



BELGRADE REGIONAL CONSERVATION ALLIANCE



BRCA conserves the lands, water quality, and natural heritage of the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

Great Pond Milfoil Infestation Battle Report

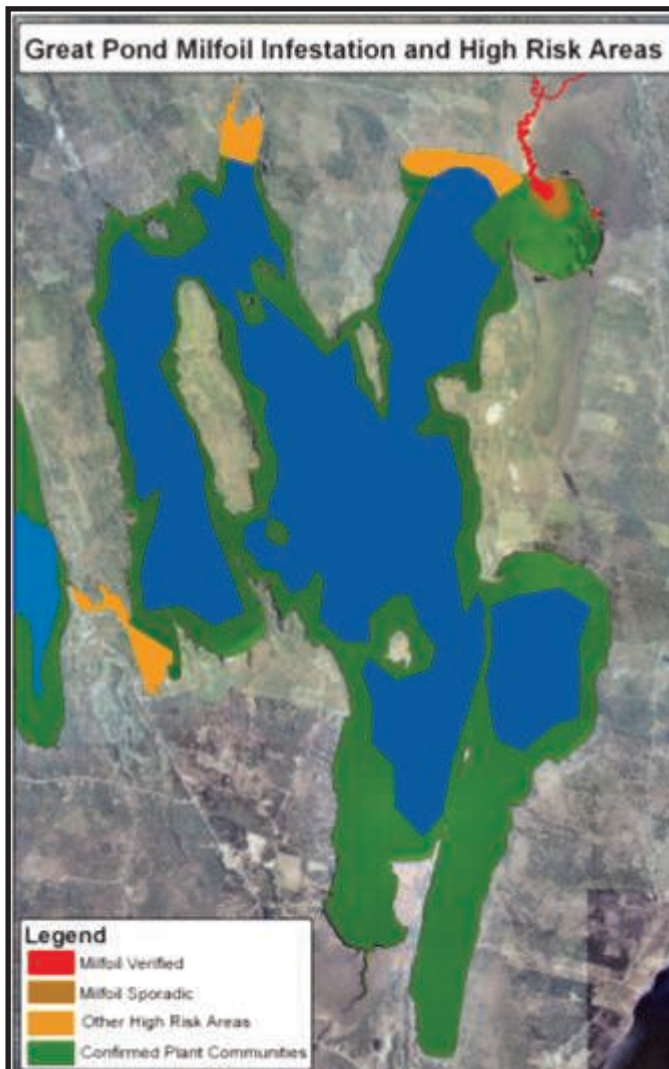
Combatting the Milfoil in Great Meadow Stream, which has now been found further into North Bay than originally thought, was definitely a battle this year. Our first full summer attempting to control this deviant plant was a learning experience with room for improvement. But we have also found things that work and easier ways to achieve some of the goals. This will mean a better developed fight next year! We now have learned the lessons and are ready to kick back at the milfoil in 2012. Stay tuned for the combined BLA-BRCA-MeCOLA campaign and what you can do to help us!

The Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance is incorporating a variety of techniques to fight the spread of milfoil within the Belgrade Lakes Watershed. In addition to employing and stationing 22 Certified Boat Inspectors (CBI's) at our public boat launches, the BRCA created a new "SWAMP" team this year that identified, marked, and removed milfoil. Surveys were done in the North Bay area of Great Pond as well as in Great Meadow Stream. The SWAMP team worked hard to manually pull the milfoil as well as create and place benthic barriers over larger sized patches. On several occasions, Maine DEP divers assisted with the pulling.

What are we going to do with all this milfoil? We are excited to announce a new program in conjunction with Black Gold Vermiculture and Research that is using earthworms to compost the harvested milfoil. The best product to come out of the Milfoil Program this year was the vermicompost; MILSOIL. The new compost will be offered to residents as a way to help fund upcoming milfoil removal projects. Please stop in to the new Maine Lakes Resource Center to pick up a ten-pound bag in exchange for a \$25 donation to the Milfoil Program.

