

The Weathervane

Winter

A Quarterly for and from West Gardiner

2015

West Gardiner Athlete Heads to China



Devryn Valley will be in Yabuli, China, March 8th through the 16th, to represent the United States at the 2015 Junior World Snowboarding Championship

Devryn first started snowboarding at the young age of only six, when his Uncle Alan Valley took him to Sunday River for snowboarding lessons. It was a rocky start, but from then on he was hooked.

His mother Anne remembers, "Every winter when Devryn was young, his father would plow all the snow from our driveway and lawn and push it up high in the middle of the front yard to make a "mountain" for Devryn to snowboard down. I would watch Devryn climb up that mountain each day and use his little red shovel to move the snow and build jumps and courses, then ride down it for hours. No matter how hungry he was, it was an hour long process to get Devryn to come inside to eat. Each time it snowed, Devryn would repeatedly ask his father to make the mountain bigger and taller. It couldn't be missed if you drove by our house on High Street during the winter; some years the mountain took up most of our front yard. Often, when I ran into people from town, they would tell me how they saw Devryn earlier that day, playing out on his "mountain" again. Tom and I take pleasure in watching him climb much bigger mountains now, as he dreams of climbing even bigger ones still."

When he was twelve, he began to compete competitively. Since then, Devryn has competed at national and international competitions including last year's Junior World's in Italy. In February 2015, he won back-to-back gold medals in Canada. That qualified him for this year's competition in China.

Devryn trains at Sugarloaf Mountain with Carrabassett Valley Academy and has worked many hours to pay for his snowboarding. Support from his parents, Tom and Anne and his sister, Vanessa, has made an impact on his success. His coach has as well. Michael Mallon, the Snowboard Program Director at CVA, sees Devryn as "a very talented, ambitious, young athlete who shows great promise".

Always dreaming of bigger mountains, his ultimate goal is to compete in the Olympics.

Good Luck in China, Devryn! We're cheering you on!

~Margaret Peacock

If you would like to make a donation to help with costs, go to GoFundMe.com/mtfat4



“An Author Among Us”

Doug Rooks Penning George Mitchell Biography

~ Josh Caldwell

In December of 2013, Doug Rooks, a resident of West Gardiner, committed to a daunting project: encapsulating the entire legal and political career of George Mitchell within the pages of a single book. Rooks, previously the editor of *The Maine Times*, began pursuing the notion of writing about the former U.S. Senator as long as ten years ago, but it was not until 2013 that he was contracted by Down East Books to complete a biography of George Mitchell. The book is set to be published in 2016, and Rooks states that he has already completed most of the research that will go into making the biography as detailed and accurate as possible. When asked why George Mitchell piqued his interest, Rooks explained that he has a great admiration for the things that Mitchell has been able to accomplish both as a lawyer and as a politician. That, coupled with the fact that Mitchell hails from Maine, made him an appealing subject for Rooks' biography. George Mitchell is likely known by most Mainers as a U.S. Senator, a position that he held from 1980 to 1995. However in his biography, Rooks illuminates not only Mitchell's illustrious political career, but also his prominent career in law. Unlike many politicians, Mitchell made use of his law degree by pursuing a career as a lawyer, an occupation in which he became extremely successful. After his time in the Senate, Mitchell served as a Chairman of Peace Talks in Northern Ireland, and then went on to become the Chair of the Board of DLA Piper, the biggest international law firm on the globe. Mitchell is now 81 years old, and his influence is still felt across our state due to the Mitchell Institute, a program that, among other things, provides scholarships to each of the 129 public high schools in Maine. George Mitchell is perhaps one of the greatest politicians to ever come from the state of Maine, and his legacy deserves to be remembered and appreciated for many years to come. Fortunately, Doug Rooks is the most qualified man to share Mitchell's story with us, and he lives right here in our hometown. Stay tuned for the 2016 release!

West Gardiner's Newest Eagle Scouts

On January 18th, Eli Fish and Michael Glazier of Troop 672, Pine Tree Council, Boy Scouts of America, were recognized for rising to the rank of Eagle Scout.

“Since its introduction in 1912 the Eagle Scout rank has been earned by more than two million young men. Requirements include earning at least 21 merit badges and demonstrating Scout Spirit through the Boy Scout Oath and Law, service, and leadership. This includes an extensive service project that the Scout plans, organizes, leads, and manages.” BSA

Congratulations to both of these young men
for your great success!



