



neighbor to neighbor

News from
 Freeport
 Community
 Services

FALL 2019

Making Freeport and Pownal age-friendly

This spring, a group of diverse people representing the towns of Freeport and Pownal began meeting to identify resources, needs and gaps to make our community more age-friendly, comfortable, safe and supportive for those who want to age in place. This group evolved into a Steering Committee working toward making our community more livable by supporting the health and well-being of citizens of all ages.

“The ultimate goal is to ensure that older adults have the resources they need to age in place, at home in their communities, with dignity, safety and independence” states Paula Paladino, FCS Executive Director.



The FCS Aging in Place Steering Committee.

During the Spring, the Steering Committee began an asset mapping process to identify age-friendly resources and priorities in our community. The priorities that emerged included transportation, home repairs, access to health services, fall prevention classes, hunger and nutrition, and decreased isolation. Additional areas of interest include connecting people to existing services and in others, identifying additional programs or services that enhance people’s quality of life.



FCS volunteer Eric Geredien assists a senior community member with transportation.

Some existing resources in our community identified by the committee include a very active food pantry, community service work by volunteers for lawn and yard clean-up, a bird-feeder program to promote inclusion, medical loan closet, the Freeport Elders Association, and a free community meal the third Friday of the month open to the public at FCS.

Going into Fall/Winter, the Steering Committee will be working on an action plan for Freeport and Pownal. The goals of the action plan will support the health and well-

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Mission Statement

To enrich lives, connect neighbors and help those in need in Freeport and Pownal.

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Greetings,

I used to work at an organization where there was always a puzzle being worked on in the lunchroom. Everyone contributed to helping to solve the puzzle, some more frequently than others. At the end, we would all admire the collective work of so many and then we would start on the next puzzle. Recently I've been thinking about how FCS reminds me of a puzzle. All the pieces are about the same size. They don't look like much in a box with 999 other pieces all in a heap. However, with time and perseverance, they eventually begin to form into a beautiful picture.

If FCS was to be turned into a puzzle, what would the picture look like? I think the pieces would number into the thousands. That picture would include the building, the board members, and the public who come to FCS daily but that is only one small corner. It would include our dedicated staff who make our mission of "neighbor helping neighbor" come alive daily.

There would be the volunteers who pick up food, stock shelves, fold and sort clothes, run the register in the thrift shop, pack bags and boxes, offer rides, make schedules, and countless other jobs. Another part of the puzzle is our neighbors in need.

Even that accounts for only a portion of the picture. It would include businesses that supply us weekly with bread, pastry, produce and meat, the churches, local organizations and individuals that regularly send contributions of money, food, and other donations. Organizations and businesses do the same and are excited about helping us. And then there are the community food drives with the scouts, the schools and the Postal carriers.

As I think about this puzzle picture, I begin to see a beautiful picture unfolding. Almost all of those pieces are the face of someone who cares very much. Can you picture it? Hundreds and even thousands of smiling faces. These faces are smiling, because they want to give of their time and support to help others, give back or are grateful for the help they receive.

We want to thank you if you are a piece of our puzzle. I hope you agree it is a beautiful picture. It takes all of us. To become a piece of our puzzle, check out our website at fcsmaine.org or call us at 865-3985 x. 206.

Paula
Executive Director



Another upcoming, caring holiday season at FCS



The LL Bean crew with their amazing fall food donation.

to purchase turkeys and pack Thanksgiving boxes poured in and we are so grateful! Kind folks are signing up to adopt families in need through our Holiday Helpline program, generously shopping for items on their family's wish-list. "This is my most favorite time of year here at FCS and I am completely in awe of how much our communities can truly care about one another" said Sarah Lundin, Community Programs Coordinator.

We hosted a scrumptious community Thanksgiving Day meal here at FCS thanks to the kind hearts and talents of Azure Café. It was a lovely day! Additionally, we provided families within our communities with food boxes, complete with a turkey, to prepare at home. For these boxes, we had holiday food donations to fill the boxes and volunteers to help prepare and hand them out.

Our Holiday Helpline program is bringing so many smiles to the faces of those in need this holiday season. People can help by shopping for families, organizing gifts as they come in, and playing Santa! There will be opportunities to wrap gifts, sort items, and spend time with wonderful folks!

