

THE BRIDGE

Winter 2020-21
Norridgewock, Maine

ph (207) 634-2252
www.townofnorridgewock.com

2021 Annual Town Meeting Preview

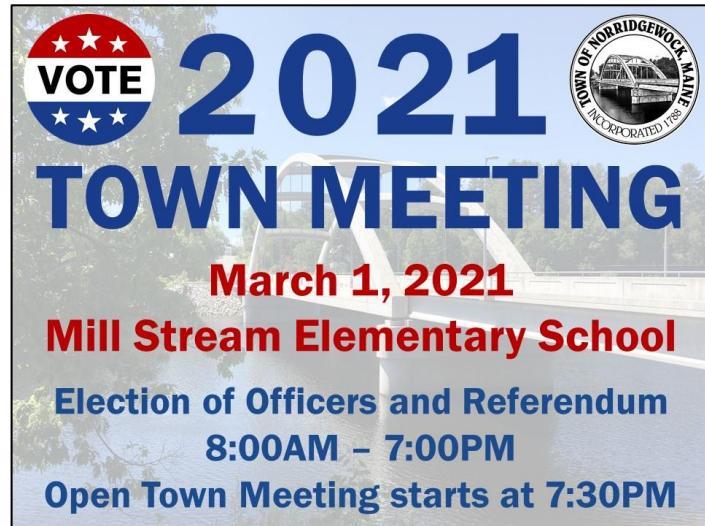
Absentee ballots now available at the Town Office

Believe it or not, Town Meeting time is here once again. The first Monday in March, voting will take place throughout the day at Mill Stream Elementary, and the open town meeting will take place at 7:30 in the evening. Absentee ballots are now available for the election of officers and one referendum question. An ordinance entitled *Town of Norridgewock Building and Property Maintenance Ordinance* will also be considered by secret ballot.

There are two contested races on the ballot: Board of Selectmen and Board of Tax Assessors. For the Board of Selectmen, Charlotte Curtis is seeking to return to the board facing off against incumbents Matt Everett, Ron Frederick, Jim Lyman, Lindsey Lynch, and Sallie Wilder. For Assessors, Sallie Wilder is looking to regain a seat on the board after narrowly losing last year. She faces incumbents Charlotte Curtis, Ron Frederick, and Jim Lyman.

There are several vacant offices for which no one is running: Planning Board (3 seats), Budget Committee (3 seats), and MSAD 54 School Board (1 seat). Write-ins are accepted. In addition, Becky Ketchum is running unopposed for a seat on the Budget Committee, Jason Dixon unopposed to the Sewer Commission, and Marnie Bottesch is seeking another term as Library Trustee— all three are incumbents.

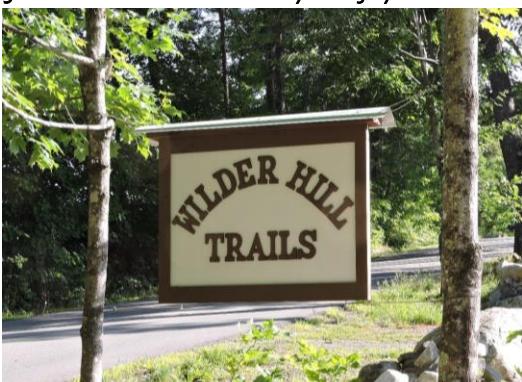
Polls will be open at Mill Stream Elementary School from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and the open meeting will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. Voters will utilize the side entrance as usual. For absentee ballots, stop by the Town Office or call 634-2252. ♦



A graphic for the 2021 Town Meeting. It features a red circle with the word "VOTE" and three stars. To the right, the year "2021" is written in large blue letters. Below "2021" is the text "TOWN MEETING" in blue. Underneath that, the date "March 1, 2021" is in red, followed by the location "Mill Stream Elementary School" in red. At the bottom, the text "Election of Officers and Referendum" and "8:00AM – 7:00PM" are in blue, and "Open Town Meeting starts at 7:30PM" is also in blue. In the top right corner of the graphic is a circular seal for the "TOWN OF NORRIDGEWOCK, MAINE INCORPORATED 1785".

Zoomed Out? Need to Get Out of the House? Take a Hike!

Join the Collard Family, Enjoy the Outdoors at Wilder Hill Trails



Wilder Hill Trails (WHT) is a small group of trails accessed off of Wilder Hill Road in Norridgewock. WHT is a great place for walking, running, fat tire or mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. Motorized vehicles are not permitted on the property.

