BRCA Announces Photo Contest

Once again, we are looking to our members for a number of talented and exceptional photographers to help us celebrate the scenic beauty of the Belgrade Lakes region by entering the BRCA Photography Contest for our 25th anniversary in the year 2013. Why so early since BRCA’s 25th anniversary is in 2013? In order to get entries finalized, make decisions, and get a 2013-year calendar printed and available by the end of 2012, we have to start now. We would like to print a commemorative BRCA calendar for this event. This area has a lot to offer, and we hope that our members will help us capture what makes the region special. Twelve winners of the contest will receive a BRCA calendar, along with mention on our website and in a future BRCA newsletter. The winning photographers will be announced and their photographs will be on display at the BRCA Annual Dinner in September of 2012.

Grab your camera and take a hike or paddle! The rules are simple, and there is no entry fee. All photos must be taken on a BRCA property, the Kennebec Highlands, or on one of the Belgrade Lakes. The contest is open to all members of the BRCA. Many of the photographs may be used in the annual report, membership and other brochures, and the website. If you would like any additional information, please contact the office at 207-495-6039. Entries are due by July, but can be submitted at any time.

Please submit your entries to:
BRCA, P.O. Box 250, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918
Or via e-mail at brca@belgradelakes.org

25th Anniversary Photography Contest for a 2013 BRCA Calendar

Deadline: July 31, 2012!

Join our second Photography Contest!

Photography Contest Guidelines

- Open to all members of the BRCA.

Enter up to 3 pieces in the following categories:

1. The Belgrade Lakes Watershed’s seven lakes (East, Great, Long, McGrath and North Ponds and Messalonskee and Salmon Lakes)

2. The BRCA trails and the Kennebec Highland trails (The Mountain, Mount Phillip, French Mountain, Sanders Hill, and Round Top)

Work must be of sufficient resolution to produce 8 x10, b/w or color. Entries will not be returned. All work must be clearly marked with your name, address and phone number, along with the category and location of photo. If you have your photos on disc, a copy on disk as well as printed form would be appreciated.

- All photographs must be taken on BRCA property – see our website for a map of properties or one of the Belgrade Lakes.

- All winning photographs may be used for promotional purposes by the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance. Photographers retain rights to the photograph.

Executive Director’s Column

As I write this first newsletter since moving into the new Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC), I am reminded of an old French proverb, “Plus ca change, plus c’est la meme chose,” which basically means the more things change, the more they stay the same. I am now staring out a new window looking over a different part of the stream that has recently frozen over as winter tightens its grip. Through the wonders of technology, I can now share my view. Go to http://www.belgradelakes.org/ and click on the link for the MLRC weather Channel, then click on the box that says, “video.” Our streaming video camera is directly over my office window and scans over our rain gardens and the stream. (cont. on Page 2)


Executive Director’s Column (cont)

It is a beautiful view and one that won’t change over time thanks to the generosity of the Pent large Family who own the property on the far side of the stream and have placed 16 acres into a permanent conservation easement held by the BRCA.

In the gallery of the MLRC, there are a lot of old photos of the region. There are changes in the cars in the streets, in the houses and buildings, and in the way people are dressed. But almost every picture shows a lake or a mountain prominently in the background, making the setting easily recognizable despite the changes. It is our landscape and our lakes that have been bringing people to this area for centuries and providing the opportunity to live and make a living in a beautiful setting. It is incumbent on us, the current caretakers of this place, to protect it for future generations. That is basically the mission of the BRCA and the other conservation organizations that share the conservation a tradition.” If you haven’t visited yet, please stop by and I will give you a tour and explain what we are trying to do here.