Elijah Fish and Michael Glazier

A Thank-you Note From the Senior Citizens

The Senior Citizens of West Gardiner would like to thank the Selectmen and West Gardiner citizens for the money that was appropriated in the past for the monthly dinners. Pending approval for this year's appropriation at the March 28th Town Meeting, the dinners will be held on the following dates:

Friday April 17th
Friday May 15th
Friday June 19th
Friday July 17th
Friday August 21st
Friday September 18th
Friday October 16th



This year's caterer is Wayne Mitten from Litchfield. Dinner will be served at 12 noon in the West Gardiner Fire Station located at 322 Spears Corner Road.

In 2014, 318 seniors attended the seven dinners averaging 46 seniors per monthly dinner.

Special thanks to the fireman that volunteer their time to set up and take down the tables and chairs for our monthly dinners.

If you have any questions, please call Mary Blen 724-7494 or Bob White 582-3103. Thanks again! *The Senior Committee*

West Gardiner Fire Station March 28th

Voting starts at 8:00 and ends at 12:00
Town Meeting starts at 1:30



Candidates on the Ballot March 28th

Carrie Boudway, MSAD 11 Board Director (1 year term)

As a longtime resident and day care provider in West Gardiner, I have demonstrated an interest and commitment to providing a quality/affordable education to our children. I have served as a selectmen appointed member since a vacancy occurred in November, 2014.

Debra Couture, MSAD 11 Board Director (3 year term)

I enjoy working collaboratively with the students, faculty, administrators, and community to help provide a quality and challenging education to all MSAD 11 students. I would like the opportunity to serve another term.

Greg Couture, Selectman (3 year term)

I have enjoyed serving the residents of West Gardiner. There are still contributions that I would like to make to the town and would appreciate the opportunity to serve another term.

~Phil Davis

Julie's Trip to Canada

It was February not too many years ago when my wife Julie decided she wanted to take a trip to Canada. I had been hauling logs up there and it's a seven hour round-trip if things go good. We left at four in the morning to get to the mill and back by noon.

We tried to talk when we started out, but we couldn't hear each other. The motor is pretty noisy, the whole truck is noisy. And it didn't help that the '84 Mack truck's heater hardly worked, so we didn't talk, in the dark, in the cold, on the way up to Canada.

We got to the mill, unloaded and headed back.

The sun was up by then, so Julie started to read a book, but the ride was too rough to read. Then she got her knitting out and tried that, but it was the same, too rough.

After a while, she thought she'd get a bit of sleep, but every time she got halfway comfortable, her head would bang against the door or the window, so she didn't read, knit or sleep, on the way back from Canada.

When we pulled in the driveway, it was 11:30. Julie got out of the truck and said, "That was an experience". She hasn't mentioned taking another trip to Canada.

~Mert Hickey

Spirit of America

The Weathervane Staff would like to thank the selectmen of the town of West Gardiner for the honor of receiving the Spirit of American award. The Weathervane started in 2009. The members of the staff between then and now: Laura Dill, Barbara Evan, Elsie Whidden, Margaret Peacock, Phil Davis, Nick Bucci, Alyx Wharton, Mert Hickey, Sandra Palmer Fish, Josh Caldwell, Mike Wing, Susan Emmet, Kim Greenleaf, and Deb Couture.

Close to the Earth

A description of the people who knew the land and waterways of this place we call West Gardiner

It would be fair to say that for many hundreds of years until the late 1700's, the Cabbassa (Cobbossee), of the Kennebec tribe and of the Abenaki confederation, lived their lives in these parts.

