

THE BRIDGE

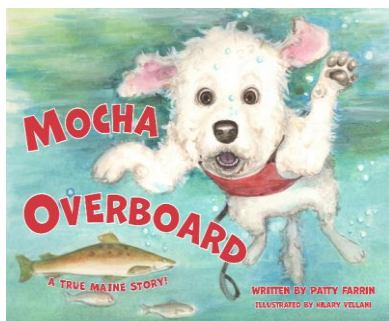
Spring 2021
Norridgewock, Maine

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www.townofnorridgewock.com

The Village Improvement Society Plant Sale: Huge Success!

The "VI" would like to thank everyone who helped to make this year's plant sale the best in (remembered) history. After the long period of social distancing, the plant sale on June 5 "bloomed" with a sense of the return to normalcy. It was a happy occasion with a reunion-like feel to it as many folks were finally able to catch up with people they had not seen in a long time. Additionally, it was wonderful to witness the enthusiasm shoppers of all ages had for getting their gardens going and/or improving their landscapes. Shoppers not only spanned all age groups (from 5 to 90's), but also all levels of gardening experience, from my very own yellow/brown thumb up to some master gardeners. One senior citizen who no longer gardens came "just to enjoy looking at and smelling all the new plants; fond memories!"

The cast for the event was large: including the Grangers giving VI the use of all their big tables and parking lot to members and friends of the VI, (several of whom started sowing seeds for the sale in February) who quietly turned the parking lot into a full-fledged nursery, to all the folks who came to shop. Many thanks to everyone! It was a fun day. ♦ RFK



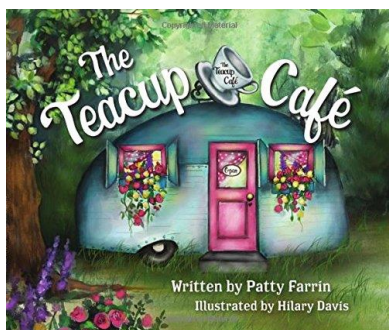
Summer Reading Program Kick-off Announced

Local Author Patty Farrin to read, sign children's books on June 26

Norridgewock Public Library is pleased to introduce its 2021 summer reading program, in cooperation with the Collaborative Summer Library Program. This year's theme for children is *Tails and Tales*, where we venture into a good book to learn more about animals and nature.

The library has organized a phenomenal kickoff event with local author Patty Farrin. On Saturday, June 26, beginning at 10:30 a.m., she will read two of her children's books, *Mocha Overboard* and *The Teacup Café*. She will also be signing books at the event.

You'll be able to register for the summer reading program and pick up the first FREE, weekly craft bag for your child. Faithful readers can enter to win some great prizes, which will be drawn at the end of the summer reading program! Don't worry, there is a program for adults, too! For more information, stop into the library or call 634-2828. ♦



Library Expands Outdoor Wireless Coverage

In Partnership with non-profit group ITDRC, projectConnect



The Norridgewock Public Library has partnered with the Information Technology Disaster Resource Center (ITDRC) to expand its FREE outdoor Wi-Fi access. Free, high-speed wireless internet access is now available from any spot in the parking lot areas of the Mill Stream School and the library and any place in the Barr Hatfield Athletic Park on Route 2. At the Sophie May Library, the expanded outdoor wireless is available around the building's perimeter and the entire space stretching between the building and the bridge, covering the pocket park and granite terrace. No password is necessary. To access the connection, simply use your device to connect to network name Sophie May, Mercer Road, or projectConnect, depending on your location.

Wi-Fi has enabled children to participate in online schoolwork, complete classroom assignments, and allow community members to obtain unemployment and reemployment resources. This Wi-Fi has also expanded access to digital banking, connected citizens to telemedicine resources, enabled voter registration and census taking, and much more. This internet connectivity also helps bridge the digital divide, especially in rural areas and underserved neighborhoods that often lack broadband options.

In addition to providing free outside internet access, inside services at the Norridgewock Library include free access to its computer stations. Each station has an internet connection and print options. The library also offers free access to great resources such as Ancestry.com, when on-site. To learn more about the library's full range of resources, please call (207) 634-2828 or email library@townofnorridgewock.com.

