

THE BRIDGE

Fall 2023
Norridgewock, Maine

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www.norridgewock.gov

Public Art Mural Revealed in Town Square

Late resident Alice Emery envisioned a mural situated downtown on the property we now know as Emery Town Square, on Main Street across from Six Penny Jug. Her vision became a reality through the work of John and Janice Malek, partnering with the TIF Advisory Committee and local artist Cary Wendell. With funding from the TIF Committee, Wendell went to work designing the postcard-style mural, which came together as a remarkably cohesive piece of public art.

The mural boasts historical and modern aspects while integrating the public feedback for places Norridgewockians prioritized. There are iconic locations like the bridge/river crossing, while less recognizable attractions like the Maine Antique Tractor Club are also incorporated. The mural shows the changing uses of the river through time and its importance in commerce, transportation, and recreation. If you haven't stopped by to see it, you should! With its prominent location, the mural will surely become an attraction of its own. Special thanks to the Bailey Family of Dunkin for providing refreshments at the October unveiling event, which was well-attended. Postcards featuring the new mural are available at the Town Office for \$3 each. ♦



NEW MURAL REVEALED • Recent resident and local artist Cary Wendell was commissioned by the Town to design and deliver a community mural, which was installed in Emery Town Square on Main Street.

Welcome to Our New Librarian, Kelli Dorais!

Kelli joined the Norridgewock Public Library in August. She and her family are new to Maine and currently reside in Madison. Kelli was born and raised in Michigan and was a journalism major at Central Michigan University. Her career experiences include being a staff writer for the *Cadillac News*, a local Michigan newspaper, office manager for a consulting firm, and, just prior to moving to Maine, a daycare and preschool teacher.

Kelli and her husband, Eric, have two children (Gabrielle, age 12 and Callum, age 9), two dogs ("a very rambunctious" Rhodesian Ridgeback named Bjorn and Ryder, a recently-adopted rescue dog lovingly described by Kelli as "a goofy husky"), and rounding out the household and probably ruling the roost, two cats (Bodie and Duke, who is named after the original Duke, John Wayne).

When asked about her hobbies and interests, Kelli immediately responded, "**READING!!!**" She also enjoys "random crafts" and said, "When we need something, I make it." She likes hiking with her family, most recently in West Virginia. She has also braved hiking with her son's Cub Scout troop.

Kelli has settled in at the library, putting her own stamp on the facility and ongoing programs such as pre-k story time and recently introducing a bi-monthly program for kindergarten through Grade 3. She has many new ideas for the library overall and in terms of programming and events to further engage the community. *Please stop by, say hello, and check out a book in the process!*

Note: This article was submitted by Becky Ketchum, Chair of the Library Board of Trustees, who, along with the trustees and friends of the library, is delighted to have Kelli leading our library! ♦ RFK



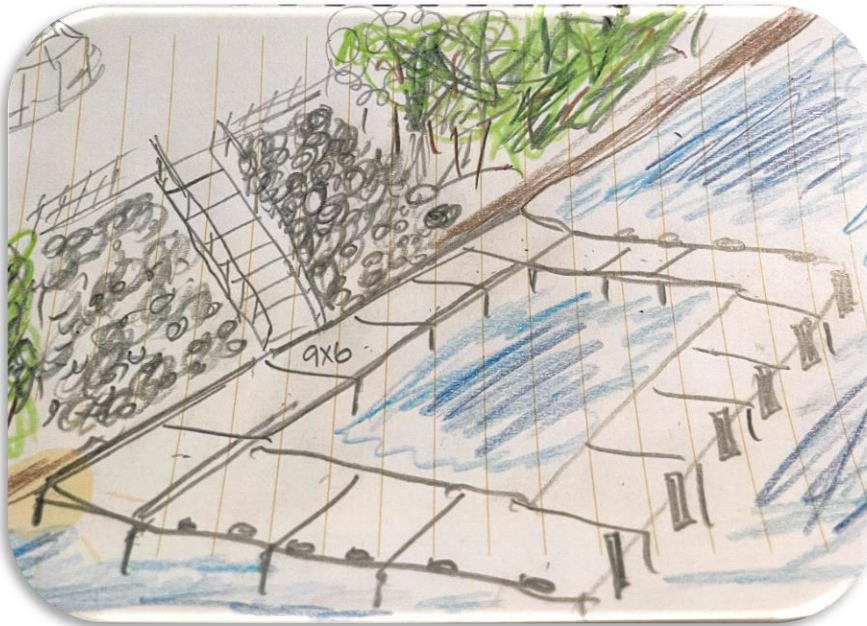
Town Awards Contract for Docks, Swim Area at Oosoola Park for Spring 2024

For quite some time, townspeople have expressed great interest in seeing a swimming area developed near Oosoola Park, as another step in enhancing our community's connection to the river. Over the course of the last two years, the project was funded, but planning and execution stalled. Earlier this year, the Select Board accepted a preliminary design for the layout (concept sketch below) and issued a request for proposals.

