reminders:

- Proceeds from the bottle boxes are being divided evenly between the box owners – the Belgrade-Rome food pantry, Belgrade Bible Church and Union Church – a move endorsed by those entities and the select board. (See select board highlights for more information.)

- We continue to accept donations of pet food, supplies and toys for the Kennebec Valley Humane Society.

- We also accept tattered flags, which are turned over to the American Legion for proper disposal.

- We offer sensitive document shredding. See an attendant. But, please, no truckloads.

*Ken Scheno, Transfer Station and Recycling Center Director, 207-495-3326, [transferstation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:transferstation@townofbelgrade.com)*

## Belgrade Public Library Report

Folks looking to escape their comfort zone and read something new are invited to join the Belgrade Public Library's friendly book group, which meets virtually at 10:30 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month. We also host an online discussion group at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of the month as a part of the Exploring Race & Relationships program. Residents interested in participating in either can register by contacting the library.

The library has been working on initiatives to bring improved services to patrons. If you can't drive or leave your home, the Book Delivery Program can provide you with library materials. The library gathers items you request, and a Neighbors Driving Neighbors driver delivers them. At the end of the loan period, a driver retrieves the items. Contact the library via phone or email to tap into this new service.

We've also entered into a collaboration with the Belgrade Historical Society and the 7 Lakes Alliance for a community read. The goal is to remind everyone how lovely Belgrade is and to appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds us. Residents may register at the library to reserve a copy of "The Overstory," by Richard Powers. The novel is about five trees with unique life experiences that connect with nine Americans, bringing them together to address forest destruction. The official program launch will be April 22, Earth Day.

Stay updated on library news at [townofbelgrade.com/library](http://townofbelgrade.com/library) and on the Belgrade Public Library's Facebook page. The library is at 124 Depot Road. Hours are 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 2 p.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday and Friday, and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday.

*Megan Aube, Library Director, 207-495-3508, [librarydirector@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:librarydirector@townofbelgrade.com)*

## Recreation Department Report

After a quiet winter, the Recreation Department is looking forward to a busier spring and summer. Here are some great recreational offerings worth anticipating:

**Easter Egg Hunt** – The annual Easter egg hunt will be Saturday, April 3, at the Community Center for All Seasons, 1 Center Drive. Participants must reserve a time slot by Friday, April 2, at 495-3481 or [recreation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:recreation@townofbelgrade.com). The hunt will take place entirely outside, so please dress for the weather.

**Craft Shows** – We will host a series of craft shows at the Village Green. The shows will be on the last Sunday of the month from May to September, with an additional show on Saturday, Oct. 9. Each show will be from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and will feature wares created by local artists and crafters.

**Early Morning Paddle** – Starting June 2, Recreation Director Lily Schubert will lead a relaxing paddle at 7 a.m. Tuesdays on Great Pond. Canoes, kayaks and paddleboards are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Paddlers must bring their own lifejackets.

**Camp Golden Pond** – The Recreation Department will continue to follow state and CDC guidelines concerning COVID-19. That will include limited spaces available in summer day camps, no field trips, no hands-on games, mask-wearing and lots of hand-washing. We will welcome campers entering kindergarten through the eighth grade for a summer filled with fun. Children who attend will spend their time playing outside, swimming, boating, learning new games and catching up with old friends.

For more information about any of the Recreation Department's programming, including summer camp registration, visit [townofbelgrade.com/recreation](http://townofbelgrade.com/recreation).

*Lily Schubert, Recreation Director, [recreation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:recreation@townofbelgrade.com), 207-495-3481,*

# Belgrade Historical Society

The Belgrade Historical Society thanks all our members both old and new for a very successful membership drive. It's not too late to become a 2021 member. Visit [belgradehistoricalsociety.org](http://belgradehistoricalsociety.org) to find out how.

The BHS is gearing up for an exciting summer. Since the pandemic postponed live programs last summer, the society has been working to find other ways to share Belgrade's history. Last year we produced two videos, available on YouTube, about the Old Town Meeting House and Belgrade Lakes Village. This year we would like to expand the collection to include Belgrade Depot and North Belgrade.

Work on the Old Town Meeting House will resume this spring. We expect to have new clapboard siding and the exterior painting done this year. The town house renovation has been such a rewarding experience, and the BHS appreciates all the wonderful contributions and comments from folks near and far.