The Milfoil Program has been involved in other events this year; we went to the North Pond Association's Lake Day and informed them about the infestation; and the "SWAMP" crew was present at the annual Milfoil Mania Day on Messalonskee Lake. We held volunteer hand-pulling events on Monday mornings throughout the summer and a multitude of invasive plant patrols were done throughout the watershed this year by a large number of volunteers from all the lake associations. Over 477.5 volunteer hours were put in thanks to the following: 9 members of Camp Runoia's Counselors in Training, Mel Croft, Adam Duguay, Andrew Dumont, Jane Eberle, Bruce Fenn, Sue Fenn, Ted Hesson, Zachary Jacques, Rob Jones, Tess Klingenstein, Rachel Mack, Maureen Maslak, Lynn Matson, Phyllis Matson, Adam Petryk, Michelle Petryk, Louise Proulx, Lea Ramirez, Emma Russell, Jeannie Russell, Tess Russell, Marg Ryan, Jane Sharf, Richard Sharf, Rob True and Gordon Woods.

As the warmer season comes to an end, the milfoil nightmares that keep me tossing and turning are not. We want everyone to remember that it only takes one fragment to cause an infestation, one person to prevent an infestation but a lot of hands to fight one.



BRCA is a Lake Trust, and a Land Trust

My lifelong dream was to live on a beautiful lake, and now I'm living that dream! I enjoy watching the loons, ospreys, and eagles. Long leisurely days lapping up the sun floating across tranquil waters while boating, fishing, kayaking, and canoeing are nothing short of heaven on earth. Ah, life amongst the Belgrade Lakes. Winter sports are also great here in paradise, but each spring I eagerly await the day my boat slides into East Pond and I make that first trek of the season across the lake to my dock. What more could one ask for?



Executive Director's Column

As I write this, three short months since our last newsletter, I am trying to figure out where the summer went. It seems like only yesterday that Memorial Day ushered in a frenetic schedule of lake association meetings (5), road association meetings (15), annual COLA and VLMP meetings (2), Summertime in the Belgrades **"Watershed Wisdom" columns (12)**, summer lectures (6), guided canoe trips (2), stewardship days (2), Conservation Corps Projects (91), DEP Stakeholder meetings (3), Invasive Plant Patrols (6), milfoil handpulling days (6), payroll every other week for 40+ employees, a Lobster Bake, identification of plants brought in by members or (CBIs 50+), working with

How about a hike into the Kennebec Highlands wilderness where nature awaits in all its splendor? Or a hike up French Mountain, or Mt. Phillip, or our new land addition on The Mountain. And they're all located in our backyard! For me, the Kennebec Highlands and other nearby trails preserved by the BRCA for our use are just as important as the lakes for recreational enjoyment. Opportunities abound to observe countless species of flora and fauna as well as geological clues to the past history of this beautiful area.

ate their gravel roads, working with Colby students studying the lake, helping to get a new building up and running, a highly successful golf tournament (Thanks again to all who helped us meet our challenge grant!), a 5K Race for the Lakes, the BRCA Annual Meeting, etc. Throw in a bit of knee surgery, a little rehab, a couple of grandkids birthdays, a couple of fishing trips with grandkids (too few), visits from friends and families and I realize where the summer went.

A common theme in all these things is that I spent a lot of time with our members and others who are passionate about protecting our lakes. It is rewarding to be able to help them help themselves and future generations who will enjoy these lakes. We live in a special place and want to do our part to keep it

The BRCA began as a Land Trust in 1988 with the acquisition of French Mountain. Since its beginning, the BRCA has set aside over 7000 acres of wilderness land for our use, and has a long range plan to add more land as it and funding become available.

If you haven't seen the sun set on McIntire Pond while making that last cast in anticipation of snagging a native brook trout, soaked in fall colors from the summit of Round Top Mountain, skied to Kidder Pond, marveled at a soaring eagle atop Mt. Phillip, or eaten mountain blueberries along the numerous Highland trails then you haven't experienced all that the Belgrade Lakes region has to offer.

Generous donations from our membership help make the Highlands possible. Please continue to support us. Our stewardship committee can also use your help, so if you're able and willing, join us on one of our stewardship work days. Call Pete or Mary at the BRCA 495-6039 for details about donations or stewardship work.

- Mel Croft, BRCA President

that way.