ITDRC is a volunteer-driven non-profit that has provided Wi-Fi hardware and installation free of charge through its ProjectConnect initiative at hundreds of sites across the country. To learn more or request Wi-Fi and other IT resources in other locations, please visit <https://www.itdrc.org/covid-19/projectconnect>. ♦

Mill Stream School 3rd Graders End the School Year with a Field Trip!

After over a year of Covid-related challenges to enjoying life as a third-grader (and as a third-grade teacher), the kids will have a great last day of school and "kick-off" for summer fun by taking a field trip to the Norridgewock Historical Society museum, which is diagonally across the street from the school. All three third-grade classes (each with about 12 kids) plan to visit the Museum. NHS's curator emeritus Nathan Richards, NHS member/newly-minted retired school teacher Janice Malek and NHS president Becky Ketchum will host the event. As some Covid restrictions still apply, each of the third-grade classes will visit as separate groups and the visit time will be short. Plans have been made and the visit designed to allow for social distancing. Following a brief lecture on museums in general and the treasures at NHS specifically, the kids will split into groups to complete a scavenger hunt (otherwise known as a mad dash around the museum, complete with squeals of excitement and plenty of energy, all of which will no doubt be moved up a notch or two given that it is the last day of school before summer vacation).

NHS will give each student a little penlight on a chain as a souvenir of their visit and as a reminder to "Explore! Dream! Discover!" Also on the field trip, students will visit the town office, fire station, and post office. ♦ RFK

SUN SAFETY TIPS



Avoid being in the sun for prolonged times when the sun is strongest, from 10 am until 4 pm.

- Seek shade
- Cover up
- Wear a hat
- Wear sunglasses
- Apply and re-apply sunscreen SPF 15 or higher

All non-emergency departments will be closed on Monday, July 5, in observance of Independence Day



Town Pushes to Build Out Broadband to Underserved Neighborhoods

Most residents of Norridgewock have some experience with inadequate internet access. Some deal with it every day at home, and some have dealt with it in the past. Some have been the beneficiary of private investment expanding access to high-speed internet. Regardless, COVID-19 made it all too clear that our infrastructure is inferior, and we needed to move for quality internet service for every residence and business. In early Fall 2020, the Town began working closely with Spectrum/Charter Communications to develop a Connect Maine grant application. The Town decided to seek grant assistance to build out broadband in the Beech Hill and Martin Stream neighborhoods based on various service data pools. This cooperative effort reviewed service data, completed a field analysis, construction study, and project cost review. Then a formal application was drafted, reviewed, and finally submitted in April 2021. Just recently, the Town was made aware that the application was unsuccessful.



Of the possible 110 points, the Town's application scored 90. The lowest scoring application to be awarded grant funding was 91. The application was very close. Just recently, the Town was made aware that the application was unsuccessful. There were only 12 applications in our category to be approved. We are currently reviewing the application for improvements. Spectrum/Consolidated is returning to the table to see if they can provide additional funding, and the Town will submit an improved grant application in July. If successful, the application would provide complete build-out in the two neighborhoods without using local tax dollars. ♦

Cooperative Planning Effort with County for Broadband Internet Access

The process of expanding broadband internet in communities like Norridgewock has been long and arduous. Areas looking for assistance expanding broadband, up until recently, have seen project support limited to a small pool of money for a great demand. With the pandemic and remote activity, the State and Federal governments freed up additional funds to support broadband expansion. For Norridgewock, this means our future applications have a better chance of being funded. While the results of the Town's most recent grant application to the Connect Maine Authority was disappointing, it demonstrated a serious first attempt while also providing productive feedback for future application. It also reinforced the importance of securing such funding and the lack of access to quality internet in our region.

The Town has taken the initiative to work with private partners; Somerset County hasn't involved Norridgewock in any broadband planning until recently. Approached by Somerset Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) Executive Director Christian Savage, the Board of Selectmen unanimously endorsed funding a proportionate share for a regional broadband study. The study, led by private contractor Casco Bay Advisors, LLC, of Gardiner, would include 55 communities in Somerset County conducting field audits, mapping, data collection, and cost analysis. Armed with this collected information, the contractor can then better develop and submit broadband applications.