Eric Hooglund, BHS curator, is working with Arcadia Publishing on "The Belgrade Lakes Region" for its Images of America series, with books that feature photographs of many areas of Maine. While the BHS has many wonderful pictures, if anyone has photographs that can be scanned to our database, please contact the society. In addition, we are looking for input from the public on a cover photo for the book. All photos for the series, including the cover, are in black and white, so we need something incredibly special for the cover.

This summer the BHS is collaborating with the Belgrade Public Library and 7 Lakes Alliance on a community read (see library report for details). In addition, 7 Lakes Alliance and BHS will have programs that highlight conservation throughout Belgrade's history.

The BHS is looking for volunteers to help with these projects and programs. This is an exciting time to be involved and make a lasting contribution. Contact the society by email at [belgradehistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:belgradehistoricalsociety@gmail.com) to become involved.

*Dianne Dowd, President, Belgrade Historical Society*



Photo by Regina Coppens

## Meeting House Update

Renovations on the Meeting House, also known as the history house, continue. Built in 1814 on Cemetery Road, it has always been owned by the town. In recent years it was mostly used as a garage until the Belgrade Historical Society was given permission in a 2017 town vote to renovate and restore it and to use it for storage and display of the BHS collection.

In 2019, the building was placed on Maine Preservation's Most Endangered Historic Places list. Fortunately, the society was able to raise enough money to start repairs last year. Hopes are exterior work will be finished this summer and interior electrical work will be done soon.

*Dianne Dowd, BHS*

## What role does Belgrade Regional Health Center play?

By Amy Madden, MD

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the role that "social determinants of health" play in the well-being of individuals and communities. Social determinants of health are "conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life risks and outcomes," according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Belgrade Regional Health Center has targeted social determinants to improve health outcomes for years; this work has intensified during the pandemic.

BRHC is one of 11 nonprofit Federally Qualified Health Centers under the HealthReach umbrella. FQHCs are government-funded to provide health care to underserved populations. BRCH sees about 8,500 patient visits yearly from Belgrade as well as nine other towns and cities. Services include primary care, behavioral health, psychiatric services and neuromuscular medicine. We often collaborate with community partners to

address social determinants of health. Some examples:

We received a grant from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care to buy bags of food for patients with food insecurity. We have a small food pantry at the health center, assisted by Good Shepard Food Bank.

We connect patients with partner organizations such as Neighbors Driving Neighbors to help with transportation needs.

We collaborate with Spectrum Generations to support older adults with challenges related to aging; a community resource specialist from Spectrum visits with the patient to determine how to best meet needs.

We assist patients with insurance issues and medication costs. In 2020, we saved patients more than \$22,000 on medication.

While our focus during the pandemic is keeping our community healthy and safe, we also strive to uncover and address issues that significantly impact our patients – namely social determinants of health.

## Town Services Available Online

Visit [townofbelgrade.com/online-services](http://townofbelgrade.com/online-services) for:

- Absentee ballot request form
- ATV/snowmobile registration renewal
- Boat registration renewal
- Deer-hunting permit
- Do not call registry
- Dog license renewal
- Duplicate vehicle registration
- Elected officials directory
- Hunting & fishing licenses
- Maine Revenue Services
- Moose hunting application
- Motor vehicle reregistration
- Notary services. The Town Office has multiple notaries on staff. There is no charge for this service for town residents.
- Trailer re-registration
- Vanity license plate search
- Water test kits



# Healthy Lakes, Healthy Community



Photo by Maureen Milliken

## Friends of Messalonskee Lake Association

Friends of Messalonskee Lake Association continued work on the Messalonskee watershed during 2020. In addition to the work our milfoil crew completed, FOM contracted with New England Milfoil to bolster removal efforts. Here's what we accomplished last year:

- 10,856 square feet of new barriers installed.
- 7,060 gallons of variable leaf milfoil removed by New England Milfoil.
- 13,925 pounds (278.5 bags) of milfoil removed by the FOM milfoil crew.
- 2,399,258 square feet of completed milfoil/plant survey and plant removal completed within the watershed.
- 2,723 courtesy boat inspections completed.
- 14 instances of invasive plants entering the lake stopped.
- Four new LakeSmart property evaluations completed by FOM volunteers.
- One property LakeSmart-certified.

