

THE BRIDGE

Fall 2021
Norridgewock, Maine

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

Select Board Seeks Federal Funding Proposals

County's approach centralized; looking to pay off the jail bond

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was authorized on March 11, 2021, and provided for a large sum of money to be distributed to state, county, and municipal governments. Half of the funding assistance has been granted this year and the other half will be made in 2022. The Town of Norridgewock is slated to receive \$340,294.10 while Somerset County expects to receive nearly \$10 million. The funds come with restrictions, in terms of what is an authorized expense. More thorough details on the program and qualified expenses are available at www.maine.gov/dafs/arpa.



The Select Board issued a request to all staff and committee volunteers seeking proposals for projects that qualify under ARPA. Only a few submissions have been received, including the purchase of fire department turnout gear, a fire hose washer, upgraded fire repeater equipment, premium incentive pay for employees, the purchase of an enclosed trailer, and the construction of a pavilion near the Mercer Road Library that would serve as an outdoor classroom. In addition to the Town-sourced proposals, Somerset Grange also submitted a request for consideration. The Grange is seeking \$3,350 for resurfacing its gravel parking lot and an additional \$17,193 for repairs to the building's eaves. Those wishing to submit proposals for funding are encouraged to visit www.maine.gov/dafs/arpa to learn more about qualified expenses, then submit a request through the Town Manager. A vote at Town Meeting will ultimately authorize the expenditures under this funding program.

When asked about Somerset County's plans for utilizing the funds, County Administrator Dawn DiBlasi stated, "We're waiting to see if we can pay the jail bond off. So we haven't reached out to anybody. And even then we have County projects we would do before going to the taxpayers." No other proposals have been sought by the County. ♦

Town Vote Authorizes Changes in Liquor Service

Licenses for on-premises consumption may be acquired through BABLO

Norridgewock voters have overturned previous votes to restrict the on-premises consumption of liquor. This clears the way for restaurants and other establishments to seek service licensing from the State of Maine Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations (BABLO).

The State passed legislation in 2019 that required municipalities to submit proof of certain votes related to on-premises consumption. That same piece of legislation revised the standards for initiating the public vote. Town votes in 1972 prevented the sale for on-premises consumption of liquor (and malt liquor), but upon petition from Dylan Wentworth, co-owner of Wentworth's Country Diner on Waterville Road, the questions were recalled for consideration. On November 2, voters, by a margin of more than 2 to 1, supported the change. As of the date of publication, the Town is not aware of any pending license applications before the State. ♦

NORRIDGEWOCK BALLOT RESULTS

Question 1: On Premises
Consumption on Sundays
662 yes, 301 no

Question 2: On Premises
Consumption on Days other
than Sunday
730 yes, 225 no

Planning Board to Review Results of Digital, Electronic Signboard Survey

The Norridgewock Planning Board developed a survey to gauge the opinion of residents on proposing an ordinance to regulate digital/electronic signboards, similar to the one installed at the corner of Mechanic and Main Streets. The survey was well-responded to, with 176 responses received, of which 169 were Norridgewock residents. At the December 9 Planning Board meeting, the board will consider whether to proceed with ordinance development or to table the item.

The survey sought the public's opinion on the sign located at the corner of Main and Mechanic. Over 84 percent of respondents viewed that sign favorably, many noting that the sign is a good tool for communication and that it is an attractive addition to downtown. Conversely, some in the minority 16 percent noted that electronic signboards don't fit our small-town, rural feel and that it may be distracting.

Also on the survey was whether or not an ordinance to regulate these types of signs would be supported. 58 percent of respondents opposed a new ordinance. The opportunity to leave additional comments provided insight into why some may oppose an ordinance. Of those comments, several respondents noted that they were opposed to additional regulations, while another half dozen people don't believe that developing such an ordinance should be a current project priority.

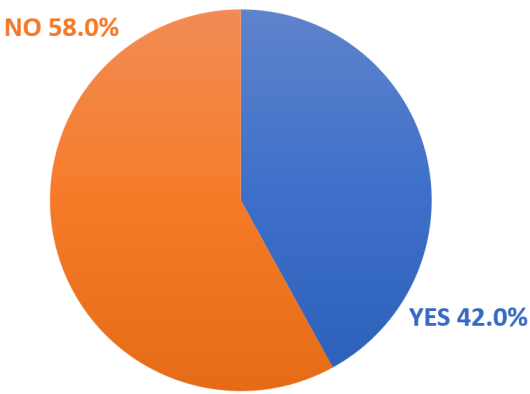
The December 9 Planning Board meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Regular Planning Board meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month. Meetings can also be viewed online via Zoom, on the Town's Facebook page, or on YouTube. ♦

Norridgewock Historical Society will Hold 4th Annual Classic Christmas Tree Event