There are two miles of trails, both open fields and wooded. It is open and free for public use year-round. Wilder Hill Trails is a wonderful place for children and friendly dogs to run and play, too. Try it out— you'll like it! While the trails are open to the public, they are private property. Many thanks to Marc Collard for sharing this wonderful section of his property with the community. It is greatly appreciated.

To get to the trails, take Wilder Hill Road 2.7 miles from Mercer Road and the trails will be on the left. Marc reports that they are working on updating the information board in the parking area that shows maps of the various trails. Bonus: The board will also showcase some of the poetic works of nearby neighbors, such as Dr. Baker— new poets are always welcome, too. Check out Wilder Hill Trails on Facebook. ♦ RFK

Norridgewock Welcomes New, Full-Time Firefighters

Andrew Dexter and Josh Corson Bring a Local Connection to Firefighting

It has been since March 2019 that Norridgewock voters signaled their support for the addition of full-time firefighters on the Fire Department's roster. After a period of grant applications, recruitment, and selection, the Town's vision finally became a reality in October. The selection process consisted of a written exam, physical agility course, as well as two live interviews with the hiring committee. In late September, it was Chief Jones' honor to announce the selection of Joshua Corson and Andrew Dexter as Norridgewock Fire's first full-time firefighters.

Amid the pandemic, the ability to fully interact with the community has been stifled, but the new full-timers are working diligently to acclimate to their roles and look forward to the days of safely engaging with the community. ♦



210 • Firefighter Joshua Corson

Josh was born and raised in Mercer and is a graduate of Skowhegan Area High School. As a child, he watched his father serve as a firefighter in Norridgewock and chose to follow in his footsteps. In one capacity or another, Josh has been involved with NFD since he was 15 years old.

Josh officially joined NFD in 2009 and has also served Madison and Skowhegan Fire Departments. During his time with Skowhegan, Josh was a member of their rapid intervention team that rescued one of Waterville Fire's members that had gone down in a structure fire.

When not at the station, Josh enjoys spending time with his family and loves going on ATV adventures.



215 • Firefighter Andrew Dexter

Andrew was born in Skowhegan and moved to Leeds where he spent the better part of his childhood. 4 years ago, he joined the Leeds Fire Department. Prior to joining Norridgewock, he also served as a firefighter with Turner Fire.

Growing up, Andrew always knew he wanted to be a firefighter. When the opportunity came along in Norridgewock, Andrew applied, gave it everything he had, and was successful in being selected. Andrew has a unique connection to Norridgewock, as both his maternal and paternal grandparents are long-time neighbors on Waterville Hill.

In his spare time, Andrew enjoys spending time with his family and friends, as well as fishing.



**FULL-TIME FIRE • Firefighters
Josh Corson (left) and Andrew
Dexter (right) following a recent
structure fire.**

**“A lot of what the
hiring committee
saw in Josh and
Andrew was their
connection to the
MAINE
community, which
has a lot of value...”**

-Town Manager Richard LaBelle

Wilder Hill Trails

*For more details on this
family-owned, local outdoor
recreation attraction, read the
article on the front page*



Norridgewock Cemeteries & the Cemetery Committee

Time to Regroup? Volunteer, Adopt a Cemetery

The Town oversees and provides perpetual care for eleven cemeteries. Lots are taken in all but one location, Sunset View Cemetery on Route 2. People are sometimes confused by the names of two of the three largest cemeteries: Old Oak (which is on River Road and has a view of the Kennebec, but not too many oaks) and Riverview (which is on Upper Main Street and does not have much of a river view any more). When Riverview was established in the 1800s, it had a beautiful view of the river. These views are often featured in period photographer Charles Sawyer's works (one pictured below). Oak, which is our oldest public cemetery, undoubtedly had many more oaks at the time it was named. Moreover, the entire road from the bridge and beyond was heavily tree lined.

Several years ago, the Town Cemetery Committee worked laboriously to update the Cemetery Ordinance. The ordinance was voted on and approved by Town residents at the annual Town Meeting in 2017. The ordinance covers all aspects of the cemeteries: lot purchase and ownership, burial or interment rules/regulations, duties and responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen, Cemetery Committee, sexton and superintendent, fees for acquiring lots/opening and closing of graves, perpetual care, and general rules for all of our cemeteries (e.g. restrictions regarding shrubs/trees, flowers, decorations, hours, vehicular rules, etc.) A copy of the ordinance is available at the Town Office or online at www.townofnorridgewock.com. The Committee fondly remembers Steve Bishop, who was the committee secretary during all revisions of the ordinance. He passed away two years ago.

