



THE BULLETIN

SUMMER 2018

**Keeping
it fresh
Downeast**

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Maine Seacoast Mission
seacoastmission.org

Message from the President

The Good Community

A good community sustains itself by trust, by good faith,
and by mutual help.

—Wendell Berry

On a bright warm June afternoon, 100 people gathered in Cherryfield for the opening celebration of the expanded Weald Bethel Community Center.

It was a great day.

A local band played country favorites. Couples danced. Tables of elders enjoyed locally sourced food. Young farmers made salads. Volunteers who had worked on the center over the past several years surprised everyone with their attendance. The musicians were first-rate, the food was delicious, the talk in the room loud enough that you had to speak up to be heard, the flow of people touring the center added movement and mixing.

“I am in awe of all of you,” said Wendy Harrington, who heads the Seacoast Mission’s direct services. “This opening represents so much. Nearly ten years of planning, the sweat equity of hundreds of volunteers, the financial gifts of people near and far all came together to create a beautiful meeting place for the community.”

With a space for worship and gathering, a commercial kitchen for putting up produce

and preparing meals for Table of Plenty dinners, a dormitory and washrooms for Housing Rehab volunteers, and generous space for EdGE programs and activities, the expanded space is just as Wendy had dreamed it would be—a gathering place for the beloved local community and all its people.

I listened to the happy comments of guests as they explored the new kitchen and sat next to two food pantry volunteers who delighted in the buzz all around them. This was a scene I’ve seen many times before in my long career as a minister in rural Maine: People getting together at a place they love, concerned about each other, depending on one another, sharing a common life. It’s a community. A long time ago I learned that we cannot live a grounded life without being grounded in a place.

The elements of a good community were on display that beautiful spring evening—the high spirits and joy that were all around offered a tangible sense of hopefulness for our community.

Certainly the communities served by the

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Cover: Kid Kitchen camp, a cooking and nutrition program that encourages healthy eating, runs each summer as part of EdGE Summer Camps. Visiting the farm was one of the field trips for campers.

Photo: Jen Kearns

Seacoast Mission have serious needs, but as I look back over my watch as the Mission's leader, I see more strength than weakness and share that sense of hopefulness. These hardscrabble Downeast communities have much to give and much to teach our fragmented world. The words of Wendell Berry, who knows much about places like those served by the Seacoast Mission, have long sustained me and are apt now:

"In this difficult time of failed public expectations, when thoughtful people wonder where to look for hope, I keep returning in my own mind to the thought of the renewal of rural communities. . .

But to be authentic, a true encouragement and a true beginning, this would have to be a revival accomplished mainly by the community itself. It would have to be done not from the outside by the instruction of visiting experts, but from the inside by the ancient rule of neighborliness, by the love of precious things, and by the wish to be at home."

Sincerely,

Scott Planting
Scott Planting, President



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2018 Sunbeam Awards

Recipients embody the ideals of community



Marjorie Withers

Marjorie Withers

For 15 years, the Sunbeam Award has honored those who embody the ideals of community. Marjorie Withers and Maine Community Foundation’s Hancock and Washington County Funds take the honors this time.

Marjorie Withers has received accolades for her work as a mental health clinician. She founded the East Machias Community Caring Collaborative in 2006, a grassroots collective of educational, nonprofit, tribal, county, and state agencies dedicated to improving the lives of children and families through creative collaborations. Her ideas were most profoundly influenced through her work with tribal communities where adversity framed her understanding about resilience and the core strengths that exist in people.

“If you build services on strengths, then you’re building resilience and changing outcomes across generations,” she said.

The Community Caring Collaborative (CCC) started with a Washington County group concerned about the devastating impact of substance abuse. “The county had

terrible statistics and a crisis in community services, but also strengths,” Withers said. In response to the substance abuse epidemic, CCC’s initiatives have included training opportunities based on substance use disorders, trauma, and poverty.

