BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

BRCA Celebrates 20th Anniversary Photo Contest

BRCA’s 20th Anniversary Photo Contest has some beautiful photos from BRCA members celebrating the scenic beauty of the Belgrade Lakes region. This area has a lot to offer and our members helped us capture what makes the region special. Ten winners of the contest will receive a BRCA coffee mug, along with mention on our website. There are more photos ahead.

“Maine Perfect” by Marc LeClaire overlooking Great Pond

“Wheeler’s Pine Rest camp on Salmon Lake” by Ken and Barbara Leach

Please note that this special anniversary edition of our newsletter is in full color as our electronic version on our website is always. To reduce our printing and postage costs, we encourage everyone to sign up for the electronic version by sending us an e-mail at brca@gwi.net

See AQUAFEST details on page 9.
President's Column
Do Anniversaries Matter?

I think so. A 100 year anniversary is a testament to community and relevance. When 80% of NY Stock Exchange listed companies that were in business 100 years ago have gone out of business or merged or morphed into other forms, it says something about BLA and Maine’s slower pace that BLA is here today and more needed than ever.

BRCA is 20 years old, and is looking to the future. As a land trust, BRCA is entrusted to protect the lands it conserves in perpetuity, without end. This legal phrase didn’t mean much to me when I joined BRCA as treasurer 10 years ago, but it has sunk in. BRCA is building an organization that we hope will be here in 100 years to conserve the land and water of the Belgrade Lakes region.

Executive Director’s Column

It continues to be an exciting and busy summer, albeit a bit soggy. Our Youth Conservation Corps recently wrapped up their season after completing 55 projects and our Courtesy Boat Inspectors are well on their way to inspecting well over 6000 boats and one of our inspectors, Katie Jacobs, removed Eurasian milfoil from a MA boat launching into Great Pond. We got approval from the Land for Maine’s Future (LMF) Board for our Kennebec Highlands Expansion project although we didn’t get the full amount we were hoping for.

Our Education and Outreach Committee has had a very successful summer, leading nature hikes, presenting educational programs, and guiding canoe trips. Thanks to a generous donation from one of our members, we hosted a very successful archaeological program that drew a hundred people to a public lecture and dozens to a series of archaeological surveys and digs the following week. Planning for AQUAFEST continues and we are building towards a very successful event.

On the down side, we have been taken aback by the discovery of Eurasian milfoil in Salmon Lake near the outlet stream to Great Pond. Eurasian milfoil has been described as “the pit bull” of invasive plants and represents an extremely serious threat to our lakes. It was heartening however to see the rapid and vigorous response by Maine DEP, the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP), the members of the McGrath Pond-Salmon Lake Association, the Belgrade Lakes Association, and student volunteers from the University of Maine at Farmington. DEP twice deployed teams of divers to hand pull plants from the cove, and teams of DEP personnel and lake association volunteers have been conducting surveys throughout Salmon Lake as well as in the Hatch Cove area of Great Pond and the stream that connects the two lakes. We are optimistic that we caught this infestation early enough to keep it in check although it will be a lot of work over the next couple of years before we will be able to declare victory.

We are still continuing to try to expand our membership and encourage more volunteers to become involved in our programs. We are looking for new members who are a lot like our current members- in love with this part of Maine and concerned enough to help protect it.

So, anniversaries matter. If we fail to get the sustainability job done in the next 100 years, I question whether BRCA will be in business; its relevance will have passed. But if we are reasonably successful, and I think we can be, we will leave the region a better place for our children’s children. That’s an anniversary worth celebrating.

And, thanks again.
Charlie Baeder
Belgrade Lakes and Farmington adds momentum to the Bureau of Parks & Lands efforts to provide landscape-scale conservation of Maine’s most special places. Future generations will thank us for protecting these gems.”

Responding to total requests that exceeded available funds by 60%, the LMF Board was challenged to meet the conservation needs of the State. “The Board understands that it is taking a calculated risk”, said Tim Glidden, LMF director. “It is possible that some of these projects may struggle due to reduced funding but we hope that the strong partnerships supporting these projects will prevail.

