

Weld's Young Scientists Dive into Webb Lake

by Lisa Bofinger

This summer, the Weld Free Public Library (WFPL) sponsored a three-part active learning program, “Bee Wild, Bee Weld.” These sessions encouraged Weld’s youngest scientists to explore local fields, forests, and waters. Instead of providing answers, we aimed to equip children with the skills to investigate and discover independently. The first session, held in June, focused on exploring the meadow and grassy areas around the library. Children were invited to develop their own questions and conduct their own investigations.

The second session took place at the Nature Center at Mt. Blue State Park, followed by a hike to the lakeshore. About 15 children, Ranger Jamie Cantin, and several parents and adults walked down Hopping Frog Trail with buckets and nets. At the water, some children were initially hesitant due to the muddy shoreline, but soon everyone was participating. We collected several large tadpoles, a few baby hornpout, and many small invertebrates, which we later examined under microscopes at the nature center.

Weld's Young Scientists
Continued on Page 2



Weld's Young Scientists

Continued from Page 1

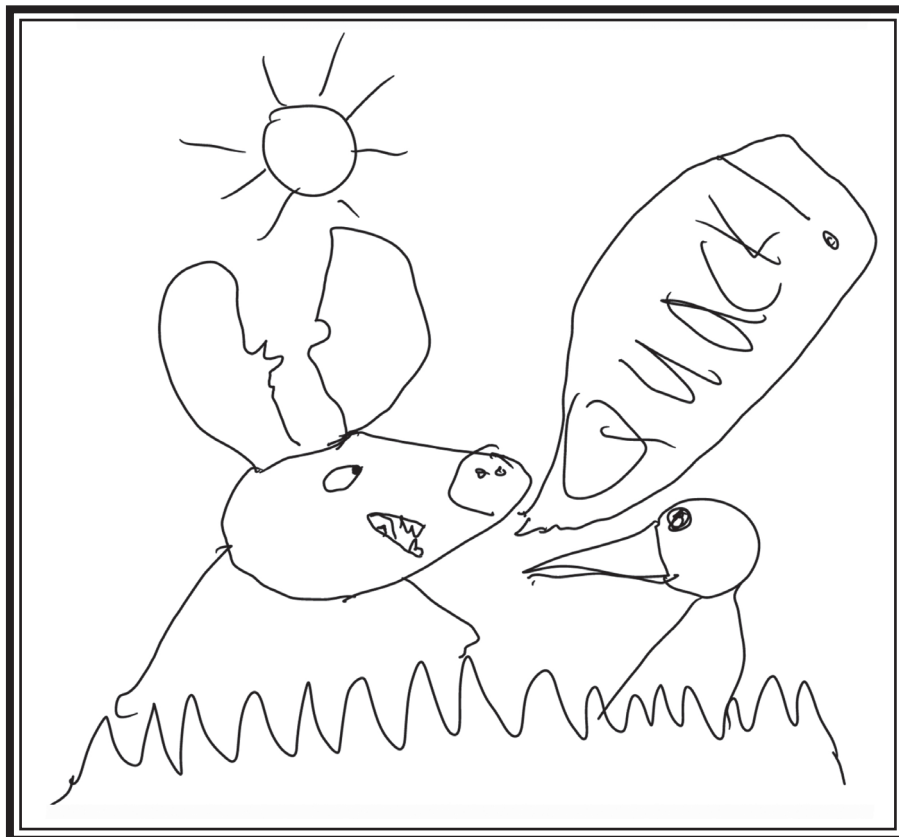
The final summer session will focus on investigating the forest. We will meet at the yurt at State Park Headquarters before heading into the woods. I plan to prepare several questions so children can choose their area of interest. If you or a family member attended any of these programs, I hope you found them valuable. Please contact me or any WFPL board member with suggestions for next summer's Summer Reading Program.

Last spring, WFPL received a grant from the Weld Heritage Fund, which enabled us to purchase a variety of scientific equipment for community

use. The first group to use these tools was the Lawroweld Homeschool Kids, who studied vernal pools. Since then, the equipment has been used with the WFPL Summer Reading Program and the Webb Lake Association.

I am happy to connect with other organizations or individuals interested in using this equipment. Advanced science can be challenging for some homeschooling families, and I hope the library can serve as a valuable resource.

I believe the best way to preserve our natural world is to teach children to understand and value it. By providing them with the tools to explore and ask questions, we open new worlds for them and help protect our shared home.