“Although there were lots of programs dealing with poverty, there was little understanding of what poverty did to people’s souls, feelings of worthiness, and mental health,” she said. “CCC tries to find a common language among providers and partners that moves from blaming people to breaking down barriers. In Washington County and in the world, we can achieve miracles.”

Withers’s desire to help people goes back to her childhood. She comes from a family that experienced a different kind of trauma—her parents were immigrants escaping Europe during World War II. “We didn’t know about the idea of trauma then. But I understood that what happens to us in the past comes to live with us, so we have to make peace with it.” ❁

Maine Community Foundation's Washington County Fund and Hancock County Fund

Mano en Mano (Hand in Hand in Spanish) is but one example of the scores of organizations whose work has been helped by grants from the Washington County Fund and the Hancock County Fund of Maine Community Foundation.

"It's been an important source of funding for us," said Mano en Mano Executive Director Ian Yaffe, speaking of the Washington County Fund. Founded to respond to the needs of migrant farm workers and their families settling Downeast, Mano en Mano recently received \$7,500 to expand its new welcome resource center for migrant wreath makers who arrive in Washington County each fall.

"Since these grants are locally administered and flexible, we can use them to do critical work that otherwise could fall through the cracks," said Yaffe.

Launched in 1986 with gifts from three local banks, the Washington County Fund

has awarded more than 400 grants totaling nearly \$1.5 million. The Hancock County Fund is celebrating 15 years and has awarded more than 400 grants totaling just over \$1.5 million. Recipients in both counties work across a wide spectrum of challenges in education, conservation, environment, health care and wellness, basic and special needs, arts and culture, and entrepreneurship.

As a known and trusted name, Maine Community Foundation often leverages additional support from donors and other sources and then combines this support with the local knowledge of community members in the counties. Cathy Melio, the senior program officer covering Hancock and Washington counties, summed it up well saying, "Maine Community Foundation has been here for 35 years, as a grant-maker, connector, and convener, all toward the end goal of improving the quality of life for all Mainers." 🌟



Steve Rowe, president of the Maine Community Foundation



Keeping it fresh Downeast

The garden grows community

By Ann Cox Halkett

"Kids will say they don't like carrots," said Michael Hayden, owner of Folklore Farm in Cherryfield. "But then they'll taste a fresh garden carrot and say, 'Oh, I love carrots—I just don't like store carrots.'" Thanks to Hayden, "Farmer Mike" to many, students at Milbridge and Cherryfield elementary schools and Narraguagus High School choose their own fresh vegetables at free farmers markets. "Young kids love veggies, as long as you get to them before their parents tell them they don't," Hayden said. He lets kids pick out the produce they think their families will eat in the coming week. Last year, he distributed more than three and a half tons of fresh food, some of which came from the Mainers Feeding Mainers program of the Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Even when Hayden isn't at the schools, students have access to healthy food through food cupboards and the backpack program. The cupboards—shelves in a designated classroom or office—are available to any

child, any time. They offer in-school snacks as well as food for home. Children from kindergarten through third grade still receive a food-filled backpack to take home for the weekend, while older children have other choices.

The partnership with Hayden is just one of the Mission's initiatives to improve people's access to food and to change their eating habits for the better. "We support local farmers and are helping to bring back a gardening culture," said Wendy Harrington, director of the Mission's service programs.

Laura Thomas, food pantry coordinator and school resource coach at Milbridge Elementary School, has seen a big change in attitude toward food assistance over the past seven or so years. "It used to be, we would have to sneak food into book bags while a class was at recess. Now, there's less stigma." She sees kids being more adventurous—a change she attributes



to Farmer Mike. "He is amazing and so exuberant. He makes trying new things fun and cool."

Gena Norgaard has worked at the Mission's food pantry for more than 20 years. Four years ago, she revived the organic garden on the Downeast campus with the help of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service and its Master Gardener

In 2017, Seacoast Mission programs provided food for 187,936 meals. Many recipients were children and elders.

program. "I've seen a difference over the years," she said. There's less knowledge about how to grow and cook fresh vegetables, so she shares easy recipes for preparing vegetables.