If you are reading this and wondering how you can help, please reach out to Sarah to find out more! Last year we helped well over 400 people with both our Thanksgiving and Holiday Helpline programs and look forward to your support! Feel free to contact Sarah at 865-3985 x 205 or slundin@fcsmaine.org



The Holiday Helpline program provides smiles as well as gifts!

What a lovely fall this has been! This is always such an exciting time full of much anticipation for the upcoming holiday season. Our sweet volunteers are hustling and bustling, stocking shelves with beautiful squash and other end of season produce that helps so many of our neighbors in need. Generous offers



ANNIE
FLEWELLING

volunteer spotlight

Every once in a while you meet a person so capable, so organized and so willing to help that it takes your breath away. Four years ago Annie Flewelling offered her many skills to FCS and we have been basking in that glory ever since.

Annie came to us with a social work degree and the passion for helping others. From day one she has given her all with abandon and has become our go-to assistant on numerous projects and events, including the Back Pack Program, Free Summer Lunch for Kids, making blankets for our "Welcome Baby" bookbags project, Chowdah Challenge, Freeze-Out event, Thanksgiving boxes program, Holiday Helpline, 3rd Friday Community Lunch program, as well as bulk mailings and many other administrative-type projects. Every venture she is involved in reflects Annie's fine hand, for sure.

Annie is compelled to volunteer with FCS because the variety of opportunities to give back to the community are so rewarding. She loves helping with 3rd Friday Community Lunch most of all, enjoying the interaction between volunteers, staff and community members. "One of the big reasons my husband and I chose to live in Freeport is FCS," tells Annie. "We love living in a town where people help to take care of one another." Annie is one of those most-caring persons, by far. We are extraordinarily blessed to have this dedicated, warm-hearted, joyful woman as a member of the FCS volunteer family. Annie is a gem!



thrift shop update

Exciting new upgrades to the Thrift Shop

The FCS Thrift Shop has recently experienced a lot of exciting upgrades! In addition to all the fixtures generously donated last year by Patagonia, another much-needed makeover has been in the form of new carpeting! Stop by soon to see our new look!

As a result, to help maintain the shop's appearance, we would appreciate customers refraining from bringing food and drinks into the store now that new carpet is installed. Thank you to everyone in advance.

Over the last six months we have added a boutique section to the store showcasing our new with tags (NWT) items and premium quality brand purses, clothing, and footwear. We continue to be the fortunate recipient of many fine quality donations, including furniture, jewelry, clothing, household items and décor. As always, we welcome donations of gently used, clean clothing, household items, furniture, jewelry, and antiques and are happy to arrange pickups of larger donations as staffing allows.

Please keep in mind that we cannot accept mattresses or electronics. Nor can we accept broken, dirty, ripped, or stained items, used underwear, socks, or baby gear. We continue to be very appreciative of everyone who donates, staff, loyal volunteers and customers.

Our much-anticipated event, the annual Christmas décor sale, is Dec 5th and 6th from 10am-4pm in the Bradley Family Meeting room. Time to start decorating! We look forward to see you there!

Annual Community Day and Tent Sale becoming more popular every year

We held our 3rd Annual Community Day and Tent Sale on August 16th and this year's weather was shall we say, a perfect day!

We moved the "Tent Sale" into the Community Center and it was well received and allowed our groups to be together on the lawn which provided a fun atmosphere for everyone to visit. Kudos to the Thrift Shop on a successful day. They also liked being inside and could display all the wonderful bargains in a unique way.

The following groups participated with us this year: YMCA, Freeport Fire & Police Departments, Freeport Elders, Freeport Community Library, Midcoast FCU, Arts & Cultural Alliance of Freeport, Midnight Prism Collective, who did great face painting, and RSU 5 Community Programs. It was a great opportunity for everyone on to meet and learn about a variety of programs.



Meeting so many area mascots was a highlight of the day.

We had a full contingent of mascots visiting throughout the day and included, Whaley, the pink whale from Vineyard Vines, Sneakers the Cat from Bath Savings, L. L. Bear, Wilbur Moose from Wilbur's Chocolates. A new feature was a visit from Darling's Ice Cream

for a Cause truck. Since 2012, Darling's has supported nonprofits by providing free ice cream at events and organizations receive a check from the donations which has totaled over \$350,000 statewide. Who doesn't love ice cream on a summer day?

