

## The Annual Gibraltar School 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip to Fish Creek

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade students walked from Gibraltar School to Fish Creek Park and enjoyed a morning of outdoor activity. They used nets to find and identify macroinvertebrates in the creek. They planted trees to shade the creek to keep the water cool which helps maintain the dissolved oxygen for fish and invertebrates to breathe. They pulled invasive garlic mustard and dames rocket that they noticed were choking out native plants and they discovered there was more to Fish Creek Park than meets the eye when we hiked the Butterfly Trail for a view of the bluff and the trail that will connect to the new extension of the park.

In the afternoon, the students went indoors to take a tour of the Noble House. Stepping through the front door, they traveled back in time to the late 1800s. The docents told stories about how Asa Thorp founded the town of Fish Creek and how many of the buildings built back then are still being used for homes and businesses. The docents showed them how the tasks of everyday life were done by hand and then compared these tasks to the modern time- saving devices we use today, and they told about the vital role that water transportation played in helping the Town grow and develop into the tourist destination that it is today.

The field trip concluded with a visit to Not Licked Yet with custard for everyone provided by the Friends of Gibraltar.

We hope the students had fun in the outdoors while gaining a better understanding of nature, and how working together can help to make the world a healthier place to live, and we hope the students enjoyed time traveling to gain a better understanding of the past, how it connects to the present and helps us see into the future.

This field trip was a collaboration between Laurie Buske, the chair of the Town's Park & Lands Committee and program director of the Gibraltar Historical Association, myself, Linda Merline, the voluntary leader of the Fish Creek Watershed Study/Water Action Volunteers Group and chair of the Town's Plan Commission, Vinni Chomeau, the coordinator for the Friends of Gibraltar, with help from the teachers, Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Weitman, volunteer docent Lynn Hermann, and volunteers Dave Lea and Patty Dixon.

This field trip helps fulfill The Fish Creek Watershed Plan's Outcome 3.4: A Multi-Generational Partnership will Support a Healthy Fish Creek.

Note: This year the macro invertebrate study could not be held in its usual wetland spot on the boardwalk crossing of the creek in Fish Creek Park due to the flooding there. The owner of Not Licked Yet, Mr. Clay Zielke, generously agreed to let the activity take place at the portion of the creek that runs through his business property. Thank You, Mr. Zielke.