In concert with updating the ordinance, the Cemetery Committee designed, purchased, and installed new signs for all of our cemeteries. Left on the Committee's to-do list: touring all the cemeteries to review current conditions. Additionally, improving the indexing of cemetery records and having everything digitalized. Currently, the Cemetery Committee is inactive. Spring 2021 seems like a good time to reconvene. If you are interested in helping update our records/maps— either by working on-site at the cemeteries (updating/verifying our map data) or helping us with data entry (simple computer tasks), please let the Town Office know. ♦ RFK

NORRIDGEWOCK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Now open for curbside service!

Tues, Thurs 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
Weds, Sat 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

40 Mercer Road • 634-2828
library@townofnorridgewock.com

E-911 Residence Numbering

Help first responders get there quickly

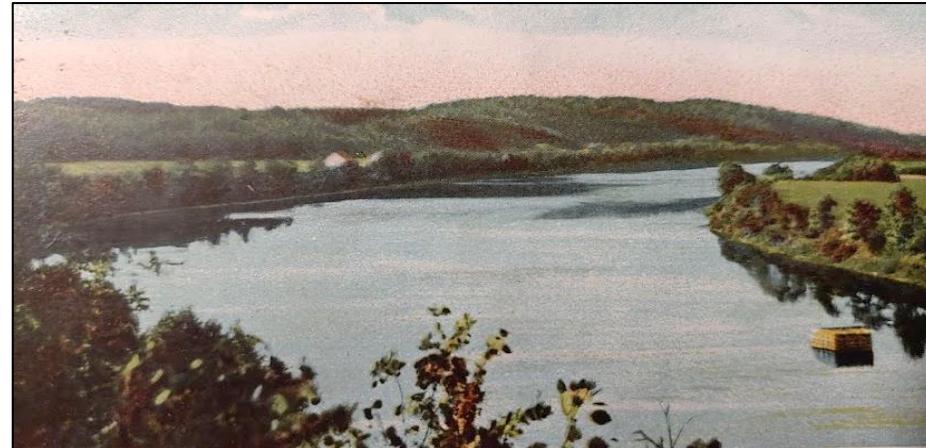
Occasionally, emergency responders are called to a property that doesn't have the proper identification, in terms of house numbering. If your home is within 50 feet of the road, you may put the house number on the side of your house—as long as it remains visible from the roadway. If you have a mailbox, you should have your house number on both sides of your mailbox. If you don't have a mailbox, you can install a simple post at the end of your driveway. This will help ensure the timeliest response possible, regardless of which agency is responding.



In an emergency, this simple number could mean saving your home from a fire or losing it entirely. Several times each year, Norridgewock Fire responds to property where the number is not adequately posted; this can cause a delay in arrival. If you are waiting for emergency responders and if you are able, we encourage you to have someone outside your home or business in order to guide the service providers safely and efficiently. Small improvements can make a big difference. ♦

Norridgewock Cemeteries

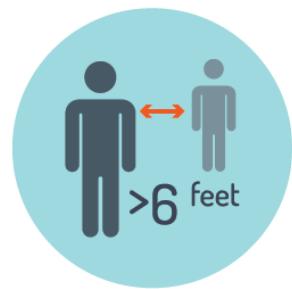
- Old Oak, River Rd.
- Riverview, Upper Main St.
- Sunset View, Mercer Rd.
- Wilder Hill, Wilder Hill Rd.
- Gilman, Winding Hill Rd.
- Oxbow, Sandy River Rd.
- Land's Rest, Father Rasle Rd.
- Williamson, Childs Rd.
- Witham, Sandy River Rd.
- Holbrook, Frederick Corner Rd.
- Longley, Red Barn Rd.





What to Expect Handout

Vaccines (shots) are one of the tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.



To stop this pandemic, we need to use all of our prevention tools. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your body's natural defenses so **your body will be ready to fight the virus**, if you are exposed (also called immunity). Other steps, like wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you don't live with, also help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Studies show that COVID-19 **vaccines are very effective** at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19. These vaccines cannot give you the disease itself.



The vaccines are safe. The U.S. vaccine safety system makes sure that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years. A system in place across the entire country that allows CDC to watch for safety issues and make sure the vaccines stay safe.



Different types of COVID-19 vaccines will be available. Most of these vaccines are given in two shots, one at a time and spaced apart. The first shot gets your body ready. The second shot is given at least three weeks later to make sure you have full protection. If you are told you need two shots, make sure that you get both of them. The vaccines may work in slightly different ways, but all types of the vaccines will help protect you.