The plan has progressed according to schedule and is currently in the process of report development. In the next couple of months, the consultant will engage service providers and issue requests for proposals. Having engaged providers and solicited the most attractive build-out plans, we are then enabled to submit grant applications for construction funding. The grant applications are expected to be submitted before the end of the calendar year.

How can you help? Submit us a letter of support for future grant applications. Simply address a letter 'To Whom It May Concern' and briefly explain what expanded, affordable, quality internet access would mean to you, your family, and/or your business. Be sure to include your home address so that we know which application to submit it with. Letters of support can be emailed to townmanager@townofnorridgewock.com. ♦



Airport Rd.
634-2714





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

Browntail Moth Poses Dangerous Threat to Humans and Forests

Browntail moth caterpillars have tiny poisonous hairs that can cause skin reactions similar to poison ivy and other more severe reactions. The caterpillars may reach 1.5 inches in length and are brown with a broken white stripe on each side and two red/orange spots on the hind end.

The caterpillars are active from mid-April until early October. The hairs remain toxic for up to three years. Signs and symptoms of contact with the caterpillars or their hairs include skin rash and breathing, or other respiratory issues. Direct contact with hairs can cause a localized skin rash that may last a few hours to several days. The rash may be red, bumpy, and itchy. Certain people may have a more severe form of the rash that can last for a few weeks. In some cases, the hairs can be inhaled and can cause respiratory problems. The rash does not spread from one person to another.

Tent-makers		No Tents	
Browntail Moth	Eastern Tent	Forest Tent	Gypsy Moth
Look for Overall brown color; White tufts along sides; <u>Red-orange dots on tail-end</u>	Look for <u>White stripe</u> down center of back Blue spots like the "eye" in peacock feather along each side of stripe	Look for White or <u>off-white footprint-shaped marks</u> down the center of the back Blue body coloration in later instars	Look for Prominent knobs with hairs on each side of head capsule. Five pairs of <u>blue- and six pairs of red- spots along back</u> (4 th instar and later).
DANGER!!			
			
Invasive Human & Forest Health Impacts	Native Mostly aesthetic impacts	Native Occasional outbreaks	Invasive Forest Health Impacts Quarantined pest

There is no specific treatment for browntail moth rash. Home remedies can help with symptoms. This can include a cool bath with baking soda, hydrocortisone cream, and calamine lotion. If you are having trouble breathing, swallowing, or swelling of your mouth, tongue, or throat, call 9-1-1. ♦ Courtesy of Maine CDC

Prevention



Take a cool shower and change clothes after activity in areas with browntail moths to wash off any hairs.



Wear a mask, goggles, and coveralls when doing any activity that can stir up browntail moth hairs, like raking leaves.



Dry laundry inside during June and July to prevent browntail moth hairs from getting on clothing.



Perform yard work and clipping on wet days so browntail moth hairs do not get stirred up.

Control



Clip browntail moth webs in the winter and very early spring



Hose down structures with caterpillars and vacuum up with a HEPA filter vacuum



Hire a licensed arborist/pesticide applicator

After clipping webs, destroy them by soaking in soapy water. Hire someone to treat affected trees before the end of May to prevent development of toxic hairs. Pesticide use within 250 feet of marine waters is restricted.

Browntail Precautions

- Take a cool shower and change clothes after activity that might involve contact with hairs
- Dry laundry inside during June and July to avoid hairs getting onto your clothing
- Use caution cleaning debris left by caterpillars because the toxin remains a hazard for a number of years
- In heavily infested areas, wear respirator, goggles, and coveralls (tightly sealed at neck, waist, and ankles) when:
 - Mowing, raking, weed whacking
 - Removing webbing
 - Performing any activities that stir up browntail caterpillar hairs
- Perform the above tasks on damp days or wet down material with a hose as moisture helps minimize contact by keeping the hairs from becoming airborne.