

THE BRIDGE

Fall 2024
Norridgewock, Maine

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www.norridgewock.gov

Town, Waste Management Partner to Offer Respectful Flag Retirement

Most of us know that when a flag is worn or tattered, it shouldn't just be thrown away. There is a United States Flag Code that guides what we should do when a flag should be retired. "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning."

Waste Management and the Town have partnered to ensure that residents have a convenient way to dispose of flags that may be worn or torn. Residents are welcome to bring old flags to Waste Management's residential transfer station on Airport Road, where a collection box is set up at the kiosk. Waste Management officials will then arrange for the proper disposal of flags through a local veteran's organization. ♦



Boston Post Cane Presented to Mary Lynn Wheaton

Mary Lynn Wheaton mentioned to her neighbor, Elwin Matthews, that she would like to be presented with the "golden cane" as Norridgewock's oldest citizen. She didn't want any fanfare, but she was proud of her longevity and was willing to accept the honor. Later that day, it was Mrs. Wheaton, Elwin, the Town Manager, and her three sons gathered in her living room as she received the cane.

Mrs. Wheaton celebrated her 101st birthday this July and continues to live in her home on Mechanic Street. She is the wife of the late Archie J. Wheaton, mother to the late Barry Wheaton and Bonnie Hoyt, as well as Gary, Jonathan, and Archie. Born in Massachusetts, she has lived in Norridgewock most of her adult life. ♦

To promote transparency in government contracts and spending, contract award details will be provided in this section of each newsletter edition. Contract results are also available at www.norridgewock.gov/rfp.

Bid Tracker

Surplus Vehicle: Sewer Pump Truck

Vehicle Information: 1994 International 4800 pump truck, diesel, 2,200 gallon tank Field Gymmy, 42,500 miles.

Successful Bidder: TBD

Bid Price: TBD

Note: This asset was put back out to bid after receiving no submissions with a minimum bid set.

Fire Department 5' x 14' Trailer

Vehicle Information: 5' x 14' Thule Destination Utility Trailer that was used to carry the Department's old all terrain vehicle.

Bid Price: \$1,300.00



CONGRATULATIONS, THANK YOU, AND HAPPY RETIREMENT! •

Brian Bronson worked for the State of Maine Department of Conservation, Forestry, & Agriculture for over 37 years, the last 7 of which he spent supervising the off-road vehicle office. Bronson was integral in the State's acquisition of the abandoned rail between Oakland and Embden and led the way on the conversion to a multi-use trail. He invested countless hours working with clubs on the project and was invaluable when working through landowner issues. Throughout his career, he promoted responsible and respectful recreation for motorized and non-motorized enthusiasts. The Town of Norridgewock is thankful for Brian's service to the State and for his involvement in the rail trail conversion. We wish him all the best in retirement! Above, Brian is pictured in Norridgewock with Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce President & CEO, Kim Lindlof at the trail's ribbon cutting event. ♦

November 5, 2024 *Election Information*

Polling Place

Mill Stream Elementary School Gym
26 Mercer Rd.

Polling Hours

8:00 am – 8:00 pm

Absentee Voting Info

Absentee ballots are now available through the Town Office or online request. Absentee voting can be done by mail or in-person at the Town Office. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is October 31. All ballots must be returned by the close of polls on Election Day.

What are we voting on?

Voters will be issued three ballots for November 5. There is one ballot with one question from MSAD 54 and two ballots are issued by the State. The State ballots will have referendum questions and offices for election, including U.S. President.

Select Board Seeks Input on Development of Newly-Acquired Property

In July, voters went to the polls and voted in favor of purchasing a piece of property on Mercer Road/Route 2 near the school. The property, commonly referred to as Gilman's Car Lot is a small parcel with great potential. The location of the lot is important because it is high-visibility, but is also near many services, including the school. When the property became available, it presented itself as an opportunity for development along the town's main corridor; it was one that voters determined was worth pursuing.

The Select Board is seeking your input to determine the best use of the property through development. The process for developing the lot shouldn't be long and drawn out; however, the Board respects the importance of public process and maximizing public participation. Not only should the final proposal meet a need of the community; it must also be within the financial constraints. The Board will be accepting suggestions over the coming weeks and will put a final proposal before voters at the March election. As an added incentive, if you take the survey and provide your contact information, you will be entered to win one of two gift cards. ♦

Take the survey! Go to
www.norridgewock.gov/idea
to share your ideas about
what you'd like to see happen
with this Town-owned land.