The Land for Maine’s Future Program was created in 1987 in response to concerns over the loss of critical natural areas and wildlife habitat along with traditional access to undeveloped lands for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation. To date, the Land for Maine’s Future Program has protected over 490,000 acres of Maine’s best recreational and natural areas. The Program also seeks to protect farmlands through the purchase of development rights and public access to water for fishing boating and commercial marine activities. Working with other state agencies, numerous local governments and charitable non-profit groups, the Land for Maine’s Future Board adheres to a “willing seller only” policy. A series of previous bond issues, overwhelmingly approved by Maine voters, provides funding for these projects.

The Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance received $227,000 of the $412,000 we had requested. We plan to add over 1,000 acres to the Kennebec Highlands between the Kennebec Highlands including either fee purchase (603 acres) or conservation easements (463 acres). We will be conducting a capital campaign in the near future to raise our cost share portion of this project.

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The finalists, located in all 16 Maine counties, include an addition to the State’s holdings in the Grafton Notch area that will protect a key portion of the new Grafton Loop Trail that has been drawing new visitors to the Western Mountains. “These projects represent strategic investments in Maine’s future”, said public board member Leon Gorman. “In addition to conserving important aspects of the State’s natural heritage, many of these projects will also contribute to Maine’s economic health. With tourism such a big and growing part of Maine’s businesses, these conserved lands are a part of the State’s economic infrastructure right along with its roads, bridges and power grid.” As an example, the Wabassus Lake project will protect miles of shoreline in the heart of the internationally famous Grand Lake Stream community of hunting and fishing guides, craftsmen and sporting camp owners.

More than three quarters of the new projects are located in southern and coastal Maine towns, many of which are struggling with mounting development pressures and sprawl. Patrick McGowan, Commissioner, Maine Department of Conservation and Board member said, “LMF funding to expand the Kennebec Highlands between the Kennebec Highlands via either fee purchase (603 acres) or conservation easements (463 acres). We will be conducting a capital campaign in the near future to raise our cost share portion of this project.

BRCA Education & Outreach

Saturday, Aug. 30
All Day
AQUAFEST
Cocktail Party for the Lakes (Friday evening, 5K Race for the Lakes, Fun Run, Kid’s Corner Challenge with the Lakes Event Course, Kayak/Canoe Race, Family BBQ, Farmer’s Market, Art Mart, and other events.

Thursday, Sept. 11
5:15 p.m.
Annual Meeting
Alden Camps
Join fellow members and friends to hear the latest watershed news, enjoy a delicious dinner, and socialize.

Friday - Sunday,
Sept. 19, 20, & 21
Common Ground Fair
Fairgrounds, Unity
BRCA Booth at the Common Ground Fair and special lecture by BRCA Executive Director, Pete Kallin.

Please call the BRCA office 495-6039 for details and to sign up for an event so we may notify you in case there are any changes in the schedule due to inclement weather.

Summertime with BRCA

It all started with wanting to get visitors and locals alike out on the trails to gain a sense of appreciation for the beauty of the area. Margaret Pietrak began leading hikes from the five trailheads in the Kennebec Highlands and BRCA properties during the summer of 2006. Since that summer, a group has formed and the Education and Outreach Committee has been established. The goal to educate and nurture a sense of appreciation for the history and natural world of the local region fuels the volunteers. This summer there has been a stronger effort to spread the word about events through flyers, website, Summertime in the Belgrades and word of mouth. Each year word has spread and eager visitors and locals have walked and learned. This year more activities have been added to the schedule beyond hikes including guided canoe trips, biking, talks and activities. Leaders of the events include Brian Alexander, Warren Balgooyen, Eric Harms, Peter Kallin, Margaret Pietrak, and Gi Reed. All deserve special thanks for volunteering their time and knowledge to help promote the BRCA mission. The response to the activities has been encouraging! Hikes and canoe trips have been well attended offering BRCA the opportunity to educate about the watershed it is so actively conserving. Please check out the schedule for the rest of the summer! Just call the BRCA office to sign up for an event! If you have any suggestions for future events or would like to lead an activity, contact the BRCA office. A list for fall and winter outings will be posted on the website as the time nears.

