

Belmont High School principals lead their students in a charge up the Tioga River

BELMONT — Several years ago, American Legion Post 58 in Belmont and Belmont High School Principal Dan Clary initiated a Community Service Project for BHS students, particularly seniors, to be performed toward the end of each school year. He worked with Post 58 to define an appropriate scope of work for the students each year and then organized them, brought them down to meet the Legionnaires and worked with them throughout the project. The project for a while now has been to clear brush, dead trees and debris from the bank of the Tioga River behind the Belmont Mill to provide a clear view of the river from the Mill and from the new Tioga Pavilion built recently. The added benefit is that the area is cleaned up and provides a view of the Mill from Route 140.

Just before Memorial Day, Principal Clary and Associate Principal Rick Acquilano brought a crew down to the site of the newly installed covered bridge across the Tioga behind the mill. They did not just supervise, they led by example, using Dan's own chainsaw to cut down several dead trees and organizing the students into crews. They worked hard for hours, along with members of Legion Post 58, to cut brush and remove debris along the West bank of the Tioga near the bridge. This opened up a nice view of the river and uncovered a stone retaining wall no one knew was there.

These projects over the last few years have fostered a close relationship between Belmont High School, American Legion Post 58 and the community. It is one of the many initiatives Principal Clary has undertaken during his tenure at BHS. This is his last year, as he is retiring after the end of the school year, and his leadership and cooperative spirit will be greatly missed. He has left a legacy for future BHS administrations and students and Post 58 certainly hopes the tradition of a BHS Community Service Day will continue.



Associate Principal Rick Acquilano (red cap), volunteer Chris Fogg (back to camera) and Principal Dan Clary (gray cap), along with two students, cut down a dead tree near the Tioga River covered bridge in Belmont as a class project. (Courtesy photo)