Norridgewock Main Street & Our Water Supply Over 100 Years Ago

By: Becky Ketchum, Norridgewock Historical Society President

With the Main Street Water Main Replacement Project underway, my thoughts turned to one of the exhibits at our museum: late 1800's water pipes that were uncovered during a previous Main Street dig. The "pipes" (wooden logs with their centers bored out) would have been placed end-to-end to form an aqueduct. The pipes are 9.5 inches in diameter.

We don't know the history of these specific pipes, that is, what water supply they may have been tied to. However, we do know about one of the Town's early water companies. The company ("Norridgewock Springs") was organized pre-World War I by Frank Ames, a prominent local attorney. His law office, which he later shared with his son, Basil Ames, was in the building that now houses the Six Penny Jug. Frank and his wife, Helena, lived in and operated a tourist home (known as Norridgewock Springs Tourist House) in the beautiful yellow house at the corner of Waterville Road and Main Street (currently owned by Norridgewock Springs, LLC, a cannabis store).

The water company supplied water to the Main Street area and then was extended to clients in other parts of town going as far as what was then known as "Monument Square." (Monument Square is where the Civil War monument is up by the Post Office). The water was pumped by engine and windmill from the spring on the Ames property to storage tanks located at the top of Waterville Hill (above where Dunkin/Hotel Street/the railroad tracks are). It ran from the tanks by gravity to the downtown area. Later, the piping network joined with that from a spring on Sunset Hill to give added supply. This system continued in operation until the 1940's.

A fun side bar to this story: Caroline Crowell, one of Frank and Helena's granddaughters, relayed to me that her grandparents used to draw the water straight from the spring to serve to overnight tourists. She wrote, "my sister, Bette (Huard), and I delighted in the responsibility to carry pitchers of cold water to the occupied rooms and cabins. It was a real treat having such pure water." ♦ RFK



*A special article brought to you by the
Norridgewock Historical Society*



Upcoming Town Office Closures



October 14 – Indigenous Peoples' Day
November 5 – Election Day
November 11 – Veteran's Day
November 28-29 – Thanksgiving
December 24-25 – Christmas
January 1 – New Year's Day
January 20 – Martin Luther King Day

Regular Hours

Mon, Tues, Weds, Fri 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Thurs 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

**Subject to change, office is open weather-permitting*

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER WANTED

Would you like to be a part of community betterment? Does improving the business climate in Norridgewock interest you? Do you have any ideas for economic development in town? *If so, consider submitting an application to join the TIF Advisory Committee!*

If you have questions about the position or the committee, don't hesitate to reach out to the Town Office. 634-2252 or rlabelle@norridgewock.gov

A Busy Summer at the Norridgewock Public Library

The Norridgewock Public Library had a very busy summer filled with activities and visitors.

We had terrific turnout for our Summer Reading Squad challenge and Summer Storytime events. Storytime participants made butterfly houses due to a generous donation from Home Depot, read stories about insects, made bug crafts, and even visited with Smokey the Bear, in honor of Smokey's 80th birthday.

Adults and children alike had fun completing reading challenges this summer. Ages 15+ filled out bingo cards for prizes while younger children read and recorded books and hours for prizes and new books.

Our Palmer Lego Club continued to meet over the summer and meets every 3rd Tuesday during the school year. Join our challenges on October 15, November 19 and December 17.

Tadpole Storytime has returned for the school year. Tadpoles already heard stories about ladybugs and apples. We meet every 1st and 3rd Thursday. Join us on October 17, November 7 and 21 and December 5.

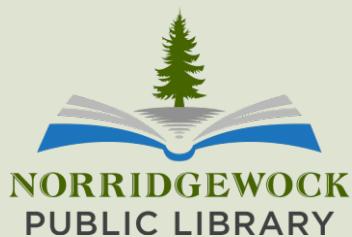
The library trustees and librarian had a great time visiting with residents and visitors at our table at Oosoola Days. We helped children make frog door hangers, sock puppets and color frog bookmarks.

