

EdGE nets \$450,000 challenge

BAR HARBOR — A \$450,000-challenge grant has been made to the Maine Sea Coast Mission's capital campaign to support the EdGE endowment, according to the mission's executive director, Gary DeLong.

Mr. DeLong said that an adequately funded endowment is critical to sustaining the EdGE, the award winning afterschool, in-school, and summer program for children in fourth through eighth grades in six communities in coastal Washington County, where there is no YMCA, YWCA or Boys & Girls Club to provide enrichment activities for children.

The goal of the Mission's Centennial Capital Campaign, which was launched in July of 2005, is \$12 million. Almost \$10.5 million has been raised. Of the \$12 million total, an endowment of \$5 million is being created to support the EdGE.

A donor who wishes to remain anonymous has committed to match all new donations for the EdGE endowment up to a total of \$450,000. A total of almost \$200,000 already has been raised against this match.

"We are, of course, very pleased

to have received this generous challenge which reflects confidence in the leadership of the program and in its importance to the children in Down East communities," said Mr. DeLong. "We encourage anyone who is interested in helping children achieve their full potential in the sixth poorest county in the entire United States to consider making a gift to the EdGE endowment," he added. "This is an especially good time to make such a gift, as it will effectively be doubled through the generosity of this anonymous donor."

The EdGE was named the most outstanding afterschool program in Maine by the Maine After School Alliance in October of 2006.

"The EdGE has clearly become a national leader in rural afterschool programs," Mr. DeLong said. "Leaders in Washington and elsewhere are looking to the EdGE for answers on how children in poor rural communities can overcome multiple barriers to success."