SAVE the DATE: Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance’s Annual Meeting

BRCA Annual Meeting
Thursday, September 11, 2008, at 5:15 p.m.
Alden Camps, Oakland, Maine
Alden Camps has once again generously donated the use of their facilities for the BRCA annual meeting.
Alden Camps is located at 3 Alden Camps Road off of Route 137 in Oakland.

Buffet dinner: beef, chicken, and vegetarian entrees will be available, along with salad, dessert, and other fixings. Cost: $19.00 per person (tax and gratuity included), payable to Alden Camps at the meeting.
You are welcome to BYOB.

Join fellow members and friends of the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance on Thursday, September 11, to hear the latest watershed news, enjoy a delicious dinner, and socialize. Bring along a friend or two and introduce them to the BRCA’s efforts to protect the land, water quality, and natural heritage of our Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

Please RSVP to (207) 495-6039 or brcamaryk@gwi.net by Thursday, September 4th.

Find out what BRCA has been up to! Great progress and new opportunities…and a little BRCA business, too.

Photo (left)
“Belgrade Sunrise” by Carrie Beth Weaver

Photo (right)
“Sunset on Great Pond Summer 2004” by Michael Bernstein
Archeology in the Kennebec Highlands

Driving down many roads in Maine you may notice a rock wall or a worn path going off into the woods. These sights often lead me to question what happened; what was there 50 or 100 years ago? It turns out there are folks who have careers trying to answer just those questions, The Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Small cemeteries and moss covered rock walls that are characteristic of many Maine back roads are evidence of Maine’s history. Further investigation leads to homesteads of farmers who first cleared the land and built the rock walls to keep livestock. It’s hard to believe much of the forest we now treasure was once cleared field not so long ago. The stories of these settlers and pioneers lie in the depths of the Kennebec Highlands.

The Kennebec Highlands, fortunately conserved by forward-thinking citizens, is rich with history. Several historic cellar holes, barn foundations, rock walls and cemeteries have been identified and documented by the Maine Historic Preservation Committee through its first archaeological survey for Land for Maine’s Future in 2003. The towns of Mount Vernon, New Sharon, Rome and Vienna all have a bit of history wrapped in the Kennebec Highlands with past residents farming and creating homes as far back as the mid 1800s. By the early 1900s, many of the sites were no longer recorded on maps, leaving us to wonder the fates of the families who were no longer there.

A new survey began with an informative public lecture on Wednesday, August 6, given jointly by Leon Cranmer and John Mosher on the history of the Kennebec Highlands and its historic sites so far noted. The lecture introduced archeology in Maine, explained basic archeological concepts and methods, related what was learned in the first study of the Kennebec Highlands and what the current study planned to cover.

In the week following the lecture, the general public had the opportunity to participate in 3 ½ days of field surveys in the Kennebec Highlands in which over a dozen new sites were discovered. In the second half of the week, the public was invited to participate in an all day archaeological digging workshop, at the Farnham Farmstead on BRCA property. Thank you to all who came and helped us.

To truly understand the present, we need to explore the past. It helps us to gain an appreciation for the way of life that brought people to live here and visit over and over, generation after generation. The cellar holes and rock walls now overgrown by forest, are just pieces to the puzzle which help to create a sense of awareness and a sense of belonging to this place.

“It’s not just important, dead white men that we ought to remember, it’s everybody. Their stories are harder to find, because the people we are talking about lived lives like you and I do, sort of below the level of historical scrutiny.”