A Moose Meets a Goose

by Liam Flanagan, Age 5

A Fun Summer Working for the State Park

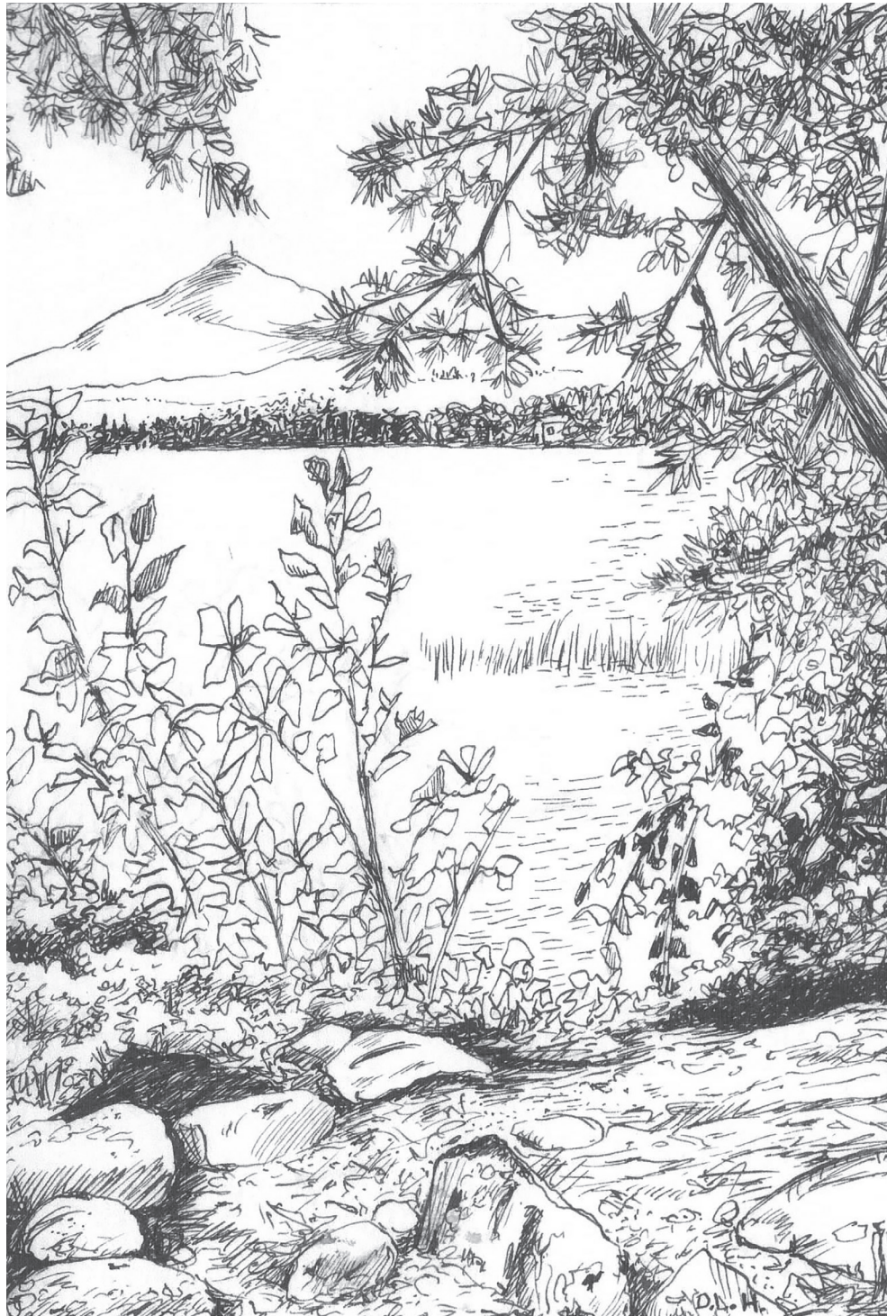
by Dorothy L. Hall

One summer I worked for Mt. Blue State Park. It was wonderful working every day outdoors—helping campers, answering questions, keeping the wood piled high, and checking in new campers daily. I especially loved the end of the day when we took a swim in the cool lake water. Most days my buddy, Ben White, would join me. Ben lived in Weld all year round.

Some days were more exciting than others, like when a bear was spotted, or a big storm came up. One day a camper went missing. He had walked to town. Masterman's store was a big draw to many of the campers in those days. Friday night square dances were very popular, too.

I remember the old guy who rented out the boats at the park. I had a friend visiting and decided to rent a kayak and take her for a ride. I stopped by to see him and asked if he would hold a kayak for me for the next day. He asked my name and when I said Dorothy Hall, he looked at me and asked, "Are you from Wilton?" I said, "No, but my dad was born and raised in Wilton." "Yeah, thought so," he replied. "Your dad and I went to school together. We were both on the baseball team." What a small world. I was happy to meet an old friend of my dad's.

The next day my friend and I took out a small boat. I was told if we went close to land we might see a moose. So, we hopped in the boat and headed the way the man had suggested we go. We went around and into a cove and we almost ran into a moose. "Back paddle. Quick!"



