

## STAFF

Anne Schroth  
Executive Director

Tonya Peasley  
Office Administrator

Lori Johnson  
Healthy Aging Coordinator

Anna Wind  
Healthy Eating Coordinator

Vanessa Hatch  
Healthy Families Coordinator

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## Communities Served

Blue Hill • Brooklin

Brooksville • Castine

Deer Isle • Sedgwick

Penobscot • Surry

Stonington

## ~ Upcoming Events ~

### Walk-In Café

Wednesdays, 10am - Noon

### Matter of Balance Trainings

Ongoing

### Volunteer Recruitment Fair

June 10, 9am - Noon

### Magic Food Bus Launches 14th Season!

June 29



# Spring 2023

## NEWS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There is something special about spring here in our corner of Maine. We gripe about mud season, eagerly save the salamanders as they cross the street on Big Night, revel in the early daffodils, and carefully count how many trucks of lobster traps make their way to the docks from winter storage. Here at Healthy Peninsula, we are also eagerly diving into Spring. With Lori Johnson's easy transition to the Healthy Aging Program Coordinator position, we are again fully staffed. We just renewed our lease after the first, fabulous year at our new office on Hinckley Ridge Road. We are hosting more in-person gatherings after the

long months of COVID Zoom-ing. The buzz of camaraderie, enthusiasm, and community building is evident in every staff meeting, casual conversation, strategic planning session, and Board meeting. It feels like we are coming together to serve our local communities, neighbors, and friends with renewed strength and commitment after extended challenges, disruptions, and social upheaval. We often remind others of the need for time and patience to heal and re-build and we've had to take our own advice, individually, collectively, organizationally, and as a community. This springtime feels like the perfect time to embrace renewed energy, commitment, and collaborative spirit that will carry us along through new opportunities, partnerships, and challenges. As always, we have a lot going on at HP – from big picture, community organizing to smaller, direct service projects. I invite you to catch up on our activities below. Please get in touch with any questions, ideas, or suggestions: [aschroth@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:aschroth@healthypeninsula.org).

Thank you for your partnership!

~Anne Schroth



Left to right: Sonya Bates, Lori Johnson, Tonya Peasley, Anne Schroth, Vanessa Hatch, Pat Saunders, Anna Wind

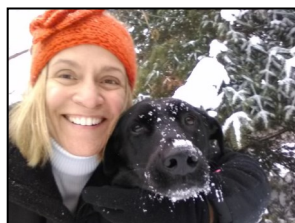
## Healthy Peninsula Welcomes Lori Johnson

We are excited to share that Lori Johnson has joined Healthy Peninsula as our new Healthy Aging Coordinator! Lori has a long and rich history of serving the community and most recently worked as the patient care manager at Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County.

Lori and her husband currently live with their rescued dogs (Izzy and Cober) and inherited cat (Tofu). They arrived in Maine in 2013 expecting to stay a few years only. As happens with many, they fell in love with the

beauty and serenity of Maine, and most importantly, found Maine to be where they belong. Walking with their dogs in Acadia National Park is one of their favorite outings. Lori also enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, eating delicious food, and reading.

Check out our Healthy Aging section inside for an update on what Lori is working on, and please be sure to stop into our offices to introduce yourself to her!



Lori and Izzy enjoying a snowy, winter walk



## HEALTHY EATING

### Magic Food Bus Ready for 14th Season!

As the local growing season ramps up, we prepare to kick off our 14th year of delivering free fresh vegetables, books, and resource materials through our Magic Food Bus program. Healthy Eating Coordinator, Anna Wind, works with community volunteers who are the wheels to the fantastical 'bus' - could you be the next MFB steward for your town?! The Magic Food Bus takes its name inspiration from the popular Magic School Bus book & TV edutainment series and aims to make nutritious fresh food available to everyone. We are looking forward to the moments of neighborly connection that happen around the pop-up traveling farm stand coolers and working with community members who have extra vegetables or time to share.

Beyond coordinating with farmers, volunteers, and fundraising to make free fresh food & book sharing happen through the Magic Food Bus this summer, Anna has been busy as guest educator at peninsula schools, starting seeds with students and teaching culinary skills through healthy snack making. This winter we hosted a fun Tea Party Story Time in collaboration with the Blue Hill Public Library, where even on the coldest (-15 degrees!) and quietest days in town, many families enjoyed playful story time accompanied by warm teas made with herbs saved from the garden and snacks inspired by local vegetables from the root cellar like beets, carrots, and parsnips! Summer will bring another season of free Garden Camp, where students will learn about growing and preparing nutritious food, and the ongoing delivery of the Simmering Pot community meal, where we partner with incredible volunteers to connect a lovingly prepared meal with anyone who needs it in the towns of Blue Hill, Brooksville, Brooklin, Castine, Penobscot, Sedgwick, Surry, Deer Isle & Stonington.