Other events over the last couple of months included an artist meet and greet with Norridgewock artist Cheryl Storer, Grandparent storytime, a homeschool library skills event and Maine author Ret. Brig. Gen. Greg Smith.

Coming up, Maine author Gerry Boyle will visit the library on October 19. He will be doing a reading from his latest book, *Hard Line*, and signing books. Make sure to check our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/norridgewocklibrary, to find out our latest events. Fall programs include a Froglet K-3 event at the end of October, additional homeschool events including a Dia de Los Muertos themed lesson, more artist displays and an adult ornament painting class.

The library Facebook page also includes pictures from our activities and photos of our latest new books.

Also worth noting, the Interlibrary Loan sharing system is back up and running. If you are looking for a book that we do not have in the library, we can request it for you from a library in Maine. ♦ KLD



Library Hours

Tuesday & Thursday	10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday & Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

40 Mercer Rd., Norridgewock
(207) 634-2828
library@norridgewock.gov

Kelli Dorais, Librarian
Library Trustees: Marnie Bottesch, Ruth Keister,
Becky Ketchum, Jean Lancaster, Jill Lawrence



What's On the November 5 Ballot for Norridgewock Voters?

Even if you've been hiding under a rock, it's most likely you're aware of an upcoming election. Yes, there is the race for U.S. President, but there are also several other important offices and referendum questions for voters to consider. In all, Norridgewock voters will receive three ballots for November 5.. Here is more information about what voters will consider. Please note that the graphics are conceptual and do not represent the actual ballots:

LOCAL BALLOT
SCHOOL REFERENDUM

Question 1: Do you favor authorizing the School Board of Maine School Administrative District No. 54 (the "District") to change the proposed location of the replacement bus garage from the current site of the North Elementary School (NEL) to the former DOT fleet maintenance lot at 264 Canaan Road in the Town of Skowhegan. The voters of the District previously approved funding and construction of the replacement bus garage as part of the new Early Childhood through Grade 5 elementary school project.

Note: Approval of this location will not change the previously approved budget for the project, nor will it incur additional local costs, and in fact, anticipated cost savings for the project.

STATE BALLOT 1
GENERAL ELECTION

The following offices will be subject to election:

President/Vice President

U.S. Senator

Representative to Congress, District 2

State Senator, District 3

Representative to the Legislature, District 71

Judge of Probate

Register of Probate

Register of Deeds

County Commissioner

STATE BALLOT 2
REFERENDA

Question 1: To set a \$5,000 limit for giving to political action committees that spend money independently to support or defeat candidates for office.

Question 2: \$25 million bond to support public and private institutions in support of the targeted sectors of life sciences, biomedical technology, environmental and renewable energy, information technology, advanced technologies for forestry and agriculture, aquaculture, and marine technology, composites and advanced materials and precision manufacturing

Question 3: \$10 million bond to restore historic buildings owned by the government or nonprofit organization.

Question 4: \$30 million bond to design, develop, and maintain multi-use trails.

Question 5: To replace the current State flag

County Referendum: To change the County Register of Deeds from elected to hired by the County Commissioners.

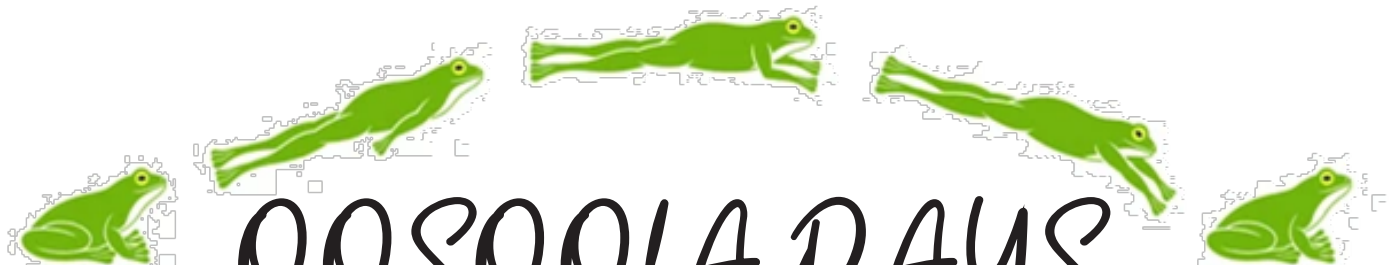
Town Awarded \$5,000 Elections Support Grant

In early August, the Town was awarded a grant from the Center for Tech and Civic Life (CTCL) to support rural election infrastructure; the grant amount was \$5,000 with no local match required. The funds are intended to make internal improvements to operations, update technology, enhance election security, make a smooth voting process for everyone, and improve access for rural voters.

