



New Year. Same Mission

NORTHEAST HARBOR, ME -- Every new year since 1905, the Maine Seacoast Mission has recommitted itself to supporting the resilient people living in some of the Northeast's most isolated communities on the islands and in the coastal communities of Downeast Maine. Through world wars, economic recessions, pandemics, and social upheaval of every sort—the Mission has always been there when our communities needed us. And we are not going anywhere.

As the challenge of 2020 turns to hope in 2021, the Maine Seacoast Mission remains committed to the communities we serve. How could we do otherwise? It's in our DNA. We were built for this. At the Mission we work hard in more stable times to develop networks of support, to help communities and individuals grow, and to ensure a strong institutional infrastructure so that we are ready for the lean times. For the hard times. For times like these.

2020 was a year of fear, sickness, tumult, frustration, and isolation. But it was also a time of opportunity, resilience, commitment, generosity, and relentless love. It would appear that 2021 may pick up right where 2020 left off. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but it is still—in many ways—a tunnel.

The Maine Seacoast Mission stands ready and hopeful for 2021. We stand ready to continue the work. No matter what the coming year brings to our communities we will face it together. With joy and with hope and a re-commitment to be there for those who count on us. No matter what.

For the Mission,
President John Zavodny



Scholarships Program Director Terri Rodick traveling to her next socially distanced driveway visit.

Continued Academic, Personal Mentoring

NORTHEAST HARBOR, ME -- Through Zoom screens, socially distanced driveway visits, and the U.S. Postal Service, our [Student Pathways](#) Team continues facilitating creative and meaningful connection with students during our ongoing, necessary, pandemic separation.

When we do engage, our Mission Scholars and Journey and College Exploration and Engagement students are impressive and inspiring in their resilience and perseverance. We will continue providing academic and personal mentoring in the months ahead, and look forward, whenever helpful, to connecting with students' families.

Recent Pathways highlights include:

- Sending monthly project materials to all Journey students including a recent STEM inspired toothpick-and-gumdrops holiday project.
- College Exploration and Engagement Zoom information sessions with our Davis Scholarship partner colleges. Our high school juniors met admissions colleagues and students/alums from University of New England, Wheaton College and Clark University.
- Mission Scholars participated in Zoom group check-in sessions and enjoyed receiving Mission hoodies for their holidays.

The Student Pathways Team also recently launched a new mentoring initiative linking Mission Scholars with Journey students. Visit the Mission's social media pages for updates.



Christmas Program Success

CHERRYFIELD, ME -- Reviewing the Mission's Christmas Program 2020, Wendy Harrington said over 1,000 people were served throughout the Mission's communities in Washington and Hancock Counties -- including several remote islands.

Wendy said, "In November the local instances of Covid increased. I decided we had to work in pods. Nobody could work together. We had three pods working separately, communicating only by phone or video. It was challenging at first, but the staff and volunteers figured it out. They really had to reinvent the Christmas program to adjust to the challenges.

"I think the significant part of this year," continued Wendy, "is that we tried to maintain what we had built for the Christmas program -- parent choice for their children's gifts. The old in-person way we did the Elves Workshop was impossible. Instead, we created a virtual shopping experience."

The Mission made available an online shopping form people could use with their laptops, smartphones, and tablets. Plus, it gave people the opportunity to shop with a Mission elf.

"More often than not it was a video conference. We used every platform there was," laughed Wendy. "We did Zoom, Facebook Live, and Face-time, and phone calls. One of our elves would walk around the gift displays, talking with the parent, showing them the available gifts.

"Nothing replaces that personal connection, but it came pretty close," said Wendy. Indeed. "Everybody at the Mission rallied around the Christmas program to help. That's another important piece of how the Mission is," Wendy continued.

Another tradition kept in 2020? "The hand-knit items. A few go out without a hand

knit item, but not many," remembered Wendy."You think about all the people who donate money, time, all of the items, and the hand knit items. Our "young folks" knitting this year were in their 70s," she laughed.

The whole Mission Christmas tradition was carried on with the white wrapping paper tied with red string. "This year in particular," said Wendy, "anything wrapped was wrapped in the white paper with red string.

"We were filling orders until December 23rd. We really try to fulfill the requests, those Christmas dreams kids and elders have asked for. That's another hallmark of our program," she said.

