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Excuse our look!

We're a little thin this week, and anemic on the news. But it's our vacation issue, and a week off to recuperate should do the trick.



The Town Line office will re-open for business on Monday, July 12, at 8 a.m.

Inside



Feature
Watching the World Cup
page 4



China
How a pizza is born
page 3

Plus

Our Towns Report	2
Obituaries	5
Scores and Outdoors	5
Entertainment	9
Platter Perspective	9
Calendar of Events	10
Classifieds	11

Waterville's North End celebrates community

by Bonnie N. Davis

Although the weather was picture perfect for an early summer evening, Waterville's North End streets were as empty as a ghost town last Friday – except for Dave's Place – the park located on Drummond Avenue, between Oak Street and High Street.

Over 600 residents gathered for the Third Annual North End Nite hosted by the North End Boys and Girls Club (NEB&GC) and



Jim Davie admires his artwork as Giovanni Garcia shows off his new face. Photo by Bonnie Davis

Living Water Community Church (LWCC). The community bash offered a free evening of fun and food, complete games, music, prizes and demonstrations of programs offered by the Alford Youth Center (AYC) - the parent organization of the NEB&GC.

"It's great that there's a demo of the programs - dance, decal and karate," said Aaron Greene, a long time employee of the AYC. Since instructors lead the demonstrations, Greene felt it was a good way to connect the AYC with the North End families.

"Last year we had more vehicular traffic," said Steve Aucoin, director of the NEB&GC unit. "The interesting thing to me is this year we had very little vehicular traffic. We restricted our publicity to the North End."

More foot traffic means more neighbors uniting to build a stronger community.

"It's been very positive and well received by the community," said Ken Walsh, CEO of the AYC, praising the diversity and peaceful atmosphere of the event, which he attended with his son, Sean. "Steve's mission driven - he works from the heart. He's like the Pied Piper of the North End."

"It's good - it gives us something to do, 'cause we're broke this week," said Melissa Garcia, a neighborhood resident with young children.

"It's awesome they did this," said her husband, Ervin. "There's a lot of people in this area with low income - this helps a lot."

"...and we can walk," Melissa said, "that's a big thing. It's something for the kids to do."

Aucoin, along with a group of volunteers, gathered donations of goods and funds from local merchants, businesses and individuals, resulting in offering free hamburgers, hotdogs, chips, water and soda to the community.

"Food is an introduction to something larger," Aucoin said. "Breaking bread has a unifying quality."

"It's a great turn out," said Mike Nerney, pastor of LWCC. His congregation ran games, free popcorn and cotton candy concessions; cooked hotdogs and burgers; and gave away backpacks as well as gently used children's clothes.

Members of Calvary Baptist Church, a sister church in Belle Air, Maryland, arrived a week prior to the event to help with organizing and set up.

"They've been a big blessing to us," Nerney said. With lack of funding threatening the continued presence of the NEB&GC past this fall, Walsh said, "We don't see funding on the horizon, but we still have hope - it's a challenge with the cutbacks. We need to be volunteer-driven. This tradition has to continue."

"It's such a good example of people working together to build community - I hope people in the North End see it and learn from it," said Aucoin, stating he would like to see more AYC board members come next year to experience the camaraderie in the North End. with the little glitches - it's really great!"

Bonnie N. Davis is a freelance writer living in Fairfield. Visit www.bonniendavis.com, www.fanstory.com/bnd-writenow, www.nei-deep.blogspot.com. Contact bnd-writenow@roadrunner.com

Learn to protect your favorite lake from invasive plants

The threat of invasive aquatic plants is more pressing than ever this year, after an infestation of the worst invasive plant in North America, Hydrilla, was found in Damariscotta Lake last September. Training is available for concerned residents wanting to protect lakes and ponds. This summer the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program will again offer an Introductory Invasive Plant Patrol Workshop, which will take place on Thursday, July 15, from 2:30-8:30 p.m., at the Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association (DLWA) office at 38 Lake Farm Circle in Jefferson.

This workshop is co-hosted by DLWA and the Pemaquid Watershed Association. Pre-registration is required. Please contact the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program at vlmp@mainevlmp.org or (207) 783-7733 to register. For on-line registration and workshop schedule updates visit www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org/workshops.



Volunteers learn to identify native and invasive aquatic plants in order to protect Maine's lakes and ponds. Contributed photo

Invasive plants are not native to Maine, and thus they lack predators and competition. Left unchecked, they can outcompete native plants, clog waterways and negatively affect fish populations. As a result, invasive plant infestations can lead to decreased property values and loss of recreational opportunities.

The primary goal of the VLMP Introductory Invasive Plant Patrol Workshop is to provide those who wish to join Maine's "early detection" effort with information and guidance needed to get started. The workshop is presented in four parts: Overview of invasive species issues in Maine and beyond, Plant identification fundamentals, Plant identification hands-on exercise with live plants, and Conducting a screening survey, tools and techniques.

All workshop participants receive an "Invasive Plant Patroller's Handbook," and the Maine Field Guide to Invasive Aquatic Plants. Invasive Plant Patrol workshops are provided free of charge to participants by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program Center for Invasive Aquatic Plants.

IPP workshops are funded in large part by a grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection with funds generated by the Maine Lake and River Protection Sticker Program. Additional support for the workshops comes from foundation grants, private donations, and the generosity of local sponsors.

Anyone interested in learning about aquatic invaders is welcome to participate in the workshops. Those who wish to become active members of Maine's early detection team and to make a formal commitment to the statewide endeavor are encouraged to become Certified IPP Volunteers. Additional training is available in a Invasive Plant Patrol Field Methods Workshop scheduled for Saturday, August 14, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., on Damariscotta Lake, leaving from the DLWA office and several shorter trainings offered by DLWA focused on Hydrilla. Please register by contacting Julia Davis at 549-3836 or Julia@dlwa.org. For more information visit www.dlwa.org or www.pemaquidwatershed.org.

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