

Winnisquam Echo

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2017

SERVING TILTON, NORTHFIELD, BELMONT & SANBORNTON, N.H.

FREE



COURTESY

Michael McWhinnie, a future Belmont farmer, gives his hens a ride in the parade.



COURTESY

Ron Mitchell, Parade Grand Marshal, and his wife Gerry as chauffeur.

Sunshine arrives just in time for Belmont's Old Home Day celebration

BY DONNA RHODES
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BELMONT — Last Saturday, the Town of Belmont celebrated their 148th Old Home Day since the town was incorporated under the name of Belmont. Despite some morning showers, the sun finally

shown over all the festivities and everyone enjoyed a day and evening filled with music, numerous activities, craft vendors and of course, lots of great food.

After a community pancake breakfast under the Tioga Pavilion, runners lined up for the

49th annual Belmont 10-Mile Road Race and the shorter Tioga Fun Race. Cheered on by residents all along the challenging course, it was Corey Lanum of Meredith who crossed the line first with a time of 1:07:12 while Elizabeth Beeson led them way for the

women with her time of 1:12:22. For the Fun Run, Micah Edgren topped the field with his time of 7:22. Competitors said that cool temperatures that followed the early morning rain made this year's challenging race quite comfortable for the participants.

Throughout the morning many people browsed and shopped the craft vendors who lined the town green or relaxed on the lawn to enjoy the bluegrass/folk music of the Tyler Road Band. Children also enjoyed a number of games and friendly competi-

tions. This year, a portable climbing wall added to the fun, and boys and girls between the ages of three and eight also lined up to take part in the popular Pedal Tractor Pull. Top finishers in three age divisions received a special trophy, SEE BELMONT, PAGE A15

adorned with a mini tractor, and they all got a gift certificate to enjoy a free sno-cone, courtesy of Belmont Rotary Club.

At 1 p.m., the crowds gathered all along Main Street for the start of the parade. Before the entries stepped out along the route though, Emcee Tom Murphy first asked for a moment of silence in honor of lifelong resident and town historian Wallace Rhodes, who passed away last month.

"To start the parade, on-lookers were then asked to yell 'Ring that bell,' and the bell on top of the Belmont Mill tolled as a final remembrance of Mr. Rhodes and his many contributions to the town," said Belmont's Events Coordinator, Gretta Olson-Wilder.

Grand Marshal for this year was Ron Mitchell, who among his many other commitments to the town, also championed the creation of the Lake Winnisquam Scenic Trail.

"Summertime Fun" was the theme for 2017 and floats and marching groups took that theme to heart. Belmont Elementary School's PTO group dressed appropriately for some fun at the beach and took home the Heart of the Community Award, presented to the annual entry that best illustrates the parade's theme. This year's Charles H. Kilborn American Legion Post 58 trophy went to "future farmer" Michael McWhinnie, whose tiny tractor towed his chickens through town in a portable coop. The Lakes Region Girls Softball Team took home the Selectmen's Trophy and

the First Baptist Church of Belmont was awarded the Albert Akerstrom II Award for their depiction of summertime fun that included a realistic looking campfire, another great way to enjoy a summer night.

Many residents, past and present, gathered at the Belmont Fire Department for their famed chicken dinner before the focal point of activities moved up to Bryant Field where plenty more entertainment was in store.

The American Legion sold pizza at a booth on the field while the friends of Belmont Football also offered additional dinner options while there were also booths for everything from burgers to pulled pork. The local Boy Scouts offered strawberry shortcake for anyone who had missed out on dessert and others sold everything from popcorn to ice cream.

The band, B Street Bombers, provided the music for the evening as families spread out lawn chairs and blankets and prepared for the firework show.

"As dusk settled in, the decision was made to move up the fireworks

by one half hour to outsmart the rain storm that was present on the weather radar," said Olson-Wilder. "Luckily, the rain held off until

the crowd cleared the field and was on their way home, concluding another wonderful end to this annual Belmont tradition."