The project was funded for up to \$75,000, which will come from the TIF fund. Proposals were received from several area companies that provided their recommended materials for the ultimate layout. Including the first year's installation, proposals ranged from \$33,164 to \$154,588. The lowest price was provided by Maine-ly Docks of Oakland, which included a ten percent civic discount. They were granted the contract.

The new dock system will be accessible through Oosoola Park. While the initial proposal sought rip-rap installation on the bank near the gazebo, plans now currently call only for an aluminum staircase down the bank to the docks, and the area around will remain vegetated.

This investment will enhance activities on the river but will also create additional opportunities for healthier living. The system will also support a safer boat launch area, as swimmers will no longer be allowed in the launching vicinity. Expect the swim docks to be installed in June 2024. ♦



MILL STREAM CRAFT FAIR

Saturday, November 18, 9am – 2pm

Mill Stream Elementary Gym

Door prizes, scholarship raffle, bake sale, lunch, and more!

Be sure to stop by the Grange Hall and check out their craft fair!

Both craft fairs are running at the same time.



NOMINATION PAPERS AVAILABLE NOV. 22

The following elected positions will be on the March 4, 2024 local ballot:

Select Board Member and Overseer

5 seats, 1-year term

Tax Assessor

3 seats, 1-year term

Planning Board Member

2 seats, 3-year term

Budget Committee Member

3 seats, 3-year term

SAD 54 School Board Director

1 seat, 3-year term; 1 seat, 2-year term

Library Trustee

1 seat, 5-year term

Sewer Commissioner

2 seats, 2-year term; 1 seat, 1-year term

Contributors appreciated... Contributors wanted...

The Bridge newsletter is written largely by Town staff but has benefitted greatly from the volunteer submissions by Becky Ketchum (affiliated with the Somerset Grange, Historical Society, Libraries, and more) and, recently, with the addition of Librarian Kelli Dorais. If you would like to become a regular contributor or just submit an article occasionally, please email Richard at rlabelle@norridgewock.gov.

Articles (and/or photos) may vary in length but will be published space-permitting and with consideration given to the broader interests of the public.



WE WANT YOU!
to write for us.

A Message from the Grange: *Thank You!*

Thanks to those who came out and supported the Grange's first community supper in several years! We apologize for underestimating the turnout and hope people who arrived after the rush will try us again. We're ready to rev it up for next time... more of everything! (a new coffee pot and more desserts, too!)

The Grange celebrates its Sesquicentennial Anniversary this spring. We anticipate a great 150th year with many fundraising events to help restore the interior of the building. If you'd like to be involved as a Member or simply as a Friend of the Grange, we'd love to have you! The next edition of *The Bridge* will include more details on the restoration initiatives. ♦ RFK

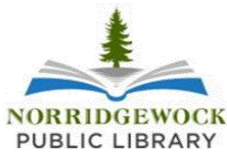


Mark your calendars!

Children in Grades K-3 are invited to join us on December 12 at 3 PM.

We will be reading Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree and making a take home ornament.

Free. No registration required.



COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER KAYAK RENTAL OPTIONS • At a recent meeting, the TIF Advisory Committee held an initial discussion about a proposed vendor to offer kayak rentals at Oosoola Park (and maybe paddle boards, too). A third party would manage the kayak rentals, and users would secure and pay for them through an app. The locked storage cages would offer kayaks and life vests, that would be unlocked using solar and cellular technology. The nearest rental program like this is offered in Auburn; it would be the first of its kind in this area. The committee will discuss the proposal at their next meeting on November 28. If you have comments or suggestions on this proposal or other economic development-related ideas, please reach out to the Town Manager or a member of the TIF Advisory Committee.

**Town Ornaments
\$12 each**

Available at the Town Office while supplies last.