# Magic Food Bus

## 2023



**FREE FRESH VEGGIES AND GOOD BOOKS**

*Everyone Welcome!*

<b>Blue Hill..... Thursdays</b> Harborview Apartments 2:15 pm <b>Brooksville..... Thursdays</b> Town Office 5:30 pm <b>Deer Isle..... Thursdays</b> Lily Pond / Deer Run 3:00 pm <b>Stonington..... Thursdays</b> Island Community Center 4:00 pm <b>Penobscot..... Thursdays</b> Town Office 3:30 pm (September at Penobscot School)	<b>Surry..... Thursdays</b> The Gatherings 2:30 pm (September at Surry School) <b>Brooklin..... Thursdays</b> Friend Memorial Library 3:00 pm <b>Sedgwick.... Thursdays &amp; Fridays</b> Sedgwick School 3:00 pm Thurs. Benjamin River Apts 11:00 am Fri. <b>Castine..... by delivery</b>
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The Magic Food Bus will run from June 29th until the end of September. All stops last approximately 40 minutes.

For delivery or information, please leave a message at 207-374-3257 or email [awind@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:awind@healthypeninsula.org)




### Simmering Pot 2022 - 49 Weeks of Meals!



- **114-148 quarts every week** • **242 people served**
- **23 delivery drivers** • **74 cooks**
- **534 Brooklin Garden Club Deliveries**

**13,612 Meals Served**

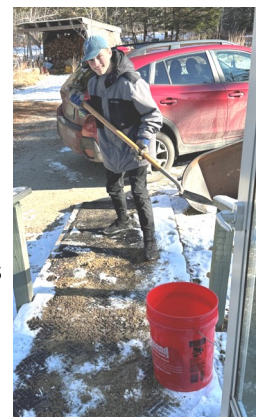
## HEALTHY FAMILIES

### Welcome Baby Bags and Community Service Programs Growing Strong

Since our fall newsletter, we have made big strides in the community support for our Welcome Baby Bags. With help from private citizens, Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, Friend Memorial Library and the Island Health and Wellness Foundation, our baby bag project's future looks good! We are thankful to everyone who has helped make this project a wonderful success.

This past winter, Healthy Peninsula hosted a free, four-hour continuing education class for early childhood educators. The focus of this course was the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: how to administer these developmental screenings and how to have productive and positive conversations with caregivers based on screening results. This will be an ongoing project as we help childcare providers get established with and navigate this program. If you are a child care provider with questions about Ages and Stages, Vanessa Hatch would love to talk with you about this - please email her at: [vhatch@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:vhatch@healthypeninsula.org)

Healthy Peninsula has been working with students from George Stevens Academy, helping to organize community service opportunities. With the help of enthusiastic students, we have delivered sand, cleaned and built shelving at a child care facility, and worked in a green house at an elementary school. There are more projects on the horizon and we are always looking for good opportunities. If you know of a project that would be a good fit for this group of volunteers, Vanessa would love to hear from you!



*GSA Student Jacob Allen helps deliver sand buckets as part of his Community Service project*



**Would you like to sponsor a Welcome Baby Bag collection from your club or school group?**

Please contact Vanessa Hatch: [vhatch@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:vhatch@healthypeninsula.org).



### Bridging Neighbors Program Nears Launch

Lori Johnson began working as our Healthy Aging Coordinator for Healthy Peninsula on March 6th. As a former hospice volunteer coordinator, she recognizes how imperative organizational collaboration, advocacy, and volunteer support are to non-profits in the community. She looks forward to continuing this type of work, along with supporting those in our communities to age safely and well. Serving as the Healthy Aging Coordinator will fulfill Lori's needs for connection, creativity, and contribution.

Since her first day working for Healthy Peninsula, Lori has become more excited about working for an organization serving the Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/Stonington, whose staff share values of compassion, dedication, and enthusiasm. Attending a few of the weekly Walk-In Cafés, witnessing the care and coordination occurring around the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Furry Friends Food Bank, and Simmering Pot, Lori has left feeling inspired and grateful to be a part of this amazing organization.

In May, Lori will be participating in the Leadership Exchange on Aging program offered by the Maine Council on Aging. Additionally, she will assist in launching our Bridging Neighbors Program, a resource advocacy program in collaboration with the Island Health & Wellness Foundation, Healthy Island Project, and Northern Light Blue Hill, to connect residents of our communities with existing community resources. Please stay tuned for more information about this new endeavor.

Lori shares that she is excited to be working closely with such dedicated, creative, and caring professionals and volunteers. One goal Lori has is to connect with more people in the nine towns we serve who have the time and desire to volunteer for our various programs. Please call (374-3257) or stop by 26 Hinckley Ridge Road to say hello and learn more about how you can become involved!

#### NEW Local Skills & Services Directory

Healthy Peninsula has partnered with the towns of the Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/Stonington to offer this directory to make it easier for local people to publicize their skills and to make it easier for others to find the help they need.

- Do you have a skill to offer the community?
- Do you own a business?
- Are you struggling to get work done at your home?
- Are you interested in hiring local community members?