We are still continuing to try to expand our membership and encourage more volunteers to become involved in our programs. We are looking for new members who are a lot like our current members- in love with this part of Maine and concerned enough to help protect it. The best place to find those people is among the friends and families of our current members. If you have a friend or family member who shares your conservation ideals who is not yet a member, please ask them to join or consider giving them a gift membership. If you have a new neighbor, a BRCA membership is a perfect welcoming gift! Any member who refers a new member will receive a special gift as a token of our appreciation. Please contact me or stop by the office if you have any ideas about how to make BRCA more responsive to your needs. All the best, Peter Kallin

Saturday, October 8th at 9:00 a.m. Post Office Docks, Belgrade	Leaf Peeping on Great Pond. As part of the Belgrade Lakes Region Business Group's Oktoberfest, the BRCA and COLA will host a ride upon the floating classroom of Melinda Ann and discuss the physiology and folklore of the changing leaves.
Sunday, October 9th at 2:00 p.m. Roundtop Trailhead Watson Pond Road, Rome	Guided Fall Foliage Hike in the Kennebec Highlands Public Lands led by a Maine Forester and Park Ranger. Co-sponsored by BRCA, Maine Forest Service and Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands.
Saturday, October 15th at 10:00 a.m. Mount Phillip Route 225, Rome	Leaf Peeping Hike on Mount Philip. In case you couldn't make the Melinda Ann on the 8th, this will be another chance to learn about the physiology and folklore behind the changing leaves.
Monday, October 31st at 5:00-7:00 p.m. Maine Lakes Resource Center, Belgrade	Halloween, Trick or Treating. Join us for free hotdogs, candy, and coloring books!

Please note that with our recent move to the new Maine Lakes Resource Center, our e-mail has changed from gwi.net to belgradelakes.org.

So, our new general e-mail is brca@belgradelakes.org



Educator's Column

Although I officially began my AmeriCorps service on May 25th, I viewed a scheduled hike to French Mountain as my **first real task as the BRCA's environmental educator**. In preparation for the hike, I spent a few hours exploring for the trail and its vegetation, prepared an informal presentation and hoped for a good turnout. Anxious to meet some members of the Belgrade community and share my love of plants, I arrived at the trail head along with menacing black clouds bearing rain and no participants. After waiting twenty minutes, I left the trail head discouraged and questioning the success of future events.

A month later I was scheduled to lead another hike, this time, on Mt. Phillip. The forecast suggested rain and thunderstorms. I forecasted no hikers. Contrary to my prediction two brave souls turned up as the clouds seemed to disperse. We hit the trail expecting the rain to hold off, but within a hundred yards of the trailhead, a light sprinkle developed. No big deal-a little rain never hurt anyone. The rain gradually grew heavier as we progressed another hundred yards along the trail. Nevertheless, both hikers and I marched forward, **now with thunder rattling overhead. A little lightning never...** oh wait, never mind. Despite the potentially disastrous conditions we set a record for the wettest and quickest completion of the Mt. Phillip trail. Thoroughly moistened and a little cold, I cursed the rain once more.

The following week presented an opportunity to redeem my rainy misfortune. This time, a medicinal plant walk at **BRCA's Dolley property was scheduled. Eight enthusiastic** guests attended. A ninth unexpected guest, by the name of Mother Nature, arrived an hour late with, you guessed it, rain. The botanical foray was cut a little short, but was a dra-

matic improvement from the previous trips: People showed up, stayed dry and learned something new!

Until a recent concert, I viewed rain as a menace to my efforts as an environmental educator. While attending the performance of singer-songwriter, Ellen Tipper, rain began to fall as if on cue during a song entitled, **"Rainy Monday."** All concert-goers acknowledged the coincidence and enjoyed the melodic union of nature and song. During that unplanned harmony, I reflected on how **important rain is to the Belgrade Lakes' vitality.**

In the months previous, I condemned precipitation for meddling with my educational efforts instead of transforming it into a teachable moment. Precipitation is the lifeblood of the watershed we enjoy, has an incredible power to change the landscape and lake quality through erosion. Through properly managing rainfall and storm-water runoff we can limit erosion, thereby preserving the lakes and land we love; a concept central the mission of the BRCA.

As fall approaches and my AmeriCorps service term draws closer to its end-date in November, I hope to continue providing recreational and educational programs for Belgrade Watershed inhabitants, but with a new reverence for rain. I encourage you to ponder the effects of rain entering and leaving your property and its effect on **the lands and lakes. The opening of the BRCA's new** home in the Maine Lakes Resource Center will provide even more opportunities to learn about the effects of rain and sustainability. I look forward to seeing you in the new resource center, on the trail, or on the lake, whatever the weather.