The conservation organizations in the MLRC cannot save the lakes and landscape by ourselves. We need our members to become involved in the process, perhaps through LakeSmart as Mel describes above. In fact we need more than our members: we need our members’ friends who are not yet members to join and become involved. If you have a friend or family member who shares your conservation ideals (cont on Page 3)
### BRCA Education & Outreach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Make your own Ecosystems, Families and Children are encouraged to join Clark Freeman, Wednesday, January 18th at 6:30 p.m. at the Maine Lakes Resource Center as we learn about ecosystems and there many different varieties. Participants will create their own ecosystems to take home with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, January 21st at Time TBA</td>
<td>Introduction to Snow Shoeing, Join Peter Roderick and members of the AMC as we learn the basics to snow shoeing. Enjoy a winter's day in the highlands as we ascend Round Top overlooking beautiful pristine snow blanketed wilderness. Make sure to bring food, water and proper winter layers for the hike. Call (207) 293-2704 for details &amp; to pre-register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, January 28th at 10 a.m.</td>
<td>Trees on Skis, Join W arren Balgooyen at his W elling W ell Farm on Saturday, January 28th at 10:00 a.m. as we explore on skis the many unique trees and bait raising ponds on his property. We will learn how to identify trees by their winter buds and bark and hear about how he has developed his lands overtime to their current condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, February 4th, at 1:00 p.m. at the MLRC</td>
<td>Bat House Building Workshop, Join Corinne Dawson on Saturday, February 4th, at 1:00 p.m. at the Maine Lakes Resource Center. Pre-registration required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, February 7th, at 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Full Moon Ski Trip, Dick Greenan will be leading a Snow Shoe hike out onto Long Pond to experience the full moon and its power to light up the night. Join us as we brave the cold to experience a magical evening filled with friends and fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, February 18th at 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Bushwhack the Kennebec Highlands, If you enjoy hiking the Highlands this is a must do trip as Brian Alexander leads a Bushwhacking hike in the height of Maine's winter. Participants are expected to have at minimum moderate snow shoeing experience and be in good physical health as this hike will be long but rewarding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, February 25th at 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>East Pond Bog Ski Trip, Join Mel Croft as we venture our way onto the frozen East Pond Bog by cross country ski. This interesting area is located to the north of East Pond and offers stunning views of the surrounding wetlands and head water of East Pond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 3rd 11:00 - 4:00 p.m. Belgrade Community Center For All Seasons, Belgrade</td>
<td>Family Fun Day, Join Maine COLA, BRCA, BLA, Colby College and the Recreation Department on Saturday, March 3rd, from 11- 4 p.m. as we host a family fun day at the Center For All Seasons. There will be a variety of events for the whole family, including: Ice Fishing, Educational GPS Scavenger Hunt, Food, Camp Fire, Beverages and more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 3rd at 12 p.m. Noon</td>
<td>GPS Scavenger Hunt for Families, Looking for something free to do? Join the BRCA, BLA and Maine COLA at the Center For All Seasons as Clark Freeman hosts a scavenger hunt for families. GPS units will be used in the search for various objects hidden around the centers grounds. Families interested in participating should call (207) 495-6039 in advance to secure a GPS receiver for the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 10th at 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Snow Shoe the Kennebec Highlands - Explore a winter wonderland in the Kennebec Highlands with Clark Freeman as we enjoy the ending of the winter season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 24th at 10:00 a.m. W ishing W ell Farm, Norridgewock</td>
<td>Maple Sugar Tour, Join us at W elling W ell Farms in Norridgewock as BRCA Board Member, W arren Balgooyen, gives a tour of his maple sugaring methods and the refining techniques that are used to harvest nature’s natural sugars on his beautiful farm. This is a must do event for families!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ED Column (cont):** who is not yet a member, please ask them to join or consider giving them a gift membership. If you have a new neighbor, a BRCA membership is a perfect welcoming gift. Send me their name and I will be happy to provide them a complementary membership in your name! Any member who refers a new member will receive a special gift as a token of our appreciation. 

All the best, Peter Kallin, Executive Director.
**Conservation Corps**

The BRCA Conservation Corps was founded in 1996 by a group of concerned residents of the Belgrade Lakes Watershed. The Corps’ mission is to preserve and improve water quality in the Belgrade Lakes by addressing erosion and runoff issues on property throughout the watershed. Each summer, the Corps hires a crew of local high school and college students to work on projects designed to control erosion and protect the lakes. Since its inception, the Corps has completed hundreds of projects throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

**HOMEOWNER PROJECT REQUESTS**

The Conservation Corps is constantly seeking candidate project sites. Corps labor is free of charge. Homeowners pay only material and permitting costs. Contact the Conservation Corps director, Clark Freeman, to schedule a property visit and learn how you can improve your lake’s water quality. Call us (207) 465-6039 or email: brca@belgradelakes.org or visit our website: www.belgradelakes.org

You may want to take advantage of the Conservation Corps’ FREE labor for erosion control on your property if....