I said in an urgent whisper. We did and soon we were out in the middle of the lake. I assume the moose wasn't that interested in us as he just kept chewing on the leaves. I had never been that close to a moose in my life.

I had a few good jobs over the years. I worked for The Farmer's

Wife. I painted the front porch steps and made Brown Cows for customers. I also worked for Steve Vining making covered wagon lamps.

I started hiking Mt. Blue in 1956 and went climbing for as long as I could into the 1980s. My days in Weld have been memorable and lots of fun. I smile as I remember them all.

Living the Dream: Norman Blodgett and his Miata

By Jean Miller Mariner

It's a quick walk to my dusty Honda, but Norman stops me. "Wait." A beat passes, then another.

"Want to see my car?" He has the biggest boyish grin sparkling to match the stone in his earlobe. His eyes glisten; his ears are pulled back. His thin lips form a wide arc, stretching clear across his face. How could I miss this opportunity?

He ushers me out of his and Linda's living room on Beehive Hill, from the warm homestead interior down the steep stairs into the combination basement-garage. Though the stairs are steep and dark, they are more easily navigated than the outdoor stairs which appear to be from the original farmhouse that burned in about 1940, when Norman was two years old. I imagine that it's possible toddler Norman crawled up those outside stairs, but he assures me these stairs are not from the original house, called the Beehive.

We pass through his basement garage--that does not hold a car--and emerge onto the driveway, so I begin searching for the vehicle that lights up his face. I look left. I can almost see the town hall where Norman's Masonic brothers meet, where Linda and Norman met and danced when they were in their teens, and where ten-year-old Norman collected water each morning for his family. I can see Mount Blue Garage, where Perry Rodenhizer rented the second-floor apartment



to Norman and Linda in their first years of marital bliss nearly seventy years ago. I can't quite see Buck's farm where they also rented an apartment before returning to Beehive Hill, but it's there in my mind's eye just beyond a tree or two.

He leads me down the hill a short distance to a free-standing single-car garage, and he pulls up the heavy door with one hearty swoop. The singular smooth movement belies his age, reveals his keen fitness, and divulges that this door is opened in this fashion multiple times each day.

My eyes adjust. A 2008 Mazda Miata with six-on-the-floor, roll bars, a sparkly-gray exterior, and the most coveted WELD ME vanity plate, rests comfortably between

cruises and next to a snowmobile that's roughly the same size. The Mazda's cap is pulled back and stored, exposing a dust- and dirt-free interior. Manicured with a toothpick, tweezers, and brush surely intended for the interior of a sewing machine, the car is a work of art. We walk around it, squeezing through the narrow space between the snowmobile and the Mazda. I can see my own image in the chrome on the lid to the gas tank.

"Linda wouldn't let me drive my motorcycle anymore, so I got this." He nods in the direction of the Miata, his right lip curling upwards.

Living the Dream

Continued to Page 5



9 Winter Lane by Scott Rhoades

Living the Dream

Continued from Page 4

I had heard the Blodgetts enjoyed a fast and fun life on a blue sparkly motorcycle and imagined it would be tough to surrender the motorcycle.

I nod admiringly towards the sports car, unable to stifle my chuckles. He is living the dream.

“There’s room for the groceries in the trunk even with the cover down, see?” Norman opens the trunk.

“So, it was clearly a very practical purchase,” I observe. He’s grinning, leaning into me, loving the moment neither of us wished to end.

Norman Silas Blodgett,
October 28, 1937-June 19, 2026.
Rest in peace.

Classic Buttermilk Ranch Dressing

by Liz Boyle

(original source unknown)

World Cup players and foreign fans fell in love this summer with ranch dressing in America, something they’d never eaten before. I wondered if they’d had homemade, without all the chemicals found in Hidden Valley bottled dressing. Here’s a homemade version which you can easily adjust to your liking.

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup buttermilk
- ¼ cup sour cream

- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh dill, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper (freshly ground, if possible)
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon hot sauce (optional)

Mix well and chill for at least 30 minutes so the flavors meld.

My Wounded Knee

by Steve Lambert

I cut myself this morning, while felling yonder tree.
It wasn't very serious, a gash across my knee.
I had some bar and chain oil that I always bring along,
And put some on my wounded knee as I began
this song.

The words did not come easily, the way they often do.
You see I was distracted by the blood and all the goo.
I did not let that slow me down, tree limbs I cut away,
Until I noticed one of mine was missing: what a day.

I thought myself a lucky man for I could walk around.
My legs were still beneath me, yes, still anchored to
the ground.

My left arm had been severed, though, as I could
plainly see.
And my left hand, accusingly, was pointing up at me.