-Jay Adams, director and curator of Old Fort Western.
Our sixth summer has been hot and productive on many fronts, particularly on the frontline of aquatic invader defense. The high prices of gas might have slowed down the tourism, but the boaters keep coming, and the inspections keep rolling. To date, the Courtesy Boat Inspectors (CBIs) have put in over 2000 hours of coverage at your local boat launches, and over 5000 boat inspections have been completed. Our inspectors have removed Variable leaf milfoil from several boats leaving Messalonskee Lake, and have removed Eurasian milfoil from a boat launching at Great Pond.

The Milfoil committee was formed in 2002 in order to coordinate invasive plant prevention efforts throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed. This collaboration between the five lake associations, Belgrade Lakes Association, East Pond Association, McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake Association, North Pond Association, and Snow Pond/Messalonskee Lake Association, has made it possible to have CBIs at all the public boat launches in the region.

Some of the CBIs are paid employees, covering critical times at the ramps that each lake association determines; others are dedicated volunteers who fill in those times that cannot be covered by paid staff due to lack of resources. Of note, the entire McGrath Pond and Salmon Lake Association’s Board of Directors received CBI training and spent significant time covering the ramps this summer. The CBIS have continued to prevent both Variable-leaf Milfoil and Eurasian Milfoil from entering our uninfested lakes.

The public’s reception to the program has been great, and the awareness has increased about the issues of invasive plants. I’m sure that many of you have met some of our crew, and our crew appreciates the friendly interactions, and positive experiences they encounter daily. Our whole community relies on the lakes that surround us, and with your participation, donations, and positive feedback the program becomes stronger and more affective. On behalf of the CBI program, we sincerely thank you for caring, engaging and sharing your positive support.

Thanks to the BRCA Courtesy Boat Inspectors on Staff

Alan Brackett  
Mike Avery  
Brendan Cloukey  
Matthew Collins  
Ian Davis  
Heather Doolittle  
Ben Dubois  
Felicia Dumont  
Robert Giggey  
Brandon Hall  
Katherine Jacobs  
Megan Kerwood  
Colby LaPlante  
Brad Loomis  
Lindsey Mathes  
Katherine Mills  
Aaron Romac  
Stephen Squiers  
Nicholas Stevens  
Caitlin Wyman  
Lila Zanuccoli

“Loon” (above) and “Autumn Reflection” (below) by Carrie Beth Weaver

“Off Long Pond toward Lost Pond” (above) and “Conservation Land leading to Lost Pond” (below) by Maryjane Shiverick in October 2007

Page 6
AUGUSTA—Confirming an August 1st discovery of Eurasian water milfoil (Myriophyllum spicatum) in Salmon Lake, a headwater of the Belgrade Lakes region, the Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (DIFW) mobilized their Rapid Response Plan to suppress the aggressive invasive aquatic plant before it has an opportunity to proliferate. The Plan deploys trained personnel, equipment and other resources without delay.

“This finding, especially in headwaters of a major lake system, calls for a quick and precise response because Eurasian water milfoil is considered more aggressive than the variable water milfoil which exists in 25 ponds and lakes in Maine,” said Paul Gregory, an environmental specialist for the DEP. “We have seen in the recent past that a rapid response to a new infestation can significantly limit and even eradicate an invasive species. That’s our objective.”

On August 5th, DEP biologists surveyed the site where the plants were first detected -- a shallow cove between a public boat ramp off Route 8 and an outlet stream leading to Great Pond. Determining that the infestation is sparse in density, DEP dive teams removed the Eurasian water milfoil by hand on Friday, August 8, and Tuesday, August 19.

Beginning August 11, DEP and BRCA coordinated in-depth surveys of Salmon Lake, an outlet stream leading down stream to Great Pond, and the inlet cove in Great Pond to determine whether the aggressive plant is established elsewhere. Meanwhile, state officials deployed buoys identifying plant sites, improved signage at the nearby boat ramp, communicate with lake shore residents on appropriate boat usage, and BRCA increased the hours of Courtesy Boat Inspections occurring at the boat ramp.