.....you have more grass than other vegetation in your yard
.....your shoreline is eroding (you noticed loss of soil, undercutting, exposed roots)
.....your driveway goes downhill towards the lake
.....you have soil displacement under roof drip lines
.....you have spots of bare soil in your yard
.....you have a path that goes downhill to the lake
.....you just want to know what you can do to improve the water quality of the lakes.

The Conservation Corps is constantly seeking candidate project sites. Corps labor is free of charge. Homeowners pay only material and permitting costs. Contact the Conservation Corps director, Clark Freeman, to schedule a property visit and learn how you can improve your lake’s water quality. Call us (207) 465-6039 or email: brca@belgradelakes.org or visit our website: www.belgradelakes.org

You may want to take advantage of the Conservation Corps’ FREE labor for erosion control on your property if....

.....you have more grass than other vegetation in your yard
.....your shoreline is eroding (you noticed loss of soil, undercutting, exposed roots)
.....your driveway goes downhill towards the lake
.....you have soil displacement under roof drip lines
.....you have spots of bare soil in your yard
.....you have a path that goes downhill to the lake
.....you just want to know what you can do to improve the water quality of the lakes.

**Before**

![Before Image](attachment:Before.jpg)

**After**

![After Image](attachment:After.jpg)

**Have a Truck to Donate?**

The BRCA Youth Conservation Corp is searching for a truck to transport our equipment between project sites during the summer, and we hope that BRCA’s dedicated members can help us. If you or anyone you know has a truck (in good running condition, preferably 4-wheel drive) that you would like to donate, please contact the BRCA office at (207) 495-6039 or email brca@belgradelakes.org. As always, gifts to BRCA are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations and go toward a great cause.

You may want to apply (or refer someone) to be a Conservation Corps summer worker if....

.....You are a high school student age of 16 or above
.....You live in or around Oakland, Mercer, Norridgewock, Rome, Sidney, Smithfield, Mt. Vernon, or Belgrade
.....You love being outdoors in the summer and don’t mind a little sweat
.....You’re dependable and hardworking
.....You like to work on projects to help the environment and are similar to landscaping
.....You have a positive attitude and are a good problem solver
.....You’d like a job where a lake is usually part of the scenery
.....You want to have a fun summer working with other people your age on a common mission
Hunting season is over and thoughts of hibernation and winter food gathering should indicate my work is slowing down. However, because Milfoil doesn’t disappear over winter, it means planning, preparing and making choices. But lucky for me, this winter I have a lot more help in this battle. Several organizations are teaming up to ambush the established plants in Great Meadow Stream with a nice, spirited spring slap in the face.

For those who live on Long Pond and Great Pond, you should be receiving a rather eye-opening newsletter from the Belgrade Lakes Association. In this newsletter an article will introduce in great detail Variable Milfoil, our current battle and what you can do to help.

Non-native Invasive Variable Leaf Milfoil
Discovery on Great Meadow Stream (Overview)

* Variable Leaf Milfoil, an invasive plant species, was found in Great Meadow Stream which flows from North Pond into the North end of Great Pond. It is spreading into North Bay.

* During the fall of 2010, BRCA and BLA (Belgrade Lakes Association), in partnership with DEP, developed an aggressive action plan to survey and remove the milfoil from the stream in order to control its spread. DEP issued a permit to BRCA for this work. From August to October of 2010, twenty nine volunteers from the all the lake associations in the watershed, spent over 350 hours removed over 600 gallons of milfoil from the stream. Over 7000 square feet of benthic barriers were manufactured placed on patches of milfoil.

* A Surface Use Restriction (SUR) was signed by the Commissioners of the Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) that prohibits motorized boats in the stream between the Rte. 225 Bridge and the mouth of the stream in Great Pond. Recently this restriction was extended a small distance (about 500 ft) into North Bay at the mouth of the stream. This area is marked by buoys placed by the DEP.

* Hand-pulling events were scheduled during the 2011 summer. Volunteers from all the lake associations and Camp Runoia Counselors in Training (CIT) put in well over 100 volunteer hours. These events continued every Monday at 8 AM all summer. DEP divers have also helped to remove milfoil in the mouth of the stream. This year’s survey and removal actions continued through September, 2011. We need snorkelers, canoeists, kayakers, and others willing to get into the water to help out whenever possible as determined by the Milfoil Committee.

* Volunteers are needed next summer to make this effort successful. Please contact Corinne Dawson, Milfoil Coordinator for BRCA at 207-495-6039 or belgradelakes.com to learn how you can help with this effort.