Fire Department Receives \$195,137 Grant

Through three rounds of grant applications to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Norridgewock Fire has continued to revise its application to seek funding support for the purchase of a new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) system. The Department's equipment was aging out, and all the tanks were due to expire in the coming year. In late August, FEMA announced the award of \$195,137 to purchase the new system, which then requires a 5% local match (\$10,270, which will come from the Department's Equipment Reserve Account).

Some of the old SCBA equipment is not subject to an expiration date and/or is incompatible with the new equipment; this equipment will be sent to benefit the Smithfield Fire Department. Our last major SCBA purchase was in 1983 and was funded wholly by Consolidated Waste Services (now Waste Management).

Congratulations to Former Chiefs David Savage and David Jones, Interim Chief Todd Pineo, and the entire membership of the NFD for their hard work and adaptability to secure this funding and spare our local tax base. ♦



NORRIDGEWOCK HOLIDAY STROLL

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023

STARTS AT 1:30 PM

LIGHTED TRACTOR PARADE AT 4:00 PM

TREELIGHTING AT 4:15PM

Join us in celebrating the holidays by decorating the outside of your home for the holidays!

Every home or business in Norridgewock is invited to participate in this year's decoration contest. Decorate the exterior of your home or business and let us know that you'd like to be considered and added to the holiday light map (stop by the Town Office, or call 634-2252 to get on the list).

On the evening of Friday, December 8, the judges will make their way around town. The winners will be announced at the tree lighting. You don't have to be present to win. Both the winning business and residence will be awarded a \$100 gift card!

For more information, contact the Town Office.

This event is organized by the
Town of Norridgewock and the
Norridgewock Parks Committee.

Check out the event page on Facebook:
Norridgewock Stroll & Tree Lighting



Popular Wreath-Making Event Returns December 2!

The Norridgewock Public Library, in partnership with the Somerset Grange, is offering its second annual workshop for making holiday wreaths. The free event will be held at the Grange Hall (9 Mercer Rd., Norridgewock) on Saturday, December 2. The workshop starts at 10:30 am. While walk-ins on the day of the event are allowed, if supplies allow, we strongly recommend (and appreciate) contacting the library to reserve your place today. *We hope to see you there!*

For questions or to reserve your spot for the event, contact the librarian, Kelli, at 634-2828. ♦ RFK



An Update from Norridgewock Public Library

Exciting things have been happening at the Norridgewock Public Library lately. We have had many community programs recently and have more to announce.

Our Storytime program started back up in September. Every first and third Thursday, we gather to read a story, have an activity, and make a craft or snack. Suggested ages are two years old through Preschool, but younger and older children may attend. We have read about jungle animals, Biscuit the Pup, a Leaf Thief, a square pumpkin, and *How to Catch a Turkey*. We also danced, sang, and made many different crafts for the children to take home. Join us on Nov. 16, Dec. 7 & 21, Jan. 4 & 18 and Feb. 1 & 15 at 10:30 AM.

Children in Kindergarten through third-grade learned how to do a Halloween Hustle, just like the skeleton featured in the book. After reading and dancing, we made Q-tip skeletons and enjoyed some candy. These ages are just suggested. Younger and older children may also attend. Join us for our next K-3 event on Dec. 12 at 3 PM. We will read a holiday story and make an ornament to take home. Don't forget to mark your calendar for our February event, as well: Feb. 13 at 3 PM.

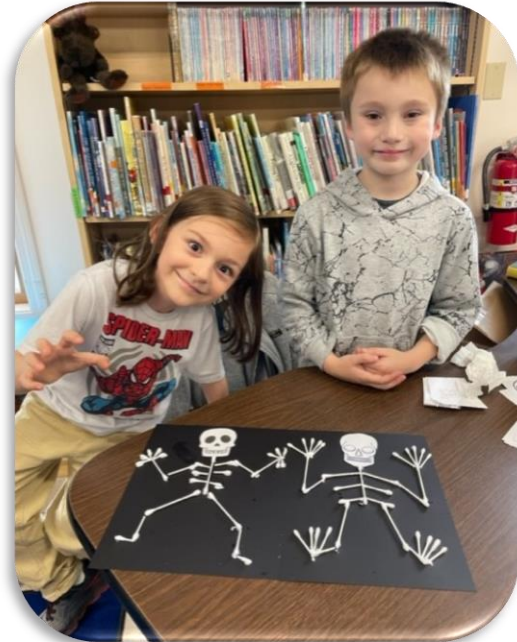
A family program that had a fantastic turnout was our recent Owls of Maine event put on by the Chewonki Foundation and held at the Somerset Grange Hall. Attendees learned about different species of owls, touched artifacts such as skulls and feathers, and viewed two live owls, Luna and Hooten.