Now I don't want to brag about how cool I was that day,
But had I been a lesser man I'd not been here to say
That in a plight so serious I did not lose my head,
For though I was delirious my chainsaw now was
dead.

I always carry duct tape, for that's simply who I am.
And I am not ashamed to say I love the taste of Spam.
But I digress for I have eaten not a thing today.
Return I will, though hungrily, to what I have to say.

I grabbed my left arm from the ground, assessed the
urgent need,
And placed it neatly where it was before the
gruesome deed.
Then carefully I bound it with precision born of skill,
Acquired at the slaughterhouse I worked at up the hill.

As I prepared to go back home to get some needed rest,
My right arm held my chainsaw and my oil can to
my chest.
But how was I to haul the tree that I had just cut
down?
I'd hoist it with my left arm to assure that it was
sound.



So up I went as I approached the home where I abide,
As tools and tree I carried with efficiency and pride.
So masterful was duct tape work that I'd done on
my arm,
That good as new it had been healed. My work had
done the charm.

Now if I was just half the man that I purport to be,
I would be here in person for to boast of limb and tree.
And rightfully you'd slap my back and tell me I was
grand,
Despite the fact that slapping me did damage to
your hand.

But as it was my destiny had something else in mind.
The little cut upon my knee would soon bite my
behind.
Infection had set in, a thing that I was soon to
dread,
But not for long, as time would tell; for sadly I am dead!

So if, per chance, you ever find that you have cut
your knee,
Remember what my arrogance and pride have
done to me.
Do not insist that you must feast on pizza laced
with ham.
Content yourself with humbler fare, like eggs fried
up with Spam!

Spotlight: The Camic Family

by Liz Boyle

On a bright July afternoon, the day after Independence Day, Nicholas Camic called over his giant draft horse, Doc—one of three that live in the town of Weld. “Come here, big guy,” he said, as the horse sauntered over. “Want to feed him a treat?” I did want to give him a peppermint, but every time Doc’s big brown teeth came toward me, I dropped the candy onto the barn floor. Doc finally sucked his peppermint with what seemed like glee as two donkeys, Izzy and Lucy, looked on with friendly eyes and flared nostrils. I was visiting the historic Storer homestead on West Brook Road, now owned by the Camic family.

If you drive West Brook Road on your way to Tumbledown Mountain, you’ll see the place alive with the draft horse, donkeys, goats, and chickens. Young children run around the gardens, and a pasture with fruit trees across the road will one day produce hay. The Camics bought the homestead almost two years ago. Their intention is to honor the livelihoods of generations of Storers who farmed the land before them, though without the dairy cows the Storers once kept.

That evening the three Camic children, Charlie, Josephine, and Theodore would sleep under the stars in a canvas tent. In the meantime, they played barefoot with yellow Tonka trucks on a sand mound. A stone firepit smoked nearby.

Rather than traveling, the Camics were vacationing at home, which meant a lot of work outdoors. We walked around the property looking



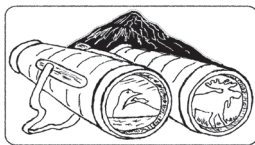
at their New England pie pumpkin patch, flowers, raspberries, peas, beans, and other plants baking in the sun. I saw where the goats would be clearing brush and where the donkeys stay outdoors at night to protect the goats from predators. Since the Camics hadn’t raised animals before, aside from dogs, they’ve sometimes leaned on others in town. Dave Fish, who they met through their farrier, has been teaching Nicholas about handling their horse under harness, so he’ll be ready to guide Doc through the field once they start plowing.

Nicholas Camic and his wife, Sarah, met during their college days in Farmington. Sarah is originally from Madrid, and Nicholas is from Madison. They bought an existing dental practice

in Wilton. Western Mountain Dentistry now serves patients from Weld and surrounding towns. Sarah went from stay-at-home mom to office manager “overnight,” she said, still sounding surprised by her own life. On workdays, the Camic children go to school and childcare about five minutes from the dental office. It’s not easy, but so far, it’s all working smoothly.

In our quiet town of Weld, the Camics are not just restoring an old farm—they are building a home where their children can grow up knowing the land, the animals, and the neighbors who make this place feel like theirs. Sarah said it best: “Everything we’ve always talked about for our kids, we’ve found here in Weld. It’s a nice small community, and we love the people, and the outdoor life.”

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN



The Weld Observer

Upcoming Submission Deadlines:

November 1, 2026 and February 1, 2027

Articles, letters, drawings, cartoons, photos, Jokes, puzzles, recipes... All submissions will be published in black and white. We welcome pieces by kids!

Via e-mail: **weldrecnews@weld-maine.org** or drop your submission in the Weld business box in front of the **Weld Town office, 23 Mill Street** in Weld. Attention: **Weld Recreation Committee**

<https://www.weld-maine.org/weld-observer>

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