* Since boat use or fishing in the stream could cause the spread of milfoil and hamper removal efforts, BLA, BRCA, and DEP requested that boaters and fishermen refrain from using the Great Meadow Stream.

* The Milfoil that is removed is composted by Black Gold Vermiculture and Research in Belgrade Lakes. Organic milfoil compost will be available for sale at the new Maine Lakes Resource Center (MLRC). It will help your gardens grow! All proceeds will be returned to the Milfoil Program.
Stewardship: Boy Scout Troop #453 Makes Big Impact in the Highlands

For two consecutive Sundays in November (20th & 27th), Troop 453 of Belgrade helped the BRCA on stewardship days to improve the hiking system in the Highlands. On Sunday, November 7th, four members of the troop joined Pete Kallin and Clark Freeman from the BRCA at the Sanders Hill Loop to re-blaze the trail and cut back any brush that was impeding hiking. The day was a success and the scouts learned the basics of trail design and how to maintain a trail system properly.

After a nice Thanksgiving and our first large snow fall of the year, Troop 453 was still eager to get out on our trails to help upgrade them before the approaching winter sports season. On Sunday, November 27th, with snow still coating the ground we hosted Troop 453 for a second Stewardship day. This time they showed up with a ten member crew at our Roundtop trail. Our goal was to install stepping stones over a small creek and muddy section of trail allowing hikers to pass without receiving a wet and muddy pair of boots. In the process, everyone volunteering received their own wet and muddy pair of boots as we moved large rocks through the snow and ice and dug in the mud for five hours setting the series of stones in place.

Collectively, the two days were a great help for the BRCA. Having volunteer groups like the Boy Scouts is what allows the BRCA to make a big impact. By mobilizing local volunteers to come out and support our efforts we can greatly improve local conservation properties that the public can in turn enjoy as the recreation assets they provide. These conservation properties are purchased and maintained for the public’s recreational use. As a user we hope that you understand that most of the work done on these properties is by volunteers like yourself. Join the BRCA or other organization that participates in similar activity’s to help give back to the lands and trail systems that you enjoy.

BRCA Education & Outreach Winter 2011-2012

It is hard to imagine that the winter of 2012 is upon us. Even though the temperatures have been mild, soon we will need our layers to keep warm. Time to locate our snow shoes, cross country and alpine skis that we hid after the last long winter season. Gather up your winter, non-cotton layers and let’s explore a winter wonderland together. Whether you enjoy the winter by moseying through the woods on snow shoes, cutting through a crisp trail on your cross-country skis, or whizzing downhill on your alpine skis, winter provides activities for all.

If you will be in the Belgrade Region this winter, please stop by the new Maine Lakes Resource Center and say hi, ask for a tour or just see what we are currently working on. The BRCA Education Program will be hosting a series of winter events, ranging from winter snow shoe and cross-country skiing hikes to educational workshops for families and a family fun day to cap off the season and celebrate the upcoming spring with friends and family. Join us as we explore Maine’s snow blanketed wilderness and you might just learn a thing or two. Events are held weekly (most events are on the weekend) so if you will be in the area make sure to check out what’s new in 2012 and come join in the fun!

Events are electronically posted on BRCA’s Website, belgradelakes.org, the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce’s Website, and Facebook:
www.midmainechamber.com  www.facebook.com
2012 BRCA Youth Conservation Corp Appeal & Bob Joly Award

You Didn’t Know? The BRCA Youth Conservation Corp is entering its 17th season of work to improve water quality throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed...

Founded in 1996, BRCA’s Youth Conservation Corps works to protect the water quality of the Belgrade Lakes. Since its inception, the Conservation Corps has completed over 770 projects throughout the Belgrade lakes Watershed. The Conservation Corps works on private and public property throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed, providing assistance to homeowners, businesses, and municipalities that want to make their property more lake-friendly. The Conservation Corps does not charge homeowners for labor; the operating costs of the Corps are covered by generous support from lake associations, towns within the watershed, and private citizens like you. Please consider making a donation to the Corp which will directly support the operational costs for the 2012 season.

Our mission is large, and to continue our work we sponsor an annual appeal to raise the necessary funds needed to operate the Corp. Without the support of our dedicated members and property owners who have seen the great work the Corp has completed, the Corp would not be able to function at the capacity we do today. The past two years, the Corp has worked on over 45 properties each season, addressing non-point sources of pollution (NPS) for each property.