With support from L. L. Bean, we provided 40 backpacks with school supplies to students in the community. As well, there were a few outdoor lawn games like corn hole which were able to use and was a hit with kids of all ages! Our goal is to continue to provide some goodwill to the community and thank everyone for supporting us again this year.

Chowdah Challenge

We had another successful Chowdah Challenge on October 5th on the porch of the L.L Home Store.

We teamed up once again with L.L. Bean and Visit Freeport as part of the 21st Annual Freeport Fall Festival which was bigger and better this year with additional location and activities.

One of FCS' most fun, popular and successful fundraisers is in large part thanks to the support of the business community, our participating restaurants, and FCS Board members and volunteers.

We offered something different for dessert this year with homemade apple crisp from apples donated by Thompson's Orchards of New Gloucester and an a la mode version topped with Ben & Jerry's vanilla ice cream along with coffee and tea donated by Starbucks. Poland Spring donated bottled water.



The Harraseeket Inn dishes up some chowdah.

Of course, there was chowder! Seven restaurants showcased their very best. Participating restaurants were Lobster Cooker, Buck's Naked BBQ, Freeport Café, Gritty's, Linda Bean's Perfect Maine, Hilton Garden Inn Freeport Downtown, Harraseeket Inn. It was truly a great variety of tastes this year, thanks to their generosity.

This year's Judges were Jim Keithley and Kathleen Jordan of WMTW News 8, Carolyn Brady, Miss Maine 2019 and Freeport Fire Chief Charles Jordan. They had a tough time making their final decision. This year's winners in the Judges' Category was Freeport café in First Place and Buck's Naked BBQ in Second Place. They also both won the Peoples' Choice awards with over 400 people who bought tickets to sample and voted.

Thanks to everyone's support, \$4,000 was raised for FCS to support a variety of programs that service residents of Freeport and Pownal. It was a perfect day to sample our community's best and support our organization.

FCS Annual Meeting focus community making a difference

Our Annual Meeting held on October 28th was a wonderful event celebrating community and how we can make a difference.

Tawni Whitney was our Kaplan Award winner for the difference she's making to FCS and in our community and Elizabeth McLellan, Founder of Partners for World Health was our keynote speaker and inspired us to make a difference globally. Did you know that when we have an overabundance of wheelchairs, walkers and crutches, we share our surplus with them? Nothing goes to waste and someone can benefit from these additional donations.

We also recognized our outgoing board members Cindy Doolan and Pat Robles for their years of service and welcomed new members Stafford Soule, Lynne Tindall and Emily Wesolowski.



Paula Paladino, Tawni Whitney and Sarah Lundin

White Nights Auction & Gala team is busy preparing for the 2020 event

Amazingly, staff and volunteers are busy gearing up for FCS' Annual White Nights Auction & Gala celebration to be held on Thursday, February 6th at the Hilton Garden Inn Downtown Freeport. This is our largest fundraising event. This year's theme is "The Place We Call Home" and we hope it reflects what home and community truly means to everyone.

Along with the wonderful theme and ambiance, the auction catalog is already developing with items coming in. We are working hard to develop our list and look forward to another great event. Check the mail for the invitation and other details about the event.

We're excited about the opportunities. If you have any interest in donating an item, stay or certificate to the event, contact Nancy Trottier, Events and Communications Coordinator at 865-3985 x 220 or ntrottier@fcsmaine.org for more information. We'll have details on the FCS website as we develop this year's exciting event.



Photo courtesy Matt Andreassen

White Nights 2019 was another huge success.

a fond farewell:



Debbie Daggett

FCS long-time Volunteer Coordinator to retire

Join us at a reception and share your stories on Wednesday, December 11 from 3-5:30 pm in the Bradley community room. Stop by to visit and extend warm wishes to Debbie.

In the Fall of 2006, Debbie Daggett joined the FCS team and began what would be a joy and passion of working with the FCS Volunteers. Over the 13 years she has served the FCS community, she has remained committed to the value of volunteerism and has worked tirelessly to support, develop and expand the volunteer group to 600. For Debbie, everyone has something to give and whether a person does a one-time project or for the thrift shop, transportation, or the pantry, she finds something for them to support FCS and give of themselves. She celebrates volunteers in all facets, from nominating them for awards or sharing hugs of support, Debbie's heartfelt thanks to those who have volunteered over the years is truly admirable.