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/vaccines



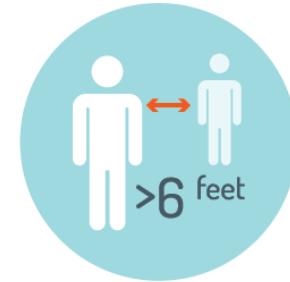
The vaccines may cause side effects in some people, like sore muscles, feeling tired, or mild fever. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will last no longer than a day or two.

Having these types of side effects does NOT mean that you have COVID-19. If you have questions about your health after your shot, call your doctor, nurse, or clinic. As with any medicine, it is rare but possible to have a serious reaction, such as not being able to breathe. It is very unlikely that this will happen, but if it does, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.



When you get the vaccine, you *and* your healthcare worker will both need to wear masks.

CDC recommends that during the pandemic, people wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth when in contact with others outside their household, when in healthcare facilities, and when receiving any vaccine, including a COVID-19 vaccine.



Even after you get your vaccine, you will need to keep wearing a mask that covers your nose **and** mouth, washing your hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you do not live with. This gives you and others the best protection from catching the virus. Right now, experts don't know how long the vaccine will protect you, so it's a good idea to continue following the guidelines from CDC and your health department. **We also know not everyone will be able to get vaccinated right away, so it's still important to protect yourself and others.**

Building & Property Maintenance Ordinance Proposed for Downtown Area

Over the course of about 18 months, a group of volunteers worked with consulting firm Wright-Pierce to develop a Community Revitalization Plan. The plan is intended to strengthen the community and create a coherent path forward to improve Norridgewock. As a part of the project, organizers sought public feedback to determine priorities for the town. Three items were identified as 'high priority' items to be accomplished: Improve the physical appearance of downtown, foster the development of new businesses within the community, and retain and strengthen existing businesses within the community. Nearly 80% of respondents stated that they believed developing a maintenance ordinance for the planning area was a top priority. The discussion of a potential ordinance came about in an attempt to eliminate/reduce unattractive properties. With this in mind, a proposed ordinance has been developed for voter consideration by referendum. The vote by referendum allows voters to vote on this issue by absentee ballot or in-person, in the voting booth on March 1.



The ordinance is intended to "set a minimum standard for the condition and maintenance of the exterior of structures and the condition and maintenance of all grounds in the Downtown Area of the Town of Norridgewock, in order to protect the health, safety, general welfare, and economic wellbeing of the Town's inhabitants, and to prevent the nuisances from forming."

A full copy of the ordinance is available at www.townofnorridgewock.com or by visiting the Town Office. ♦

Fire Dept. Seeks FEMA Grant

SCBA system a critical priority for replacement

Norridgewock Fire continues to seek opportunities for external funding to minimize the impact on taxpayers. In late 2020, NFD signed a contract with First Responder Grants, LLC to assist the department with grant review before submission. The top priority for equipment replacement is the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) system. The estimated cost of upgrading this system is \$173,500. The system itself is nearly 32 years old and the air packs and pack bottles are about 13 years old, with a 15 year maximum life, per regulations.

Through FEMA and its Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), the department hopes to secure grant funding that would pay about 95% of the total cost. The SCBA system has become outdated, inefficient, and subject to costly maintenance. The system simply is not a piece of reliable fire service equipment.

A new system would replace the compressor, bottles, and fill station. Our current system is not compatible with our primary mutual aid partners; aligning with our mutual aid partners will extend the department's effectiveness and save critical time at structure fires.

Grant announcements are expected in April 2021. ♦

A Somerset Granger's Baked Bean Recipe

This is Arthur Wilder's recipe. His beans are a sell-out at all of the Grange public suppers

4 cups of beans – dried, found in the soup aisle of grocery store; Art generally uses Jacob's Cattle beans. He puts them in a pot of water, brings the water to a boil and then turns the heat off and lets the beans soak overnight. The next morning, put the beans and the water they soaked in into the crock pot.

¾ cups of sugar – it's okay to reduce this if you're cutting back on sugar

¼ cup of molasses

1 cup of pork chop pieces – cut the fat off the pork chop before cutting it into cubes

1 teaspoon of salt

2 tablespoons of canola oil

Let it cook in the crock pot for six hours.

Although they can be a hard sell with the younger folks, baked beans made from scratch are very nutritious – they have lots of plant-based protein (no cholesterol in the beans themselves; the pork being animal-based does have some cholesterol), fiber, B vitamins, minerals, and health-protecting plant compounds.