Community members have been gathering every two months to meet featured artists during our Artist Meet and Greet series. These artists display their artwork at the library and gather with the community to talk about their art-making process. Artwork can also be purchased during the two months the art is on display. John Alsop and Tammi Galbraith were recently featured.

Connecting the mind and the body, the library also organized yoga sessions in Oosoola Park and at the Grange Hall throughout the summer and fall. Be on the lookout for more activities in the new year.

While the library's first purpose is to promote reading and welcome community members to check out books, we also want to be a center for the community. Our activities and programs try to have that purpose in mind. We recently were able to give tours of the library to the first-grade classes at Mill Stream Elementary for their community unit. Reading stories and sharing how our library is involved in our community was great fun.

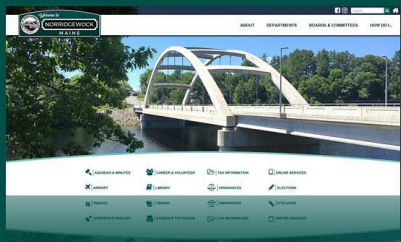
Whether you are looking for the latest book from your favorite author, want a place to gather with other community members, or find an activity for yourself or your children, our library offers a variety of information and fun. Rediscover the Norridgewock Library, the best place to be! ♦ KLD



Town Transitions to Norridgewock.gov Domain


The townofnorridgewock.com domain is no more; we've migrated our website and email addresses to the more secure and trusted .gov domain. You'll be redirected to our new site if you visit the old one, but you can log on directly to www.norridgewock.gov for all of your town-related resources. *Why did we change?* The U.S. Department of Homeland Security advised eligible governmental units that the shift signals trust and credibility while adding advanced layers of security for data. A variety of Federal agencies also help monitor a .gov domain for issues in the namespace.

Most towns and cities are required to have something in the domain that indicates the state, like waterville-me.gov or augustamaine.gov. Norridgewock is unique in that it is the only Norridgewock in the United States-- so after requesting an exception, the Town was granted the simpler and shorter www.norridgewock.gov. ♦



Our website has changed;
We've moved to
norridgewock.gov

This change provides expanded security protections and monitoring and establishes the site as an official, trusted source.



Don't forget that unpaid taxes and past-due sewer charges are listed in the annual town report.

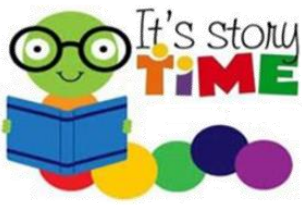
To avoid your name in the listing, please pay your account current before December 31, 2023.

Town Seeks New Code Enforcement Officer, Licensed Plumbing Inspector

The Town of Norridgewock has an immediate opening for a Code Enforcement Officer. The Code Enforcement Officer also serves as the Licensed Plumbing Inspector and Health Officer. The hours are flexible, and the wage is negotiable.

The position requires strong communication and organizational skills. The position is based out of the Town Office and offers phone and travel stipends. The Town is willing to provide training for the right candidate to gain relevant certifications within twelve months of hire.

For more information on the position, visit www.norridgewock.gov/jobs or stop by the Town Office for a copy of the job description and application. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and will be accepted until a candidate is selected. The Town of Norridgewock is an equal-opportunity employer and service provider. ♦

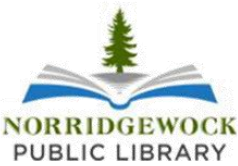


Join us every 1st and 3rd Thursday at 10:30 AM for Storytime.

Storytime includes reading a book, crafts and activities.

Cost is free. Recommended ages are 2 – Preschool.

No registration required.





Waste Management is a private business. As a convenience to residents, we provide their back gate hours.

Sun, Mon, Tues Closed
Weds, Thurs, Fri 9:30am – 6:00pm
Sat 7:30am – 4:00pm

Airport Rd.
634-2714



The Town Office will be closed:

November 23-24– Thanksgiving
December 25-26– Christmas
January 1– New Year's Day
January 15- Martin Luther King Day
February 19– Presidents Day, observed
March 4-5– Elections Staffing

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