We want to thank Debbie for all of her work here at FCS and wish her well in the next phase of her life as she continues to bring her own brand of hard work, joy and compassion for everyone she meets.

CLYNK

Changes in donating your returnables to FCS.

As of October 15, 2019, returnables are no longer accepted at the transfer station, behind the Public Safety Building, and the South Freeport location. FCS has always been fortunate to get such support from the community by donating returnable bottles and cans. It all adds up to support our programs to help our neighbors in need.

But there are still options if you still want to donate your bottles for FCS. Through Clynk at your local Hannaford, FCS Clynk bags are available for free at the FCS office or Thrift Shop. If you already have a Clynk account, did you know that you can also donate directly to FCS via your account? Check Clynk to Give or go to the donate button from your account and then you can type in Freeport Community Services and determine the amount you wish to donate.

Returnables for FCS can also be dropped off at Country Redemption, 155 Durham Rd. in Freeport. The team at Country Redemption has designated a location outside their building for FCS bottle donations and we will continue to receive the proceeds.

In addition to helping your neighbors in need, returning bottles has a positive environmental impact. For example, returning approximately 1,200 bottles has saved emissions equivalent to driving your car nearly 400 miles or saved energy to light 2 lightbulbs 24 hours a day for a year. You can learn more from the Environmental Protection Agency's Waste Reduction Model (WARM) or Clynk.

We hope you'll consider these options and we continue to thank all of you for your support with this changed process.

"Age friendly" continued from pg. 1

being of residents of all ages, while promoting the livability for those who wish to age in place in our community. The action plan will identify goals in the key livability domains, including housing, transportation, community support and health services, social isolation and civic participation. Once the key goals have been developed, the plan is to create committees of interested residents to accomplish these goals.

"We all need to actively build the kinds of communities that will work for us throughout our lifetimes" says Brenda White, a Steering Committee member and retired school nurse. She adds "This is a volunteer driven initiative and anyone with an interest in this important work is welcome to join us." For more information about joining the Steering Committee or a sub-committee, please contact Paula Paladino at 865-3985 x. 204.

Thoughts as the year comes to a close

As FCS addresses basic needs in our community, we also work to build a brighter future for all. Today, FCS is leading the development of age-friendly initiatives to make our communities more vibrant and livable for children and adults at every stage of life.

With the holidays rapidly approaching we are reminded that this time of year can be a struggle for many of our neighbors in Freeport and Pownal. We have already begun helping residents in need of fuel assistance even before we see the first snowflakes.

We geared up to distribute over 100 food boxes to families in need so they could have a memorable Thanksgiving this year. Additionally, thanks to the Azure Café, we were able to offer a free delicious turkey meal with all the fixings to 200+ people at our Community Center on Thanksgiving Day with volunteers delivering hot meals to those who were unable to come to the Center.

Last year FCS provided 400 children and adults with food and gifts during the holidays. We expect as many, or more this year through our Holiday Helpline.



Food is ready for packing into Thanksgiving dinner boxes



Food boxes ready for distribution.

Please help our community by supporting FCS and making a special gift this year of \$50, \$100, or more if possible. You may use the enclosed envelope or make a payment online via PayPal by going to fcsmaine.org and "Donate" at the top of the page. Your gift really does matter. Thank you.

save the date!

Upcoming Activities

- Every month (except Nov./Dec.)
3rd Friday Free Lunch
- 11/28 Thanksgiving Day
Community Dinner
- 12/5-6 Thrift Shop Special
holiday items sale
- 12/6 Sparkle Parade
- 01/24 Fourth Friday Just Desserts
- 02/06 White Nights Auction
& Gala
- 02/22 Freeze Out
- 02/28 Fourth Friday Just Desserts
- 03/27 Fourth Friday Just Desserts
- 04/24 Fourth Friday Just Desserts
- 05/22 Fourth Friday Just Desserts



How would you like to receive your newsletter?

We want you to stay up to date with FCS. How would you like to receive future newsletters?

Kindly select one - and please print:

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You may email the information to: Kim Hudak: khudak@fcsmaine.org or call: 865-3985 x202
Or mail to: Freeport Community Services, PO Box 119, Freeport, ME 04032



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