“DEP officials discussed the infestation, rapid response plan and sought assistance from area residents at the previously-scheduled annual meeting of the Salmon Lake-McGrath Pond Association on Thursday August 7th at the Belgrade Center for All Seasons in Belgrade.

Also known as Ellis Lake, Salmon Lake’s 695 acres are located in Belgrade and Oakland. The infestation was first detected by Kurt Lakin, a summer resident from Tennessee and a fisheries biologist with first-hand knowledge of Eurasian milfoil. Only one other water body in the state, a 46-acre gravel pit in Scarborough, is infested with Eurasian milfoil. In total, 29 out of Maine’s 5,700 ponds and lakes contain an invasive aquatic plant species.

To date, a few fragments have been found in the stream but no plants have been found outside the cove where the original infestation was noted.
OFFICIAL 2008
SUMMER FISHING
DERBY & RAFFLE

The Fishing Derby offers prizes from our select local sponsors. Guide services, GPS units, and more!

Electronic Fishfinder
Value $300

Full Day Guided Fishing Trip for 2
Value $300

$200 Gift Certificate

Swan’s Guide Service

Full Day Guided Fishing Trip
Value $350

Half Day Guided Fishing Trip, Value $175

Mid-Maine Marine

Gift Certificate for Marine Store Accessories
Value $350

6 hour Guided Fishing Trip
Value $300
397-4972

Summer Photo Fishing Derby
Date: Memorial Day to August 30, 2008
Location: Belgrade Lakes Watershed

Send in your photograph or e-mail a digital photograph of your “trophy” fish caught in any of the lakes or ponds in the Belgrade Watershed with $5 and you are eligible to enter our raffle. A great event for all ages! All proceeds go to preserving the natural resources of the Belgrade Watershed.

Enter the BRCA Summer Fishing Derby & Raffle until 11 a.m. on the day of the final drawing. All prizes to be selected by drawing at the AQUAFEST Awards Ceremony. Maine State fishing regulations are in effect. Registration forms are available at the seven Belgrade Watershed boat ramps from our Courtesy Boat Inspectors, at the BRCA office in the village, or on our website.

Pete Kallin, BRCA Executive Director, and his grandson, Nathan Kallin, just having caught his second fish ever. This is an entry for the Official 2008 Summer Fishing Derby and Raffle.
Belgrade Watershed Aquafest

Ongoing programs of the BRCA Lake Trust include Milfoil control, Conservation Corps, support of the five lake associations, and a watershed-wide working group to improve water quality and public enjoyment of the seven Belgrade lakes for all who live, work, visit, and play in the 13 towns of the Belgrade Watershed.

KID’S CORNER CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:
- Passport thru the Watershed
- Musical Milfoil
- Stream Critters
- Working Watershed
- T-shirt Painting with a free t-shirt to take home!

When kid’s visit each lake station, their “passport” is stamped.
When a kid’s passport gets all the stamps, they earn a free ice cream.

The PARTY FOR OUR LAKES and ANTIQUE BOAT DISPLAY at the Village Inn on Friday, August 29th, was sold out and we want to thank all who made this possible.

BRCA Lake Trust

We are all in this together...

The 5K Registration is from 6:30 to 7:45 am at Camp Runoia, Point Road.

The 5K RACE for the LAKES is from 8:00 to 8:40 am. It is a Timed Road Race, Safe, Rolling course, Out and Back from Camp Runoia Gates. The entry fee is $18 on Saturday.

The 5K Award Ceremony is at 8:45 to 9:00 am. It includes Overall Men and Women, 1, 2, 3 Men’s and Women’s in six age categories.

The FUN RUN Registration is from 8:30 to 10:45 am at CFAS Route 27, Belgrade.

The KID’S CORNER CHALLENGE is from 9:00 to 11:00 am. It is Center for All Seasons FREE!

FREE RIDES ON MELINDA ANN, a pontoon boat with lake learning lab! From the Dock at the Center for All Seasons.