As part of the town holiday stroll event, the Historical Society will resume its Annual Classic Christmas Tree Open House. The event features classic Christmas trees and decorations. Refreshments (free) include homemade whoopie pies, other sweets, and coffee. The Open House is 1:00 to 4:00 PM on Saturday, December 11. ♦ RFK



GRANGE CRAFT FAIR • The Annual Somerset Grange Crafts & Treasures Fair was held recently and drew a good crowd. Both vendors and shoppers enjoyed the event. Clearly everyone relished being out and about; not only shopping, but re-connecting with people they had not seen for some time. For many a lunch of homemade soup, hot dogs, and baked goods helped to top off the outing. ♦ RFK



SURVEY QUESTION RESULTS • Do you favor a digital sign ordinance to regulate electronic signboards in Norridgewock?



**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

The Town Office will be closed:

**December 24- Christmas Eve
December 31- New Year's Eve
January 18- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

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



Coming Soon: Norridgewock Library Children's Story Time Event!

The Norridgewock Library is pleased to announce that local children's author Barbara Winslow has agreed to do a video recording of her popular children's book: *The Kennebec is Rising*. The video, which is expected to be recorded early in December will be available through a link on the Library page of the Town website.

Barbara has written five children's books: *Fancy and Francis* (about a local apple farmer), *Dance on a Seal Skin*, *Just A little Fog*, *Kittery Ghost*, and *The Kennebec is Rising*.

On her author's bio page Barbara wrote, "I am a teacher, mother, grandmother, writer, singer, songwriter... I wear many hats! I was born in Connecticut and attended college in South Dakota where I began teaching. We moved to Alaska to teach in remote villages for ten years, then back to Maine where we raised our family on a small farm. Now I am retired and an author." (Sidebar- one example of her "many hats": post retirement and pre-Covid Barbara [along with Janice Malek] put on a skit for Mill Stream School third graders when they had their spring field trip to the Norridgewock Historical Society. Barbara played the role of a one-room school house teacher whose class is visited by Sophie May [played by Janice]. The kids were absolutely mesmerized. It was delightful to behold.)

We look forward to watching the recording of *The Kennebec is Rising*. Intended for kids, but engaging for all ages! ♦ RFK



STORY TIME WITH LOCAL AUTHOR • The Norridgewock Public Library is pleased to partner with volunteer and Norridgewock resident Barbara Winslow to reintroduce children's story time. The story time is planned to be released in early December and to be a part of a growing series of story times available online and accessible at your convenience.

Google Map to be Available for Holiday Light Tour

A group of volunteers is once again spearheading the Norridgewock holiday stroll and tree lighting, which will be held on Saturday, December 11, with activities beginning at 1:00 PM. Keep an eye on the Town of Norridgewock Facebook page for a link to a Google Map of destinations throughout Norridgewock that will be decorated/illuminated for the holidays. One business and one residential winner will be selected and awarded a \$100 prize, courtesy of our friends at Skowhegan Savings. ♦



DRINK DRIVING

42,000 people die each year in motor vehicle crashes -- 16,000 of these deaths are alcohol or drug related.

Almost 30 AMERICANS ARE KILLED EACH DAY by alcohol-impaired driving. This amounts to ONE DEATH EVERY 48 MINUTES 30% OF MOTOR VEHICLE DEATHS ARE ALCOHOL RELATED.

ONE IN THREE AMERICANS will be involved in an alcohol-related crash in their lifetime.

Drink drivers are typically first arrested after their 80% OFFENCE.

DRUGGED DRIVING

10.5 MILLION AMERICANS reported driving under the influence of drugs.

Males were 84% MORE LIKELY to drive under the influence of drugs than females.

18% of fatally injured drivers tested positive for drugs.

National Impaired Driving Prevention Month



IN MOST STATES, A PERSON IS CONSIDERED LEGALLY INTOXICATED IF HIS OR HER BLOOD ALCOHOLCONTENT (BAC) IS .08% OR GREATER.

IN AVERAGE THIS IS 3 DRINKS FOR WOMEN AND 4 DRINKS FOR MEN.

50% to 75% of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive with a suspended license.

Drivers with a BAC of .08% or higher are 8 times more likely to have a prior DWI than sober drivers.

29% of motorcyclists killed in crashes had BACs of .08%

35% of drunk drivers killed in crashes were between the ages of 21 and 24.

PREVENTION

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) was founded in 1983 to teach children from kindergarten to high school how to resist peer pressure and live productive, drug and alcohol-abuse free lives.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) was founded by Candice Lightner after her 13-years-old daughter was killed by a drunk driver in 1980 in California.

MADD seeks to stop drunk driving, support those affected by drunk driving, and prevent



FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK



NORRIDGEWOCK HOLIDAY STROLL

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2021

STARTS AT 1:00 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 and 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 (stop by the Town Office, or call 634-2252 to get on the list).

