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Larry Clifford
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Communities Served

- Blue Hill • Brooklin
- Brooksville • Castine
- Deer Isle • Sedgwick
- Penobscot • Surry
- Stonington

~Upcoming Events~

Matter of Balance Trainings

Ongoing
Dates to be announced

Volunteer Appreciation Celebration
November

Walk-In Café
Wednesdays - ongoing



Fall 2022

NEWS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to our Fall newsletter!

As I look back on my first year as Healthy Peninsula's director, I am so proud of our growth, resilience, and collaborative spirit. We have seen growth in our community impact, with new programs and new collaborative endeavors, as well as growth internally as an organization and team of individuals dedicated to improving community health in this little corner of our world.



The colder season is often a time of introspection and reflection and we at Healthy Peninsula will soon be spending some time reflecting on our growth over the past few years as we begin our strategic planning process. Thanks to COVID, we delayed this process for an extra year and now we will be able to weave lessons learned from the pandemic into our planning. The unexpected growth of volunteer-supported projects is one area of exciting expansion that we will be evaluating. The inspiring number of collaborative projects that we have sprouting in our various initiatives is another.

As a small (but mighty!) organization, we strive to build on community collaboration, extending services and resources rather than duplicating efforts. We try to avoid siloed work patterns and seek to expand the reach of available community-based resources in our collection of towns. How to do this effectively....how to maintain growth, while ensuring sustainability....how to enlist financial and volunteer support.... These are the questions we will be considering as we take a deep breath in and assess our growth and resilience over these last few unprecedented years. We are excited to see where it leads us, and we are grateful for the support from you and others that has made this work so impactful for the last 20+ years.

Have a look inside for updates on our initiatives and let us know if you have ideas or questions! We look forward to hearing from you,
Anne Schroth

We Have a New Home and New Neighbors!



Since March 2022, when we left our longtime home on Parker Point Road and moved to 26 Hinckley Ridge Road in Blue Hill, we've settled in nicely next door to the School Union 93 Superintendent's office. We share office space with the wonderful staff of New Surry Theatre as they develop their shows, camps and classes.

We welcome visitors and would love to show you around our new space! Please feel free to stop by and say "Hi!".



Lori Sitzabee
New Surry Theatre's
Artistic Director



Sharing Healthy Food, Books & Community

Our Healthy Eating Coordinator, Anna Wind, has been out and about this season along with the incredible team of volunteers and partners that keep the Magic Food Bus rolling through our community, distributing hundreds of pounds of free fresh veggies and books every week throughout the summer and into the fall.



For anyone wondering, the Magic Food Bus is powered by community donations and grants which allow us to buy food wholesale from local farmers and coordinate fresh produce donations from individual growers, community gardens, and the Gleaning Initiative to share with anyone who would like to visit for fresh vibrant greens, luscious tomatoes, flavorful carrots, beets, potatoes and more!

We believe that everyone has a right to nutritious wholesome food and that income, land access, or mobility should not be barriers to accessing nourishing ingredients. Some visitors to The Magic Food Bus leave with a smile from a comedic carrot and a new chapter book and others head off with a week's worth of groceries; everyone who comes and those who show up to share are part of a community of care. The work we do connects abundance with need and plants seeds of goodwill while promoting healthy living in our community.

Magic Food Bus

2022

FREE FRESH VEGGIES AND GOOD BOOKS

by the numbers

13 YEARS rolling, 12 years of coordination by Healthy Peninsula.

PATRON VISITS providing an average of a pound and a half of food per visit.

15+ **MADE IT POSSIBLE**
Our sponsors and funders include many generous private donors and... Quimby Family Foundation, St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church, Stanley Family Foundation, Maine Community Foundation, Sewall Foundation, Bar Harbor Bank and Trust, Blue Hill Co-op, Tradewinds Market, Heart of Maine United Way, Hancock County Food Drive, Maine Farmland Trust, John T. Gorman Foundation and Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital.