One of the most important programs FOM offers is courtesy boat inspections at the Sidney and Oakland boat launches. We are seeking volunteers to help with inspections in 2021. This is a fun way to make a significant impact on the entire Belgrade Lakes watershed. We provide the training. If you are interested, email [friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessalonskee@gmail.com).

Recently, FOM worked with Pan Am Railways to remove old railroad ties that were leaching chemicals into the lake. Pan Am removed eight loads of ties from the Belgrade and Oakland shorelines. A special thank-you to Town Manager Anthony Wilson and FOM board members Janna Townsend and Linda Warner for their hard work in getting the ties removed from tracks.

To join FOM, visit [riendsofmessalonskee.com](http://riendsofmessalonskee.com) or check out our Facebook page.

*Mike Guarino, FOM Board President, [mainewilderness@gmail.com](mailto:mainewilderness@gmail.com)*

## Browntail Moth Infestation Alert

The Maine Forest Service has alerted the town about a dramatic increase in browntail moths. Browntail caterpillars have hairs that can cause a rash similar to poison ivy, as well as respiratory distress. The hairs can continue to cause problems for years when mowing or other activities stir them up. In late sum-

mer, there was enough damage from just-hatched caterpillars in Kennebec County that it could be mapped from the air. The forest service says now is the best time to check for signs of the moths. For information, visit the town website, click "news" and find the article on browntail moths.

## 7 Lakes Alliance

The lakes and land surrounding Belgrade are among our greatest assets, supporting health and well-being as well as our economy and quality of life. With public-private partnerships, the 7 Lakes Alliance is working to keep our region healthy, including:

**Stopping Invasives:** With support from Belgrade, the state, Belgrade Lakes Association and many individuals, 7 Lakes will employ an experienced milfoil removal crew in 2021 that will build on 2020 successes, including removing 33,000 gallons of invasive milfoil. They'll continue a new practice of using burlap, rather than plastic, barriers to suppress invasive growth and will engage more volunteers to monitor shorelines through Adopt-A-Shoreline.

Courtesy boat inspectors are also crucial, as increased boat traffic elevates the risk of new and spreading invasive plants. In anticipation of inspecting thousands of boats – there were more than 7,000 inspections on Great Pond last year – 7 Lakes is hiring inspectors for this summer.

**Water Quality:** 7 Lakes and Colby College continue to monitor water quality on all Belgrade lakes. Sediment analysis critical to the Great Pond management plan was completed this winter. New approaches this year will help us to better understand algae-promoting phosphorus pollution, including from tributaries.

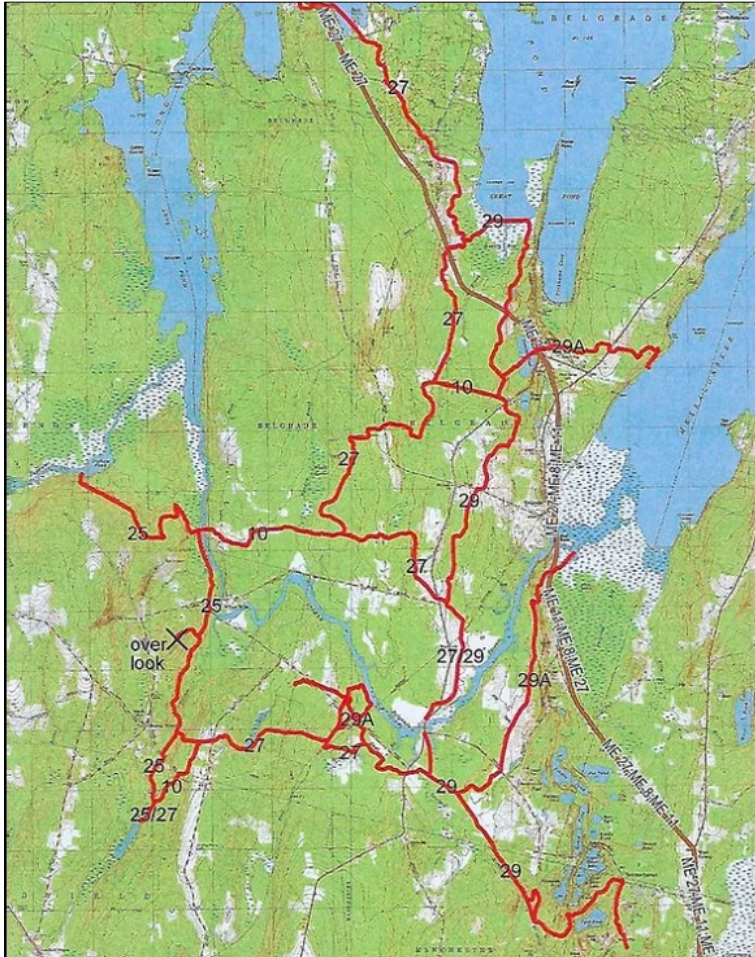
In 2020, Belgrade and Rome, 7 Lakes, BLA, the state, Kennebec County Soil and Water Conservation District and others developed a 10-year Great Pond management plan. The science-based plan recommends action to improve and protect water quality. The key finding is simple: we must keep dirt out of the lakes.