Another way you can contribute to the Corp is through the Bob Joly award. Bob Joly, one of the founders of the Conservation Corps, passed away on February 9, 2011. The Bob Joly Youth Conservation Corps Award was created to honor Bob's legacy. Two awards of $250 each, funded by donations to the Corps in Bob's name, will be awarded to the outstanding Corps crewmember at the end of each summer work season. While Bob will no longer have a physical presence on our board, he will always be with us spiritually as the Corps carry on his legacy to protect and preserve our lakes. The award is presented to member(s) of the Corp who go above and beyond just working but truly understanding the impacts they are making each day at work and want to better our watershed. This year's winners were Levi Mason and James Cumming.

Donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 250, Belgrade Lakes, ME, 04918 and are greatly appreciated. If you are interested in having the Corp complete work on your property, call the BRCA at (207) 495-6039 and ask for a FREE site visit from the Conservation Corp Director, Clark Freeman, to discuss possible best management practices (BMP) to mitigate storm water on your property. We are also looking to replace our truck this year. If you have a 4-wheel drive pick-up truck you are considering upgrading, please consider making a tax-deductible donation of your old truck to the Conservation Corps.

BRCA Executive Director Search

Change is coming to the BRCA. I don’t like change, but it's part of life. Looking back over my life I've successfully weathered change after time, and often life was even better afterwards. It's all in ones frame of mind. With that preface, Pete Kallin, our Executive Director (ED) for the past 5 years has elected to retire May 1, 2012. It's not that Pete doesn't like his job. On the contrary, those of you who know Pete can see the passion he has for our watershed. But Pete has reached a time in his life where he wants to spend more time with his family, and more time hunting, and fishing.

With no disrespect to the next ED, I doubt that we will be able to replace Pete. I'll defer to an upcoming newsletter, closer to his retirement, to extol the talents and virtues of Pete. For now I'd like to update you on our plans to find a replacement.

We’ve formed a Selection Committee, comprised of BRCA Board Members Jane Eberle, Bill Swan, Dick Greenan, Don Mairs, Mark Heuberger, and me. Pete will also serve on the committee. We developed a job description that encapsulated everything that Pete does (well almost everything, we didn't want to scare off potential applicants) and posted that on five different job search websites in mid-November. We already have 20 applicants. The posting will close on Dec 31, 2011 and by mid January 2012 we’ll have high-graded the list of applicants to 5-10 candidates. The next steps are to interview those applicants, select our preferred candidate, and strive to have the new ED begin work on April 1, which will allow for one month overlap with Pete.

Before Pete retires he'll have all of our programs mapped out for the 2012 summer season, ready for the new ED to implement. Fortunately our Milfoil Director, Corinne Dawson, and our Youth Conservation Corps Director, Clark Freeman, are talented employees with at least one year of experience in their respective jobs. We also have a very knowledgeable and seasoned Office Manager in Mary Kerwood. Mary, Corinne, and Clark will be of tremendous value to our new ED, and along with the BRCA Board, I’m confident that we will continue to progress all aspects of the BRCA and run effective programs during the transition to a new ED. Fortunately, Pete is staying in the area, so he is just a shout away if we need his help, and I’m sure we will find ways to take advantage of Pete's knowledge and talents once he retires.

Page 7

Mel Croft, BRCA President
To view the BRCA Newsletters in full color with active hyperlinks visit our website.

To the new Maine Lakes Resource Center, our e-mail has changed from gwi.net to belgradelakes.org.

So, our new general e-mail is brca@belgradelakes.org

Peter Kallin, PhD  
BRCA Executive Director  

Mel Croft  
President  

Don Mairs  
Secretary  

Dick Greenan  
Treasurer  

David Axelman  
Member at Large  

Warren Balgooyen  
Member at Large  

Chris Cook  
Member at Large  

Pat Donahue  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Jane Eberle  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Bruce Hazard  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Mark Heuberger  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Jack Schultz  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Maggie Shannon  
Belgrade Lakes Association  

Bill Swan  
Member at Large  

Peter Kallin, PhD  
BRCA Executive Director  

Mary Kerwood  
Office Manager  

Corinne Dawson  
Milfoil Program  

Clark Freeman  
Conservation Corps Program  

http://www.colby.edu/chemistry/Weather/MLRC_Weather.html