YOU WITH YOUR DONATION
Tax deductible gifts can be sent to Healthy Peninsula, P.O. Box 945, Blue Hill, ME 04814 or through our website: www.healthypeninsula.org. Healthy Peninsula is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

13 LOCATIONS + DELIVERY OPTIONS in 9 towns—Blue Hill, Brooklin, Brooksville, Castine, Penobscot, Sedgwick, Surry, Deer Isle and Stonington.

3,488 AVERAGE POUNDS OF FOOD delivered weekly June through September. That's 6,725 meals worth of vegetables provided to individuals and families; 88% of produce harvested and donated by farm gleaning and community gardeners.

400 MEALS' WORTH OF VEGETABLES provided to 871 unduplicated visitors of all ages.

50+ **MADE IT HAPPEN** - Generous home gardeners, volunteer delivery drivers, Backstage Farm, Blue-Zee Farm, Four Seasons Farm, King Hill Farm, and local food partners: The Gleaning Initiative, Healthy Island Project, Blue Hill Community Garden, and Brooklyn Food Corps & School Garden.

6,725

For more information:
Anna Wind at 207-374-3257
info@healthypeninsula.org

Healthy Peninsula

HEALTHY FAMILIES

Providing Support Through Programming & Collaboration

Healthy Families is looking forward and, in this case, rear facing too, with car seat safety! In response to a lack of car seat installation inspectors, and car seat distribution centers, we organized a car seat training for this September. We are so pleased that several of our fellow non-profits are joining us on this project! Soon Hancock County's smallest passengers will be safer.

In other updates, our Child Care Provider Network continues to meet on a monthly basis. We are collaborating with Maine Roads to Quality and other continuing education organizations to offer programming opportunities to child care providers, thus giving them more time and expertise to focus on working with their students. In addition, we hosted a substitute fair this June to help address the shortage of qualified substitutes in both local child care facilities and elementary schools. And, we have loved our Beach Walk collaboration with Blue Hill Heritage Trust and look forward to more collaborations with them in the future.

If you are looking for activities for the young people in your life, look for our seasonal *Little Sapling News* on the Healthy Peninsula FaceBook page and website. Subscribe to our email list to get up to date information and programming news!



Welcome Baby!

Our Baby Bag project with local Northern Light primary care practices is still going strong, distributing supplies and resource information to families with new babies. Do you have extra supplies you could donate? Do you want to sponsor a collection from your club or school group? Let us know at vhatch@healthypeninsula.org.



Age-Friendly Coastal Communities Initiative Post-COVID

The past year has been a chance to reevaluate our Healthy Aging programs with an eye on revising and rejuvenating our Age-Friendly Coastal Communities (AFCC) Action Plan for a post-COVID world. AFCC is a community partnership that includes our nine service towns and a coalition composed of 30+ social service, medical, and community organizations, all working together to make our region a safe and healthy place to live as we age.

In 2018, the AFCC Coordinating Council conducted a community-wide survey to assess assets and challenges for older people living in our region. This information was used to inform the group’s AFCC Action Plan in 2020 – to form goals and activities to undertake over the course of three years. Then COVID-19 reared its ugly head.

The pandemic and associated restrictions had an unprecedented impact on older adults’ routines, access to social supports, and stress levels. Three dozen community stakeholders (clients and volunteers from the AFCC partner organizations) were recently interviewed, who provided information to help us plan the next (post-COVID) phase of AFCC. As expected, the feedback we received was telling and consistent, highlighting ongoing challenges in the areas of community supports, health services, social inclusion/participation, communication, information access, housing, food security, and transportation.

We also continue to partner with other organizations on several direct service projects, such as:

- **Simmering Pot** to coordinate delivery of 120+ quarts of soup and servings of bread weekly
- **The Walk-In Café** (see story below)
- **Matter Of Balance Trainings** (see story below)
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program** to coordinate delivery of monthly food boxes to older, low-income residents

We are also committed to identifying new and innovative ways to address the health and wellness needs of older adults on the peninsula and the island. We greatly appreciate your ongoing support!