For those who can't come to the food pantry, staff members and volunteers make home deliveries. The van brings a welcome visit with the food. The result? The garden grows produce that makes both healthy bodies and healthy communities.

Six volunteer master gardeners join Gena every Friday morning to work in the garden. "It's fun, because we laugh," said volunteer Dixie Dahman from Sorrento. "I can't say enough about the group," Gena says. "One day I talked about needing a new fence,

and the next thing I knew, we had one. I just cried. They're amazing."

The Downeast Table of Plenty (DETOP), the free community meal held at the Downeast campus every Sunday afternoon, uses fresh produce from Michael Hayden, the Mission's garden, and other generous gardeners. Volunteers prepare the food. "We try to make it healthy," says Bonnie Johnson, DETOP founder. "When you treat people well, they think they're worth it. And they are!"

"The Elmina B. Sewall Foundation supports our food programs," said Mission President Scott Planting. "The foundation and the Mission share a common goal: "improve the well-being of Maine people . . . while fostering relationships that strive for social equity and community resilience."

"Getting people to eat well is the goal," said Bonnie Johnson. "In Washington County we have a lot of people who are food insecure and dealing with obesity issues. To rework the thinking about what is healthy isn't easy. It's a work in progress. But it's work we feel is really critical to the well-being of a community. 🌱"

Below: Bonnie Johnson



SHORT TAKES



Alan L. Baker (right), with fellow 2017 Sunbeam Award recipients Earl Brechlin and Robin Alden. Baker kicks off a new legacy program at the Seacoast Mission.

A Lasting Circle

When Alan Baker mentioned to President Scott Planting that the Mission was in his will, that act of generosity seemed a natural for him. Baker had been a board director for many years, chair for two, and continues service on the finance committee. “Among my proudest moments, while serving on the board, was presenting the Mission’s annual scholarships to deserving young graduates from area high schools. Remembering that magnificent program in my will has always been a priority,” said Baker.

Over the last one hundred plus years, bequests have enabled the Seacoast Mission to grow in scope and strength. “People who make plans to benefit the future work of the Seacoast Mission ensure its continuing relevance and vitality,” said Patsy Fogarty, who leads the Mission’s development committee. “Everywhere you turn, you see the good work that’s possible because of legacy gifts.”

To put a fine point on that, a Second Century Circle is forming to recognize the people who take the step to include the Mission in their plans and to encourage others to consider doing so.

New Journey for Students

EdGE Journey, a six-year youth mentoring program, raises the aspirations of middle school students in rural Maine by working with students from seventh grade until they graduate from high school. The first class consists of 15 seventh graders from Narraguagus and Cherryfield schools.

Journey is funded by the Emanuel & Pauline A. Lerner Foundation, which in 2016 elected to primarily fund programs that “raise and sustain the aspirations of middle schools students in rural Maine.” In addition to helping middle school students define their identity and become more aware of the broader world, the foundation helps high school students gain access to scholarships for college.

Many hands, light work

Friends and foundations are stepping up to make a refitted *Sunbeam* a reality.

The All Hands on Deck special gift committee was created to make quick work of securing the \$1.5 million needed to extend the *Sunbeam's* working life. Chaired by Bryan Colket and Captain Michael Johnson, the committee has raised 70% of its goal. Johnson is developing the refit plans as well as planning temporary transportation for the nurse and outreach director while the *Sunbeam* is refitted during summer 2019.

The Sunbeam Award Gala on August 17 is the target date for announcing the success of this campaign. To join in, contact Ellen, epope@seacoastmission.org or directly at 207-801-6011.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Campaign steering committee

Bryan D. Colket, co-chair
Captain Michael Johnson, co-chair
Dennis Damon
Patsy Fogarty
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Lee Judd
Hewlett Kent
C. Scott Planting
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Jock Williams

Honorary chairs

Curtis and Patricia Blake
Tristram and Ruth Colket

Mission Scholars Selected

With the arrival of the last application for the Mission's 2018 scholarships, the tough task of choosing recipients got underway. This season, the Mission awarded about \$150,000 in new and renewed scholarships.