*Our directory can help!*

Visit our website for information: [healthypeninsula.org](http://healthypeninsula.org)

## LIFELONG MAINE AMERICORPS PROGRAM

*"We are both so happy to have had the privilege to work with Healthy Peninsula. During our time here we've had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of programs and projects such as: The Simmering Pot, The Magic Food Bus, The Walk-In Café, Commodity Supplemental Food Program, volunteer recruitment and appreciation, Matter of Balance, and SNAP accessibility at the Blue Hill Farmer's Market. It was easy to see during our time serving with Healthy Peninsula's staff, board, and volunteers that they are a diverse group of caring, creative folk who are dedicated to working as a community to help everyone thrive. Thank you for making us part of that!"*

- Sonya Bates & Pat Saunders

### Spring Updates from the Walk-In Café and Matter of Balance Project

Pat Saunders and Sonya Bates are serving their second one-year term with Lifelong Maine AmeriCorps at Healthy Peninsula. While their term will conclude at the end of August, there is still lots that they are looking forward to working on!

The Walk-In Café will be moving back outside again soon! We've been generously provided the use of Fisher Hall in the Blue Hill Congregational Church during the Winter months, and we are looking forward to moving back outdoors. Sitting under the shade of the trees, and sipping coffee (or tea) while engaged in pleasant conversation is an exceptionally enjoyable way to spend a morning. The proximity to the accessible Murphy Trail is another advantage that gives most attendees the opportunity to move through a forest landscape in whatever method is available to them. An attendee of the Café who joined us for the first time this winter, and who uses a walker, recently expressed her eagerness to get out on the Murphy Trail for a walk. And we're eager to get out there with her!

Pat Saunders will be holding another round of Matter of Balance (MOB) classes, slated to start May 16th and run through June 8th in Blue Hill. Pat, who is a MOB Master Trainer, has trained 10 other coaches and already organized three of the 8-session classes around the Peninsula since last September. Matter of Balance is a research-based, award-winning program that is designed to manage falls and to increase activity levels, strength, and balance. The classes combine conversations on topics such as fears of falling, home safety, talking with medical providers or family about aging in place, along with a gentle exercise component. The classes are geared toward people 60 years of age or older. Most participants report that the social aspects of the classes are as important as the exercises and topics covered. "I learned so much and it was fun!" This program is personally significant to Pat and she's looking forward to engaging with another class group in June.



**AmeriCorps**



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



### MEET Sarah Hatch!

**Magic Food Bus, Walk-In Café & Healthy Families Volunteer since 2022**

#### Do you have a favorite volunteer role with us?

It's tough to choose just one! I really like sewing for the Welcome Baby Bags, but my most favorite thing to do is probably helping to set up the snack table at the Walk-In Café. I really like seeing everyone who comes to the café - it's fun playing games and eating with them, too!

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

It's fun for me to spend time at the Walk-In Café. I feel like I am being helpful and this makes me feel good. I also like making new friends. One friend I've made is Beaudroux - he is a rescue dog who always comes to the café with his mom Donna and his dad Bill.

#### What have you learned about yourself through volunteering?

I've realized I'm good at helping people. I've also realized that I like meeting new people and I like working with my mom.

#### What has been the biggest surprise about volunteering?

That there is so much to do!

#### If you could encourage someone else to volunteer, what would you say?

That's easy - I'd tell them volunteering is fun and you should do it!

***Thank you, Sarah for being a wonderful part of the Healthy Peninsula family, and showing us that volunteerism happens at all ages!***



### Celebrating One Year of Welcoming Babies!

During the winter of 2022, our Healthy Families Program Coordinator, Vanessa Hatch learned that local primary care practices were struggling to maintain donations and supplies for new babies, particularly after COVID disruptions. After setting up a community donation project, and teaming up with Northern Light Blue Hill Hospital, in April 2022, our Welcome Baby Bag Project was up and running! We have received an amazing array of handmade baby items from generous community members, as well as donated supplies from other agencies like Hancock County WIC, and the Island Dental Center. Thanks to a grant from the Island Health and Wellness Foundation, and a donation from NLBHH, we are excited to be able to fully stock the baby bags for another year!

Vanessa has also worked with additional community partners: Sedgwick, Deer Isle - Stonington and Blue Hill elementary schools as they have hosted drives for baby supplies, and recently a sewing "MakerSpace" pop-up at the Friend Memorial Public Library in Brooklin. Thank you, to all of our Baby Bag partners - organizations, schools, local donors, knitters and sewers! Your energy for this project is heartwarming and appreciated!



*Friend Memorial Public Library's MakerSpace participants*

## You Can Help Make A Difference....

### Become A Volunteer!

We would love to talk with you about our volunteer opportunities, including:

- **Magic Food Bus - June through September**
- **Walk-In Café - Wednesdays, ongoing**
- **Bridging Neighbors - volunteer community outreach**
- **Simmering Pot - substitute drivers, ongoing**
- **Commodity Food Box - substitute drivers, ongoing**

For more information, please email [tpeasley@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:tpeasley@healthypeninsula.org) or register online at: [healthypeninsula.org](http://healthypeninsula.org) by clicking on the "Volunteer" tab.



### Become A Donor!

Your gift helps us promote healthy communities for all on the Blue Hill Peninsula, Stonington & Deer Isle!

You can donate by including a check with the enclosed remittance envelope or by going online to: [www.healthypeninsula.org/donate](http://www.healthypeninsula.org/donate).

**Thank you!**