Daylight Savings Time Begins March 14:

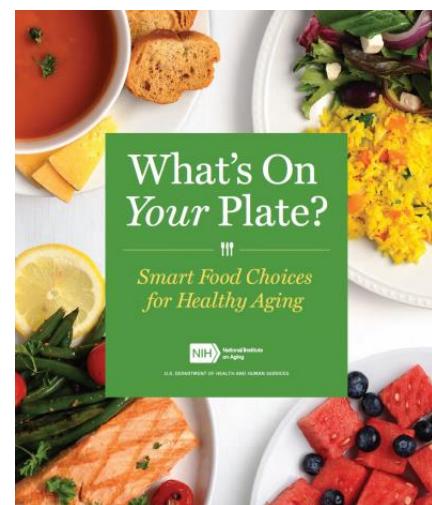
Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead before you go to bed on Saturday night, March 13!

March is National Nutrition Month: Eat Right!

It's easy to get caught up in the business of life— and forget time to eat healthy, watch your weight, and consider your overall health. As we make our way through a long Maine winter, March is a great time to remind ourselves of what we need to do in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics hosts www.eatright.org, a website aimed at helping you live a better lifestyle through better diet. Resources are available depending on what category you may fall into— suggestions based on age, gender, etc. There are offerings such as "Breaking Your Gradeschooler's Unhealthy Food Habit" that help parents encourage healthier dietary behavior in their children. The site also has a great section on COVID-19 and its impact on supporting health with good nutrition.

There are many healthy eating resources available. Learn more about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits. ◆



Provided by the National Institute on Aging, *What's On Your Plate?* is available for FREE at the Norridgewock Public Library.

Healthy Eating Plate

Fruits and Vegetables: $\frac{1}{2}$ of your plate

Whole grains: $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate

Protein Power: $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate

The first wealth is
health.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Around Town: Village Spirit on Full Display

With COVID-19 often in the forefront of our thoughts over these past months, finding sweet surprises around town has brought smiles and a renewed appreciation of the quiet goodness of our community. One of the brightest spots in town over the holidays was by the bridge: the brightly lit trees in John and Janice Malek's yard. There was one tree for each of their eight grandchildren (seven of them are pictured on right).

A number of months ago, Les Vigneault and Raelyn Clements (Main Street homeowners) inquired at the Town Office if it would be "okay" to do some decorating around town. What a nice question to have to field!



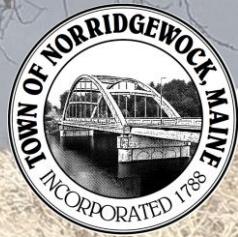
Given the go-ahead, the duo set up displays last fall of antique agricultural equipment and flowers. One display was between the bank and the Town Office, another on Main Street by the new electronic signboard. They are also the ones responsible for the happy figures (waving and pulling a sled) by the sign during the holidays.

Everett's also provided a ray of sunshine on Main Street, filling the bed of their wonderful 1954 Chevy truck with pumpkins in the fall, followed by a Christmas tree in December. They also set up a mailbox for letters to Santa, as they have done for several years.

And, of course, we all enjoyed the Town tree at Alice E. Emery Town Square.

Thank you to each of you that work to make our community such a special place. ◆ RFK





Town of Norridgewock

PO Box 7
Norridgewock, ME 04957

ECRWSSEDDM

Postal Customer
Norridgewock, ME 04957

Are you an older Mainer?



Do you have **QUESTIONS** about the COVID-19 vaccine?



Do you need help **SIGNING UP** for a vaccine?



Do you need a **RIDE** to your vaccination location?



Are you not able to leave your home due to **LIMITED MOBILITY?**

Spectrum Generations is here to help.

Call **1-800-639-4553** and they can:

- Answer general questions about the vaccine
- Provide information about where and when you can get the vaccine
- Assist you with scheduling appointments when it is your turn to get the doses you need to be fully vaccinated
- Connect you with transportation services to help you get to and from your vaccine location

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccine, phases, and more, visit:
www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines



spectrum
generations



Dear Neighbors,

Well, 2020 is behind us and we are looking forward to a new year where vaccinations are becoming more widely available and we hope to return to some semblance of normalcy in good time. In the meantime, I hope this newsletter provides you a reasonable update on local happenings.

Annual Town Meeting is already back and is scheduled for March 1. This unique New England tradition places the control of local government in the hands of voters. Your local officials and municipal budget are decided through Town Meeting. Don't miss your chance to make an impact.

If you have suggestions for future newsletter articles or features, please feel free to email me at townmanager@townofnorridgewock.com. We strive to make this newsletter something of interest to every member of the community. As with the last newsletter, I want to thank Becky Ketchum for her contributions. She has worked hard to provide material of general interest and that is unique to Norridgewock.

Stay safe and stay healthy!

Richard

Richard A. LaBelle
Town Manager