-Tim Perez, Educator

Conservation Corps

The 2011 BRCA Youth Conservation Corp season was filled with 9 weeks of erosion control projects being carried out on all 7 lakes in the Belgrade Lakes watershed. Our season began on June 20th, with a training week with our new Field Supervisor, Nick Betts and our two team leaders, Chase Karter and Josh Hall. The rest of the crew members started their summer of service on June 27th and worked for 8 weeks until August 18th. This summer the crews completed 91 projects on 46 different properties throughout the Belgrade Lakes Watershed.

Highlights of this year's service included 15 infiltration steps on Timber Point, cleaning out and re-**arming a 200' culvert fed stream** with a series of 6 plunge pools, to contain high volume flows of water in

spring time and completing the Miller Island project after the sinking of one of our boats full of rock.

The Conservation Corps has completed 772 projects in the past 16 years. The year 2011 was another record high that surpasses the record set in 2010. Projects this year included riprap, buffer gardens, rain gardens, rubber razor blades, box culverts, culvert armoring, drywells, infiltration trenches and infiltration steps. Projects were completed on all seven major Belgrade Lakes, with Great Pond, Long Pond, Messalonskee and North Pond receiving the most projects.

This year there was a good variety of projects, both working on the shorelines and addressing issues on driveways and other impervious surfaces. After our first island project in 2009, word spread and demand for island projects increased. We decided to only tackle one island project a

year because of the amount of time necessary for these projects. Our project this year was a riprap project on the Miller Islands in East Pond. We moved just over 19 yd³ of rock out to the island riprapping about 100 ft. of shoreline. Next year we hope to work on at least one Island and might take on two projects due to the increased demand for island work. If anyone has any boats they would like to donate to our cause please do not hesitate to call.

The season schedule did not fill up till the end of July this year but next **year's schedule is already filling up** so if you are interested in a project for next season make sure to contact Clark at BRCA (495-6039) to set up a site visit to look at your properties erosion concerns.

-Clark Freeman, Conservation Corps

Table 1: Summarizes the 46 properties worked on sorted by town and lake.	Belgrade	Rome	Smithfield	Oakland	Sidney	Mt. Vernon	Total
Great Pond	8	5	-	-	-	-	13
Long Pond	5	7	-	-	-	2	14
Messalonskee Lake	1	-	-	-	3	-	4
East Pond	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Salmon-McGrath	2	-	-	4	-	-	6
North Pond	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
Watson Pond	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total	16	14	7	4	3	2	46



Table 2: Summarizes the 91 projects completed by town and lake.	Belgrade	Rome	Smithfield	Oakland	Sidney	Mt. Vernon	Total
Great Pond	18	12	-	-	-	-	30
Long Pond	11	14	-	-	-	4	29
Messalonskee Lake	1	-	-	-	7	-	8
East Pond	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Salmon-McGrath	2	-	-	7	-	-	9
North Pond	-	-	7	-	-	-	7
Watson Pond	-	5	-	-	-	-	5
Total	33	31	10	6	7	4	91



15 Infiltration Steps leading down to Long Pond. Top is before and bottom is after the project.

Milfoil Program Season 2011

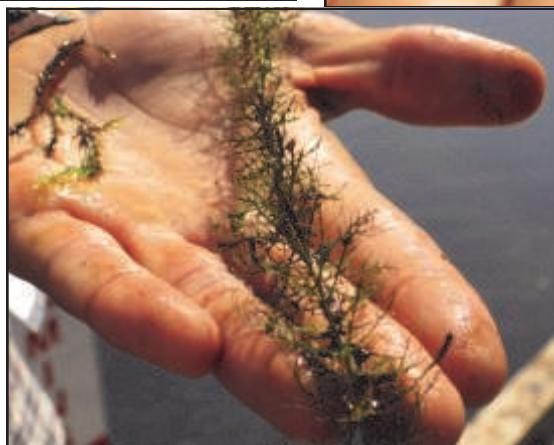
The Milfoil Program is no longer keeping quiet! Haven't you heard? The watershed conducted over 11,500 boat inspections, Great Meadow Stream has Milfoil and BRCA now has Milfoil. What a season this has been for the Milfoil Program here at the BRCA!!