LIFELONG MAINE AMERICORPS PROGRAM

The Walk-In Café - A Sense of Connection



Healthy Peninsula debuted the Walk-In Café on April 20, 2022, in response to a community desire for an outside, safe gathering place. Funded by a gift from an anonymous donor, the Café meets Wednesdays from 10-11:30am behind the First Congregational Church of Blue Hill near the Blue Hill Heritage Trust’s Murphy Trail. Spearheaded by our AmeriCorps members, Sonya Bates and Pat Saunders, the response to the Café has been heartfelt. In the words of one of our frequent guests, “because COVID lasted so long and my social network fell apart...I became very isolated. This gives me a sense of connection.” Guests have enjoyed coffee, tea, refreshments, conversation, and friendship, in addition to walks and programs led by Blue Hill Heritage Trust staff and others.

Healthy Peninsula is joined by our partners—the First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, Blue Hill Heritage Trust, and Friends in Action—in providing this program. We are grateful for their support. We also thank our volunteers who bake goodies for the Café and help set-up and take down the Café.

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A Matter of Balance - Bringing A Fall Risk Reduction and Exercise Program to the Peninsula

In the Spring, our AmeriCorps member Pat Saunders completed a Master Trainer course provided by Maine Health and began training lay coaches to offer Matter Of Balance (MOB) for our local area. MOB is an award-winning, research-proven program designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. The Master Trainer’s role is to recruit, train, and support lay coaches to lead the 8 two-hour classes, as well as lead classes when necessary. With generous sponsorship by AARP Maine and collaboration with Eastern Area Agency on Aging, Pat has currently trained four lay coaches and helped to coach the first community training with ten participants at The Gatherings in Surry. An enthusiastic participant noted, “Not only am I learning a lot, this is so much fun.”



Through a collaboration with the Healthy Island Project, Pat will train additional coaches to provide the program in the Deer Isle/Stonington area this fall.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



MEET Lisa! Magic Food Bus Volunteer since 2021

Do you have a favorite volunteer role with us?

Weighing the donated and purchased produce that comes in for the Magic Food Bus is definitely a highlight for me - I get to see the bounty and learn the names of our suppliers!

Would you share with us an especially meaningful time for you as a volunteer with Healthy Peninsula?

There is profound meaning in being part of both the Brooklin Food Corps Community Garden, where some plots are reserved for Brooklin Elementary students to participate in growing and the harvesting for the Magic Food Bus! Joining that food with other sources and then getting to share it with families back in our town, feels very much like the way life should be: Everyone participating, everyone eating well!

How has volunteering had an impact on you?

I have forged unexpectedly deep bonds with the Magic Food Bus volunteers. They are exceptionally talented people who I'm happy to now call dear friends.

What has been the biggest surprise about volunteering?

Volunteering for Healthy Peninsula has been a surprise because I now feel like part of the local farm economy. If I go to a farmers' market, either I already know the vendors or I have an excuse to get to know them. Being part of a community of growers is a joy!

Thank you Lisa for supporting our mission and being a wonderful part of our team!

The Brooklin Garden Club - Spreading Cheer with Flowers

Once a month, the folks who receive our Simmering Pot deliveries (roughly 75 households!) also receive a fresh bouquet of cut flowers along with their nourishing soup and bread!

These thoughtfully arranged flowers are generous donations from our friends at the Brooklin Garden Club. Often times, these bouquets are accompanied with a hand-written note, just to let the recipient know someone is thinking of them. These gifts are a wonderful source of cheer to everyone! The members of the Brooklin Garden Club are volunteers who serve as note writers, flower arrangers, and many also donate beautiful flowers that they have grown themselves.



August flowers from the Brooklin Garden Club awaiting delivery

Thank you, Brooklin Garden Club for your wonderful collaboration! We love seeing your beautiful bouquets and notes that bring joy to so many!

Please Consider Helping...



- By donating to our annual appeal, your gift helps us to promote healthy communities for all on the Blue Hill Peninsula, Stonington and Deer Isle. You can donate by including a check with the enclosed remittance envelope or by going online to: www.healthypeninsula.org/donate.
- Become a volunteer with Healthy Peninsula! We would love to talk with you about our many volunteer opportunities. This is a wonderful way to get involved and make a difference in our communities. For more information, please email tpasley@healthypeninsula.org.

Thank you!