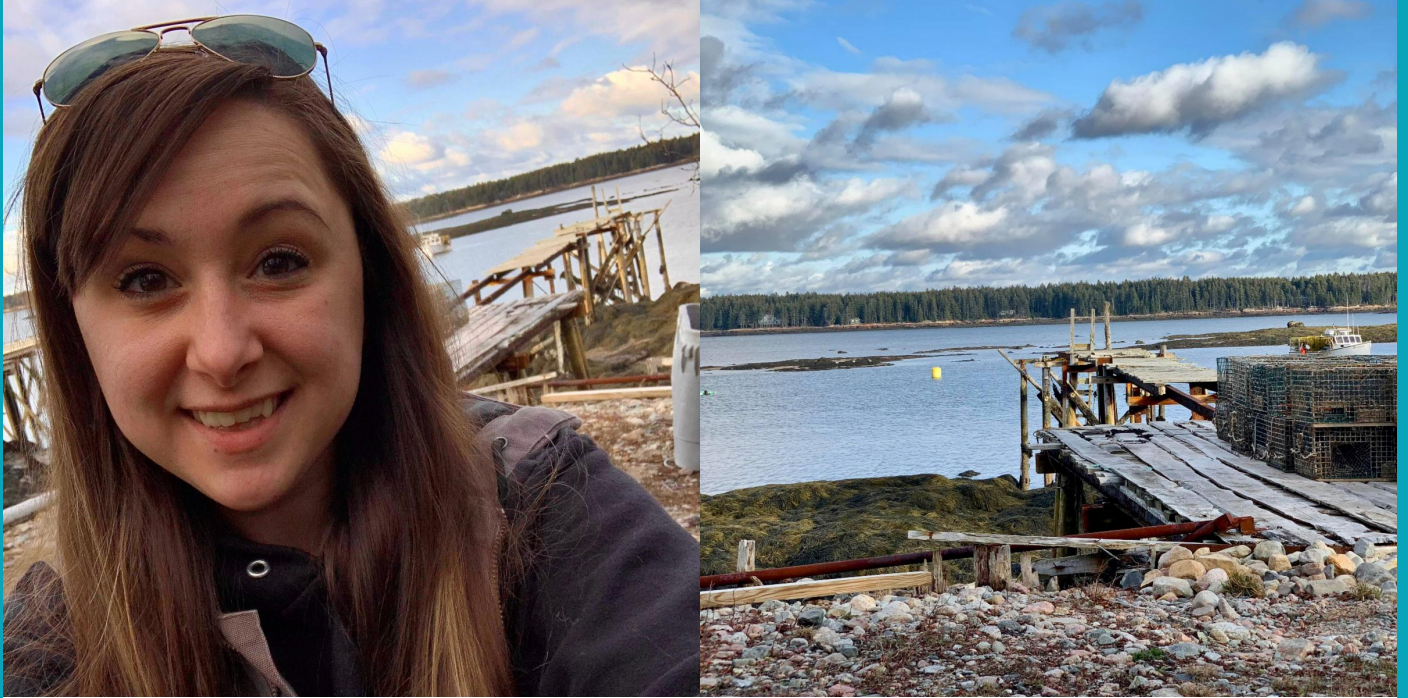
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Sunbeam Returns to Service

NORTHEAST HARBOR, ME -- After an almost year-and-a-half refit at Front Street Shipyard, all Sunbeam systems are upgraded and modernized. All the materials are the most technologically advanced. The effort was necessary and extraordinary. In the end, we have a boat that will serve the islands for decades.

[Learn More](#)



Journey Program Coordinator Briana West and her grandfather's wharf.

Mission People & Places - Briana West

STEUBEN, ME -- Briana West, who is in her fifth year with the Mission, launches our 2021 introduction of the great people who make the Mission programs and services possible, and Maine places special to them. Briana is Program Coordinator for our [Journey](#) program; a six-year youth mentoring program made possible by the Lerner Foundation. Briana's special place is her grandfather's wharf.

"The wharf is down a road, built by hand, by my grandfather and a few others many years ago. It's peaceful and quiet, especially on days where the world gets to be a little too much.

"It started with a few wharves for fishing out of. We spent many days there as a family for picnics, family reunions, loading up the boat for a trip around the bay, or early morning lobster fishing.

"As a teenager I used to sit in my truck down there, or my friends and I would hang out. As an adult I go down after a long day at work. It's a place my dogs can run free and feel at peace. You can watch the boats coming and going, and smell the ocean air.

"At the start of the pandemic I started my mornings by going down and sitting for a while. The wharf is slowly falling apart, but the memories and feelings will always be there, and it will always be my place to go."

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