This year's CBI program went well thanks to our fantastic 23 summer boat inspectors and over 15 volunteers. Our staff and volunteers together spent just under 6500 hours and performed 11,596 inspections at the boat ramps located on Great Pond, Long Pond, East Pond, North Pond, Salmon Lake/McGrath Pond

and the two ramps on Messalonskee. This year we had two saves, Anna Marshall working on July 4th at the East Pond boat ramp pulled Variable Milfoil off of a boat and a few weeks later Georgia Bolduc pulled curly-leaf pondweed of a boat at the Great Pond boat ramp. We received a lot of fragments this year, all but two being native, it's important to remember to inspect your boat and equipment before entering any water body and after leaving one also! Information on invasive vectors can be found online or stop into the new resource center to talk to us about it!
-Corinne Dawson, Milfoil

Lake	Hours	Inspections
East Pond	865	1143
Great Pond	825	3083
Long Pond	804	2202
Messalonskee Lake	1033	2860
North Pond	700	1180
Salmon Lake (Whisperwood)	721 (1475)	1101 (339)

MILSOIL
VERMICOMPOST
made from VARIABLE-LEAF MILFOIL
Harvested from the Great Meadow Stream
Approved for Organic Growers and Meets MOFGA Standards



Stewardship Program

There are three notable stewardship efforts to report at this time; the first involves French Mountain; the second regards work on The Mountain; and the third is news of a recent land acquisition.

Let's get started.

French Mountain, if you haven't been there recently, has an interpretive guide available for free at the kiosk. On the interpretive guide are numbers that refer to aspects of the trail you may not have noticed in the past. Number markers along the trail correspond to those on the interpretive guide, allowing for a self guided hike that we hope will teach you a thing or two.. Get to the trail, check it out, and let us know what you think. We hope you enjoy it.

The Mountain addition, recently purchased by the members of BRCA and BLA, on the northern slopes of The Mountain has allowed for the development of new trails. When finished, almost two miles of trails will be added. The trails will be located to the east of the existing ones and give hikers much more to choose from. Some work has progressed on one sixth of this future network.

Brian Alexander marked out some of this potential trail that passes by interesting rock features and through unique vegetative communities. Work was done to remove large branches and downed logs prior to the July 22nd's Stewardship Workday and on that Workday the trail began to take form. After the trail dimensions were cut, rakes were used to remove a top layer of detritus and create a tread. Because of the gentle slope of the new trail, side-hilling was not needed. Side-hilling is necessary for creating trails that traverse steep slopes. This aspect of trail building usually requires a pick-mattock tool to notch out the side out the side of a hill. Examples of this can be found on Long Pond Loop trail and on the southern loop of French Mountain's trail. **The additional trail is accessible from Great Pond Loop, but it is not completed nor marked with blazes. It is not recommended for use at this time, but with some help from more volunteers the trail should be completed for fall hikers. We will be leading some guided hikes on this new trail.**

Lastly, Central Maine Power (CMP) recently donated approximately 469 acres to the BRCA (see Winter 2010 Newsletter). This land is protected by conservation covenants. Named the Fogg Island Preserve, this property borders **some of Ingham Stream's southeastern bank and extends about two miles down Long Pond's southwestern shore into Belgrade Stream.** The preserve provides habitat for all sorts of wildlife: birds like loons, bald eagles, osprey; mammals such as bats, beavers and deer; ribbon snake, a species of special concern in Maine, turtles, frogs are but a few reptiles that can be found.

Upland forests and wetlands make up the major vegetative communities on the preserve. Berries are available for picking along with beaked hazelnuts and wildflowers are in abundance. The property is open for the public to enjoy. Although no formal hiking trails have been established, they are planned. In the meantime people

are welcome to explore. One designated trail is open to snowmobilers in the winter, but motorized vehicles are limited according to the conservation covenants. Hunting is allowed and encouraged on the property. As you can see, there is a lot of work ahead of us! If you are interested in contributing to one of our many projects, please contact us! Stay tuned for more trail news and opportunities to get involved. Check our website or Facebook page, stop by our office, or call for updates!



