

Maine Sea Coast Mission 'Holiday Open House' Dec. 3

BAR HARBOR — Holiday spending is on the minds of many Mainers this time of year, but the staff and volunteers at the Maine Sea Coast Mission in Bar Harbor have been thinking all year long about making Christmas special for Maine families in need. Through its annual Christmas Program, the mission receives and wraps approximately 16,000 gifts that are delivered to individuals and families in need in Down East Maine and on coastal islands. On Friday, Dec. 3 the mission will host its annual Holiday Open House from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. to raise funds to support this year's Christmas Program.

The Holiday Open House will take place at the Maine Sea Coast Mission Colket Center at 127 West St. in Bar Harbor and will feature music by Jessie Holladay, hors d'oeuvres and beverages, a wreath silent auction, and tours of the decorated Colket Center. The event is open to the public and a donation to the Christmas Program is encouraged in lieu of an admission fee.

"The Holiday Open House is a time for our community to come together, support our neighbors in need and celebrate the beauty of the holiday season," said Erin Fogg, chairwoman of the volunteer Holiday Open House Committee. "The Christmas

Program touches so many families along the Maine coast and brightens their holiday season. We can each help expand the reach of this program by donating to the Christmas Program in any amount — large or small."

Guests at the Holiday Open House will have a chance to see some of the wrapped gifts, and within each package, wrapped with the mission's signature white paper and red string, are items that will help meet the needs of individuals — needs that may not otherwise be met. Gifts range from toys to warm clothes for children and personal care items to books and calendars for the elderly.

"The presents provided through the mission's Christmas Program are all new, with their original tags and packaging. We also make every effort to select gifts that match each person's identified interests," said Christmas Program Coordinator Julie Patton. "Many people, who are now adults and supporters of the mission, have written to tell us how important the presents they received as children were."

For more information about the Holiday Open House, sponsored by Kelco Industries, or ways to support the Maine Sea Coast Mission's Christmas Program, call Sarah Clemens at 288-5097.