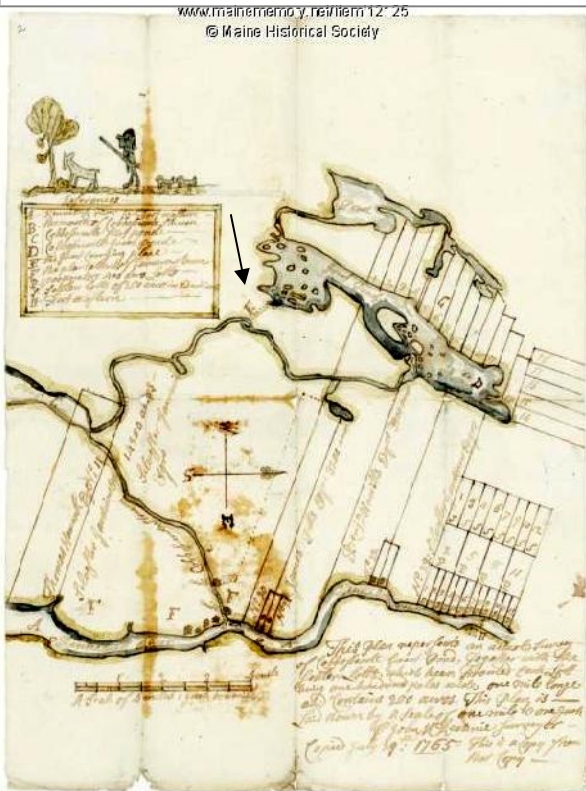
The original people of this area in Maine were happy people and friendly. "They were bold and brave and strongly attached to native soil and peaceable ..." As with all the Abenaki*, the Cabbassa dealt with weather and hunger through hard work and cunning. Tools and beautiful clothing were fashioned with skills passed on by the elders.

"The men dress in the skins of animals, or in loose robes of red or blue cloth; and the women wear mantles reaching to the middle of the leg, very gracefully arranged, with light covering thrown over the head, and falling to the feet, and stockings from the knee to the ankle (ankle). Their moccasins are of deerskin. In the winter they wear snowshoes, without which they cannot exist. With them they are able to overtake the swiftest animals.

They are tall, powerful and active, with teeth whiter than ivory. Their only ornaments are beads, made of shell, white and black, so arranged in belts, and the like, as to represent different figures with great beauty. Their children are regarded with the greatest affection, and the utmost respect is manifested toward the aged. Their skill with the bow is great, even children can shoot with astonishing accuracy."

Quotes of Father Sebastian Rale, Norridgewock, c. 1700, from J. W. Hanson's History of Gardiner Pittston and West Gardiner.

*There are many spelling variations of the Native American names in Maine.



The Cabbassa used the waterways of West Gardiner's Cobbossee Lake and Cobbossee Stream and its shores to fish, hunt, camp, and travel.

In the warmer months, "They rendezvoused (with other tribes) in Gardinerstown at the mouth of Cobbossee and at Merrymeeting Bay." They then made their way inland as it became colder.

The map pictured on the left, copied in 1765, shows Cobbossee Lake and Stream and Kennebec River. The land between Goodwin's Point on the lake and the stream at the oxbow is referred to in the inset as Great Camping Grounds. There is an "E" placed between these two points. Thoughts of campfires, singing and dancing come to mind.

A neighboring tribe of the Kennebecs, the Androscoggins, would also travel on the Cobbossee waters. The following is an account of the Androscoggins using lake and stream as a route to Merrymeeting Bay.

"They always made two trips each year to the sea-coast. These were made for the purposes of visiting the graves of their fathers; to hunt sea fowl; to buy and sell furs." The Androscoggins divided into two groups. "Part went over to Wilson Pond, worked along its waters to Cobbosseecontee; thence to the Kennebec. The other followed the Androscoggin. They reunited at Merrymeeting Bay; hunted ducks and fished and dried their fish and fowl... The last of these trips of record was in 1796."

Lewiston Sun Journal, 1928

All the Abenakis, which includes the Cabbassa, spoke the same language with little variation, described as elegant. It can be imagined that when they met in Gardiner and Merrymeeting Bay, they talked of many things, along with the joy they felt in watching a sunset and the fascination in the stars. ~Margaret Peacock

Lu enlisted in the United States Air Force in October, 1955. He served for 23 years and retired as a MSgt (E-7). After basic training at Sampson AFB, NY., he attended Air Traffic Control School at Keesler AFB, Mississippi.

Lu was stationed at many bases including Greenland; Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico; Keesler MI, Ellington AFB, TX, Ft. Campbell, KY, Hanscom AFB, MA, Pease AFB, NH, and Loring AFB, ME. Some of the schools he attended were Basic Air Traffic Control School, Advanced Instructor School, Non-Commissioned Officer School, and Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy.