Meanwhile, Youth Conservation Corps and LakeSmart programs help landowners do just that. 7 Lakes' YCC crews protect the lakes from harmful algal blooms by installing best practices such as buffer strips to keep dirt and the phosphorous it carries out of lakes. LakeSmart helps landowners do the same while protecting their property values. For more information, including job opportunities, visit [www.lakealliance.org](http://www.lakealliance.org) or call 207-495-6039.



## Belgrade Draggin' Masters Trail Map

Spring may almost be here, but there's still plenty of good sledding left this season. The state mapped the Belgrade Draggin' Masters 43 miles of trails via GPS in March 2019. The club works diligently to maintain trails, and holds two social events a year — the club cookout and the landowners thank-you supper. For more information, and a bigger version of the trail map, visit [belgradedragginmasterssc.com](http://belgradedragginmasterssc.com).



## Upcoming Community Events

**March 24** — Virtual Photography Webinar with Elise Klysa, 6:30 p.m., via Zoom, sponsored by Belgrade Public Library, tips on perfecting your springtime photography skills, call the library to register at 495-3508, or email [library@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:library@townofbelgrade.com).

**April 3** — Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Center for All Seasons, 1 Center Drive, registration by April 2 required, 495-3481 or [recreation@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:recreation@townofbelgrade.com).

**April 7** — Author Nancy Marshall, "Grow Your Audience, Grow Your Brand," 6:30 p.m. via Zoom, sponsored by Belgrade Public Library, call the library to register at 495-3508, or email [library@townofbelgrade.com](mailto:library@townofbelgrade.com).

**April 22** — Launch of community read, "The Overstory," by Richard Powers, sponsored by Belgrade Public Library, Belgrade Historical Society, 7 Lakes Alliance. Details TBA.

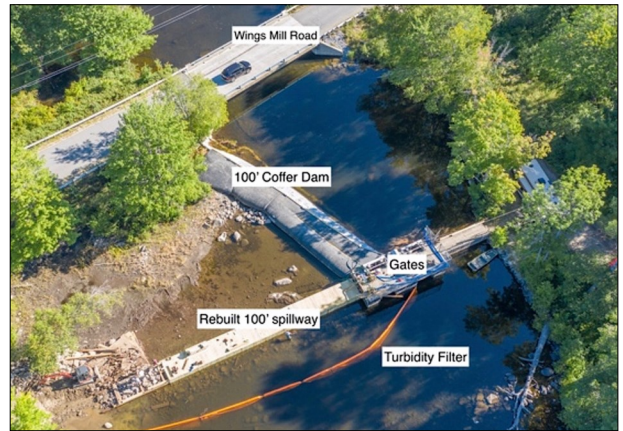


Photo by Alex Wall

The Wings Mill Dam remediation project is almost complete.

## Belgrade Inter-Lakes Dam Committee Report

As I write this update, all of our ponds are in great shape and far better than at any time in the past five years because of what felt like endless heavy rain events this fall. We are well into our 2020-21 fall/winter lakes drawdown. Long Pond is 13.56" below full pond, Great Pond, is 7.32" below full and Salmon Lake is down 9" from full.