On the evening of Friday, December 10, 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 resident will be awarded a \$100 gift card, courtesy of Skowhegan Savings Bank.

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 Downtown Stroll & Tree Lighting



Remembering Kent Sinclair

Kent Sinclair, who served as Norridgewock's librarian for a number of years, from 2012 to 2019, passed away on September 4 following several years of poor health. Kent was a smart, kind, and gentle man with a good sense of humor. His patrons were fond of him and vice versa. As noted in his obituary, "You could walk into the library without knowing what you wanted and Kent was always there with suggestions and ideas. He had an amazing talent for remembering the books you had already checked-out, the ones you loved, and the ones you might be interested in".

A few testimonials that I received from patrons while preparing this article:

- Kent loved the library and loved the books. He was always striving to make the library collection better. He enjoyed helping people find good reads. He knew books!!
- He was so helpful! He knew 19th century literature. He could find anything I wanted.
- Kent had a passion for music and literature. But more than that he cherished books and objects that linked our present time to the past. He loved genealogy and was committed to preserving the Sophie May Library for future generations.




In keeping with the latter remark, I remember a meeting of the Historical Society that Kent attended. It was a cold evening and the meeting was underway when he arrived. He came in wearing a black silk top hat from the 1800's, which he promptly removed and proudly presented to the assembled group for the Museum collection. He found the hat deep in the attic of his historic home, "the Josiah Peet House" (right across the street from the Civil War Soldiers Monument). He was pretty sure the hat belonged to Josiah or a member of the Peet family. Another time, Kent and his partner Roger Sack quietly appeared at the Museum to donate a spinning wheel that they found and thought the Museum should have. That was Kent, quiet and thoughtful; always taking pleasure in preserving history – and pleasing others. ♦ RFK



\$15 each or 2 for \$25

Available at the Town Office

while supplies last



*Norridgewock
Public Library*

Tues, Thurs 10 am – 6 pm
Weds. Sat 10 am – 2 pm

634-2828



**LICENSE
YOUR DOGS**

IT'S THE LAW

Get your 2022 license now!

BEFORE FEBRUARY 1
\$6.00 per dog- spayed/neutered
\$11.00 per dog- unaltered

FEBRUARY 1 AND AFTER
\$31.00 per dog- spayed/neutered
\$36.00 per dog- unaltered



**NORRIDGEWOCK
DOWNTOWN STROLL
& TREE LIGHTING
DECEMBER 11, 2021**

Fire Safety Education at Mill Stream School

Partnership brings exciting program to PreK through Grade 2

How old are you before you understand the basics of fire safety? The necessity of having a working smoke alarm and the importance of having a fire escape plan? What about stop, drop and roll? At Norridgewock Fire and Mill Stream Elementary, they believe it is never too early. Full-time firefighters Josh Corson and Andrew Dexter were joined by Skowhegan Fire Captain Rick Caldwell as they taught fire safety to Mill Stream students, Pre-K through Grade 2.

The students learned about fire prevention, but also the work of being a firefighter. They were intrigued in learning from the firefighters and were especially excited to be able to see the engine. At the conclusion of each session, the students got to see all of the equipment on the engine and had the chance to sit in the driver's seat!

Educating children about fire safety is important, but so is promoting the firefighting industry as a potential career. Most communities in Maine struggle with maintaining a staff for fire protection; educating and encouraging young people about the field is an important part of inspiring a willingness to be involved in the future. *Norridgewock extends a special thanks to 'Firefighter Rick' from Skowhegan for his remarkable work in creating a fun, interactive, and engaging environment for these youngsters to learn about fire safety— it was truly amazing!* ♦



Vaccine Clinic Proves Success

At a local election, one might typically vote and then patronize a book sale or bake sale, but at Norridgewock's November 2 election, voters had the option to receive a vaccination. Initially planned strictly as a flu vaccine clinic, the FDA approval of the COVID booster timed well to add it to the offering; this provided folks with unusually easy access to vaccinations.

In partnership with Redington-Fairview General Hospital and RFGH EMS, over 200 vaccines were administered at the clinic. Voters and passersby accounted for the injection of 57 flu shots and 151 COVID booster jabs. The vaccination clinic was offered at no cost to the Town or those receiving vaccinations. A special thanks to Barb Demchak and the staff at RFGH who were instrumental in facilitating this convenient, pop-up event for people in and around Norridgewock. ♦



NOMINATION PAPERS NOW AVAILABLE

The following elected positions will be on the ballot March 7:

Select Board and Overseer
5 seats, 1-year term

Tax Assessor
3 seats, 1-year term

Planning Board Member
1 seat, 3-year term; 1 seat, 2-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; 1 seat, 2-year term
1 seat, 1-year term

Sewer Commissioner
2 seats, 3-year term; 2 seats, 2-year term
1 seat, 1-year term