Several of Lu's memorable events include Basic Training in NY in the winter and having to push snow by hand to get to the firing range and the 5am marches in the cold to the chow hall. He also experienced several hurricanes. In one, he was hauling supplies in Texas throughout a hurricane and in another, rode one out at Keesler AFB MS in a small trailer. He vowed he would go to the on-base shelter for any future hurricanes.

Vietnam Veteran



Lu (Lowell) Lamoreau

In June, 1969, Lu deployed to Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. He remembers the interesting foods in Vietnam and wasn't sure what he was eating sometimes. He would always check the rice to make sure it did not move! Lu returned from Vietnam in June, 1970 through the San Francisco airport. He will never forget the crowds with and how they spit and threw things at them. He remembers the red banners with yellow letters, (North Vietnam flag colors) and the yellow banners with the red letters, (South Vietnam's flag colors). He thinks he was more afraid as he came past those people than he was all the time that he was in Vietnam. Lu received the Bronze Star and the Air Force commendation Medal for his service in Vietnam.

Lu's advice for a young person considering the military: It is a good life, if you can adjust to it. Stay involved with the community wherever you are stationed. If you decide not to make a career of the military, select a field that you can benefit from. Lu, thank you for your service. ~Deb Couture

Glastek's
James Forrest
Thanks Us!



Jim Forrest contacted the Weathervane recently to put a thank you in to the residents of West Gardiner for their patronage. He said since he placed his listing in the Weathervane, he noticed his business increased.

Thanks for letting us know, Jim!

Welcome Back to West Gardiner

Joan Anastasio, with her husband Gino, have built their retirement home here in West Gardiner where Joan grew up. She is the eldest daughter of Chet and Gloria Thompson. Joan has been away since the early 70's and wanted to get closer to family and friends. They spent three years clearing their land with the help of family and finally moved into their new home this past November. It's been quite a winter to be back in Maine. They are both looking forward to spring to begin their landscaping, bird watching, kayaking and golf. Let's hope her Wednesday morning coffee chats with her three sisters, mother and great niece, Iris, can ease the snow burden of this winter and get her caught up on all that is in West Gardiner. Welcome home!

~ Kim Greenleaf

Free Listings in West Gardiner Directory

If you have an organization or business listing that you would like to submit to the Weathervane, send your information to margaret.peacock@yahoo.com, or call 724-3869.



The West Gardiner Historical Society meets monthly on every third Wednesday at the Auxiliary Hall at 7:00pm.

From the Porch

Snow Job

~Mike Wing

On this fine winter morning, the layer of snow has insulated the gardens, the lawn doesn't need mowing, and the black flies aren't too bad. The relief from summer's chores is a welcomed snow job, but still one of those debts to be paid. The white stuff is West Gardiner's uninvited guest that drops in and hangs around too long, and we are obligated to feed it and put up with it. We can't burn it, eat it, or avoid it, so we just move it around. It eats up seasoned hardwood, bags of pellets, tanks of propane and gallons of heating oil. Snow makes us plow and shovel, sand and salt. Its sidekick, the cold, hangs around like a bad smell, that freeloading relative who doesn't know when to leave. I really don't hate snow and it doesn't hate us. It's Mother Nature. Susan and I compromise and go snow shoeing, following deer tracks and dogging rabbit trails, being nice with the white stuff. We rode a Skidoo once, kind of fun, noisy though. The grand kids will come over to slide and holler out front, then dump boots and long johns. Ball caps become wool hats. Fresh veggies for frozen. Hay fever upgrades to cabin fever. I've read that love-hate relationships are natural. While snow gives us a break from yard work, it then hands out shovels. A fresh dusting surprises us with sunrise beauty, then sneaks up our sleeves and numbs our wrists by noon. Look around town at the smoke rising from those chimneys above the blanketed roofs, lovely but at a physical and financial price. So round we go in ice, wind and snow, four or five months that test our strength and enrich our hearts, at the same time. Maybe that's why we live out here.



WEST GARDINER NEWSLETTER

The Weathervane

A Quarterly For and From Our Town

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The Weathervane is a non-profit quarterly informational newsletter intended to be unbiased, non-denominational, non-partisan, accurate, and enjoyable.

Schedules of town events, organizations and activities as well as local businesses will be listed in the spring issues.

The Weathervane welcomes story ideas from our readers.

Call 724-3869 or write margaret.peacock@yahoo.com