We still have all of the gates opened just to get back down to the drawdown schedule, which calls for Great and Long ponds to be drawn down to 1.5' - 2.0' and Salmon to 1.0' - 1.5' by Nov. 1, which is now a moot point.

The Dams Committee had a successful 2020, despite the COVID distractions. Phase I of the Wings Mill Dam remediation project went according to plan, with phase II to commence this spring. It was quite an engineering feat to complete restoration of the 100-foot spillway/walkway without losing any water in the process. That was thanks to a state-of-the-art 100-by-30-by-8 foot rubber and nylon reinforced coffer dam, essentially a large water bag that weighs 2,500 pounds, dry and which required three visits from the Central Maine Crane Company.

Phase II involves replacing most of the lumber in the walkway to, and including, the caged gate. That will, once again, require the services of Waterville-based Kavestone LLC Construction Co. and their coffer dam.

The persistent leaking of the 100-year-old dam is finally history. With several thousand dollars of stainless steel hardware and pressure treated hemlock, we should easily get another hundred years this time around.

Thank you all for your continued support and enjoy the rest of your winter.

*Dick Greenan, Secretary, Belgrade Lakes Inter-lakes Dams Committee*



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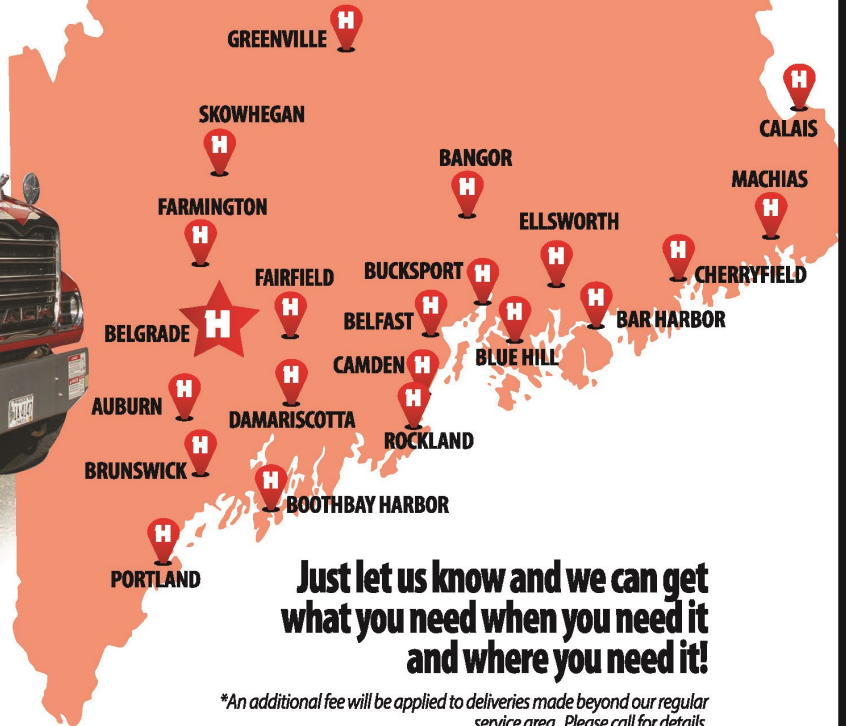
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One day at a time Coaching

Want to see the Belgrade Bulletin in color or get a PDF copy?  
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Hammond Lumber is generously sponsoring the Belgrade Bulletin to support the cost of mailing it to all residents during the COVID-19 crisis.



<b>Library Trustees</b>	<b>Board of Parks and Recreation</b>	<b>Transfer Station Committee</b>	<b>Fire &amp; Rescue</b>
1st Thursday @ 7 p.m.	4th Wednesday @ 6:30 p.m.	2nd Monday @ 7 p.m.	2nd Wednesday
<b>Selectpersons</b>	<b>Planning Board</b>	<b>Appeals Board</b>	<b>Road Committee</b>
1st and 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30 p.m.	1st and 3rd Thursday @ 7 p.m.	4th Wednesday @ 7 pm	4th Wednesday @ 6:30 p.m.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, town meetings are taking place via Zoom.

**Check [townofbelgrade.com](http://townofbelgrade.com) for information on meetings and for other information.**

**Click “Notify Me” to get updates on town news and committee information**

The Belgrade Bulletin is published quarterly by the Belgrade Communications Committee, which meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

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