TWINS MAINTAIN INTEREST IN PRESERVING AND PROTECTING OUR LAKES

Way back in the summer of 2003, Mike Little, then-Director of the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance, was asked to address the membership of the Belgrade Lakes Association at their annual meeting held in **Loon's Cove on Great Pond. The hot topic of the day** was invasive plants, and Mike emphasized the need for every lake dweller, every lake user, every lake property owner-- in fact, every lake lover, to become familiar with the aquatic plants present in the areas of the lake that they were most familiar with. Variable milfoil had been discovered in Lake Messalonskee a couple of years or so before that meeting, and there was great concern that it might spread to Great and/or Long **Ponds if we weren't diligent in our efforts to keep it at bay** through the use of widespread plant identification and boat inspections. The BLA membership was urged to attend plant identification workshops and courtesy boat inspection training so that they could join in the effort by becoming volunteers in the fight against invasives.

Two 7-year-old twin girls, Emma and Tess Russell-Grad, attended that meeting with their mom, and their Great Aunt, Jean Trueblood. It seems that Aunt Jean, being a very forward-thinking environmentalist, had given the twins an annual membership in the BLA every year for their birthday. As a result, they received all the mailings, newsletters, brochures, and announcements that went out to members, and their mom, Jean, read them all to them until they were old enough to read themselves. They got to come up to Belgrade Lakes from the Bronx in New York every summer from the time they were 3 months old, to vacation at their family camp on Long Pond, which has been in the family since **the 1930's, and is now on a conservation easement** held by the BRCA. They fell in love with it and Maine and their lake, as so many of us have.

A week or two after the meeting, we received a call in the office from Aunt Jean, who asked if she could bring the girls up to the office because they had found some plants in the lake while they were out canoeing, which looked very much like the pictures of two of the invasives that they had seen in the summer BLA newsletter. They wanted to bring them in for Mike to identify them. They were our youngest volunteer invasive plant patrollers ever! The good news was that they had **found "bladderwort" and "American waterweed," two invasive plant look-alikes, not "variable milfoil" and "hydrilla," the evil invasives. The best news was that** they were out there in the lake, hunting for invasive plants, and now sitting in our office making sure their waterfront was invasive-free! We took their picture and put it in our Summer 2003 newsletter, letting our members know how proud we were that we had these two little heroes as members of the BLA!



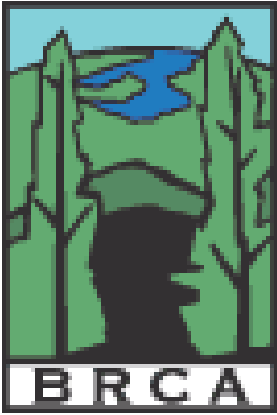
Emma Russell-Grad, Jean Russell, Tess Russell-Grad

Well, moving the calendar 8 years forward, at a BRCA meeting in June, 2011, we were recruiting volunteers to help pull variable Milfoil from Great Meadow Stream in Great Pond, where it had been identified the year prior, when who should appear but Tess and Emma, now 15 years old, and still totally interested in saving our lakes from invasive plants! They have spent a number of days this summer pulling out Milfoil by the roots, along with their Mom, Jean, and a number of other volunteer teens and adults. They also attended the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program all-day training for plant identification and education this summer; the Invasive Plant Patrols on Great and Long ponds, and learned to identify mushrooms at the program presented by the BRCA. Their time on the lake ended this year the last week in August, but not before contributing many hours of their vacation time pulling hundreds of pounds of milfoil, and promising to return next summer to continue to preserve and protect the lakes they so love. They hope to become Courtesy Boat Inspectors next year.

The girls are sophomores in the Bronx High School of Science and were delighted with the opportunity to meet Dr. Whitney King, Chemistry Chair of Colby College, when they attended the Maine Lakes Resource Center grand opening recently in Belgrade Lakes. Dr. King has been collaborating with both the BRCA and BLA in studies involving the presence of gloeotrichia in our lakes, as well as other water quality studies. **It wouldn't come as a surprise if one or both of the girls applied to Colby College for admission when the time comes for them to attend college – and Colby would be the better for it!**

Thanks, girls, for your ongoing interest and dedication. You do your Mom and Aunt Jean proud!

- Maureen Maslak, Milfoil Committee



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To view the BRCA Newsletters
in full color with active
hyperlinks visit our website

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