FUN EVENTS FOR FAMILIES:
- Lake Activities Event Course
- T-shirt painting
- Ice Cream!

The FUN RUN, WALK, CRAWL, or CREEP (dogs too!) is from 11:00 am at the Center for All Seasons around the Village flower triangle and back. $5/person, $10/family, or FREE with pledges for sponsorship.

The BARBECUE AND FAMILY SWIM is at 12:00 at the Center for All Seasons Picnic Area. $5/person, kids under 3 Free.

The 1:00 to 3:00 Kayak Clinic is at the waterfront of Center for All Seasons.

The GPS Clinic is from 2:00 pm at CFAS Picnic Area.

The KAYAK RACE is from 2:00 to 3:00 pm at the Dock at Center for All Seasons.

ALL DAY ACTIVITIES IN THE VILLAGE
- 8 am to 2 pm in the Village
- FARMERS’ MARKET at the Yellow House Lawn
- ART MART at Artists and Artisans in the Village
- 7 pm COFFEE HOUSE AND OPEN MIKE at Union Church, Featuring Live Music

$ Fee will be charged for these activities.

Please thank all of our sponsors who are listed on the back page.
Conservation Corps: New Look, Same Great Taste!

The BRCA’s Youth Conservation Corps wrapped up its 2008 work season on August 14, following a busy summer in which our two crews of local students completed a near-record 55 projects throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed. By far the most visible Conservation Corps project of the summer was completed in the first week of the season, when the crew installed a rain garden and a set of infiltration steps at Day’s Store in Belgrade Lakes in order to collect and infiltrate runoff from the driveway next to the store. Other Conservation Corps projects this summer included riprap, ditch armoring, buffer gardens, runoff diversion, and bare soil stabilization. Since its inception in 1996, the Conservation Corps has completed 549 projects in the Belgrade Lakes Watershed, helping to prevent soil erosion and protect the water quality of our lakes.

Some of you may also have noticed the new look of the Conservation Corps this year. With the help of the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Morrissette Motors of Waterville, Mission Trailer of Waterville, Trailside Performance of Winslow, and the generous support of many concerned citizens of the Belgrade Lakes area, the Conservation Corps purchased a truck and two new trailers to carry tools and equipment between project sites. Look for the Conservation Corps throughout the Belgrade Lakes watershed as we continue our work to protect the lakes we all love!

With the 2008 work season in the books, the Conservation Corps has begun looking ahead to 2009. Corps Director Jason Bulay is currently visiting sites and arranging projects for next summer. If you are interested in a work project on your property next year, contact Jason at the BRCA office or via email at brcacc@gwi.net.

BRCA Thanks the Conservation Corps

Jason Bulay
Cody Baeder
Sam Mathes
Jackson Bouchard
Whitney Bushey
Jon Dumont
Ben Seel

Dan Pelletier
Matt Seel
Stephen McLeod
Isabel Burgess
Tim Davis
Ryan McLeod
Sean Strothmann
And don’t forget us northern folks still up here in the winter keeping all safe and warm......

“Birdhouse in Snow” December, 2003

“Ice on Great Pond”(all above)

Photos by Michael Bernstein

BRCA is planning a 2009 calendar with some of our member’s photos. If you have any photos for the BRCA calendar 2009, please submit to brca@gwi.net or stop by the office to have them scanned.
Photos by Dick Greenan, BRCA’s Board Member and Treasurer
Please thank all of our AQUAFEST sponsors:

The HILDRETH STEWART CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

NORTH POND ASSOCIATION

BELGRADE REGIONAL HEALTH CENTER

Hight
Chevrolet-Buick-Pontiac-GMC

Savings Bank of Maine

Hammond Lumber Company

Kennebec Savings Bank
your community bank since 1870

NATIVE NOTIONS
Ecological Landscape Design & Contracting

Also thank all of the wonderful community members that volunteered to make this possible.