The majority of grant funds supported the purchase of new voting booths, which will be easier to transport and assemble for Public Works. Funds were also allocated to support the purchase of a new laptop for the Clerk's Office, miscellaneous election supplies, and postage to pay for outbound and return absentee ballots.

The mission of CTCL is to increase civic participation by modernizing engagement between local government and the people they serve. They strive to connect Americans with the information they need to become and remain civically engaged and ensure that elections are professional and secure. ♦





OOSOOLA DAYS

KINDLY SUBMITTED BY THE NORRIDGEWOCK PARKS COMMITTEE

The Norridgewock Parks Committee is amazed by the turnout at Oosoola Days over Labor Day Weekend. It takes a lot of work and planning to organize these events. The small but dedicated Parks Committee, along with the resilient Town Manager and various clubs and non-profits, came together to make this happen. We couldn't have done it without the community's involvement and help. While some people may think that only the Parks Committee runs this event, there are many people working behind the scenes.

This year's Oosoola Days marked the 51st anniversary and had the highest attendance ever. When we arrived in the morning, we weren't sure how many people would show up, but seeing the crowds after the parade was truly breathtaking.



The Parks Committee put in many meetings and sleepless nights to prepare for this day. We strive to make this event the best it can be for our town and to bring people together as an unofficial end-of-summer celebration. We all believe that the weather on both days was the best they could be for Oosoola Days 2024. We hope to see you at Oosoola Days next year with your frog ready for the frog races! Have a great rest of your fall!! ♦ AC

For current information and alerts
about community events like
Oosoola Days or the Holiday Stroll,
Text **OOSoola** to **38276**

Fire Department's New Side-by-Side & Trailer; Thanks to Ms. Emery

On April 26, 2021, longtime Norridgewock resident Alice Emery passed away. She was predeceased by her twin sister Avis just a few short months before. The women were true daughters of Norridgewock. They were raised and retired to the family farm on Frederick Corner Road, and both were passionate about improving the Norridgewock community.

Over the course of their lives, the sisters were generous to many causes in Norridgewock, as well as in the surrounding communities. Alice was particularly fond of a few organizations, to which she generously donated. Organizations included the Norridgewock Public Library, Norridgewock Historical Society, Pine Tree Camp, The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers, MaineGeneral Medical, and the Norridgewock Fire Department. Each of these organizations was kindly thought of in Ms. Emery's estate planning.

Shortly after Alice's passing, the Town was made aware of her generous planned gift-- \$50,000 to the Norridgewock Fire Department. The funds were deposited into a reserve, with the intention of purchasing something that would broadly impact the community and support economic development.



A KIND FRIEND • The late Alice Emery, of Norridgewock



With the conversion of the rail trail, Fire Department officers, in consultation with the Select Board, determined that the purchase of a side-by-side, enclosed trailer, and skid unit would be an appropriate use of the gift, and would honor her memory. A bid plan was developed and in late September the total purchase was completed, with additional support from residual American Rescue Plan funds. The new equipment provides the Norridgewock Fire Department with the appropriate tools needed to respond to calls in the woods (i.e.,

forestry, etc.), but also to help meet the needs of recreators along the new multi-use rail trail. It is with great thanks to the Emery's for their thoughtfulness and value of community that the NFD is able to introduce its new Unit 28. Both the trailer and the side-by-side are emblazoned with the tulip graphic (Alice's favorite flower), commemorating the gift. ♦



Town of Norridgewock
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Norridgewock, ME 04957

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Mark your calendar for the **HOLIDAY STROLL, TREE LIGHTING & LIGHTED TRACTOR PARADE**

Saturday, December 14

Main Street activities start at 1:30 PM

Parade starts at 4:00 PM

Tree Lighting immediately following the parade

More info will be available soon on the Town's Facebook and webpage