Of the 80 applications, 44 advanced to the next phase of selection. The Scholarship Committee interviewed students from nine Downeast high schools. Applicants flagged for the four-year Angus MacDonald Scholarship (\$12,000) returned later for second interviews. New scholars will take part in leadership workshops this summer on Mount Desert Island and at the Mission's Downeast Campus, and will include a new component: financial literacy and debt management. To learn more about the scholarship program, visit seacoastmission.org.



June 7, 2018. At Jonesport Beals graduation ceremony Ivy Robinson receives a Sunbeam Scholarship presented by Tristan Alley, a fourth-year Sunbeam scholar, a volunteer for the Seacoast Mission Scholarship committee, and a 2015 Jonesport Beals graduate.

Lobster Fest benefits Frenchboro



The 57th Frenchboro Lobster Dinner will be Saturday, August 11. That's right: the Lobster Fest debuted in 1961, the same year as *Mr. Ed* and *The Avengers*. And the Lobster Fest is the only one still standing. A tradition that strong is not to be missed.

There will be lots of good food—lobster and pie being two favorites—live music, auctions, and other fun. Proceeds benefit the Frenchboro Congregational Church and its outreach programs, the historical society, and library.

The ferry will leave Bass Harbor Terminal at 9 a.m., and the Mission's *Sunbeam* will make the trip, too. Boarding begins at 9:30 a.m. at Northeast Harbor Marina and cast off is 10:00 sharp. It will return to the marina by 4:30. Reservations are required. Please contact Anna Silver at 207-801-6011 or asilver@seacoastmission.org.

MAINE
BOAT & HOME
SHOW

August 10-12, 2018
Rockland, Maine • maineboats.com/boatshow

Sponsors:

Interlux
AWLGRIP
LCI
Bangor Savings Bank
EPIFANES
ROCK HARBOR
West Bay Rotary
USHARBORS
MAINE
Passion Networks

Gates open at 10 a.m. • Tickets \$15 (good all weekend) • No pets allowed

***Sunbeam* featured at Maine Boat & Home Show**

Think of some great pairings: Astaire & Rogers, cows & clover, peanut butter & jelly. Now add to the list the *Sunbeam* and the Maine Boat and Home Show. Yes! The *Sunbeam* will be moored at the show Friday, August 10. The Mission is delighted to have the *Sunbeam* selected as one of the Maine iconic vessels invited to the show. Stop by to see the boat and chat with the crew and other Mission staff.

The Maine Boat and Home Show runs Friday through Sunday, August 10–12 in Rockland. Get tickets and more information at maineboats.com/boatshow or call 800-565-4951.

Tennis Traditions: 14th Annual Open Tennis Tournament Benefits Maine Youth

September 8 marks the 14th year the Seacoast Mission will host a tennis tournament to benefit EdGE, the Mission's program providing in-school, after-school, and summer programs for over 800 children in 17 Downeast communities. At two pre-tournament tennis clinics, EdGE

students will learn from experts how to improve their game. In addition to hosting the tournament, the Seacoast Mission will hold an on-site silent auction to help raise additional funds for EdGE. If you would like to play or contribute, contact Anna Silver, asilver@seacoastmission.org.



Patti Doyle played for R. H. Foster Energy, LLC.

SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY, AUGUST 17, 2018

The Fifteenth Annual
SUNBEAM AWARD
GALA

Register online, by phone, or email:
seacoastmission.org; asilver@seacoastmission.org;
seacoastmission.org; 207-801-6011.





127 West Street
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

seacoastmission.org



Volunteers make the Housing Rehab Program go—

Everyone deserves to live in a warm, safe home. But houses and mobile homes in Washington County are often old and hard to heat, especially on a limited budget. The Housing Rehab program fixes or rebuilds homes, ranging from painting to insulation to new roofs. Scott Shaw, director of Housing Rehab, is pictured with Marianne Bagley, who gives her new windows, doors, and ramp a thumbs up.