

MAINE SEA COAST MISSION—NEWS RELEASE

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Maine Sea Coast Mission Holiday Open House Raises Funds for Christmas Program

BAR HARBOR—With one glance around the third floor of the Maine Sea Coast Mission's Colket Center on West Street in Bar Harbor one might think they've stumbled upon a satellite office of Santa's workshop. While the Mission may not make toys, a little bit of holiday magic does take place within the historic house overlooking the sea. Through its annual Christmas program, the Mission receives and wraps approximately 15,000 gifts that are delivered to individuals and families in need up in Downeast Maine and coastal islands. On Friday, December 7, the Mission will host its annual Holiday Open House from 6:00pm to 8:00pm 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 Street in Bar Harbor and will feature festive music by Jessie Holladay, plenty of hors d'oeuvres and beverages, and tours of the beautifully-decorated Colket Center. The event is open to the public and a donation to the Christmas Program will be accepted in lieu of an admission fee.

"For the past three years the Mission has included a silent auction with its Holiday Open House," said Penny Read, chair of the volunteer Holiday Open House committee, "but silent auctions have become more numerous and can burden local business and artists that are frequently asked to donate items. As an alternative to the silent auction, we invite the community to come celebrate the holiday season with friends and bring a donation, large or small, to help raise the \$10,000 needed for the Mission's Christmas Program."

Guests at the Holiday Open House will have a chance to see some of the wrapped gifts that will bring hope and joy to those in need along Maine's coast. 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 adults.

"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 Julie Patton, director of the Christmas Program. "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 or ways to support the Maine Sea Coast Mission's Christmas program, call the Sarah Clemens at 207-288-5097.

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