

FALL 2017

FCS chosen as the 6 **Who Care Agency of Distinction for 2017**

The 6 Who Care is an annual recognition made possible by WCSH6 and United Way of Greater Portland, and sponsored by TD Bank and Dead River Company. For 2017, there were six award winners: five outstanding volunteers and the Agency of Distinction award for an outstanding nonprofit agency. Freeport Community Services was chosen as the 2017 6 Who Care Agency of

Distinction, which is a special honor. The presentation ceremony was held on October 16th at the Portland Museum of Art.

"We are so proud to have been chosen for this award. As a hidden gem in the heart of Freeport, the selection committee's recognition of the work we do in Freeport and Pownal means a The 6 Who Care plaque. great deal to us." said Paula Paladino, Executive Director.

With strong competition with other applicants in the agency of distinction category, FCS was selected based on "the organization's comprehensive and innovative services to the community, dedication to engaging volunteers, and commitment to demonstrating results" as outlined in the award announcement.

FCS traces its beginnings to the 1970's, when a group of local women decided to start an organization to help their friends and neighbors in need. We were delighted to have 3 of the founders with us that night: Vaughndella Curtis, Betsy Ruff and Cheryl Smith. They were thrilled that, 44 years later, FCS continues the mission of "Neighbor Helping Neighbor" in Freeport and Pownal.

Volunteer award winners were presented with a cash award to be donated to the charity of their choice. The Agency of Distinction award was a \$2,000 contribution to the organization. WCSH6 has created a video presentation on each winner which will be broadcast on November 26th at 11:30 am.



The 2017 6 Who Care Honorees. (Photo courtesy WCSH6)

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Mission Statement

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

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Dear Friends,

For many of us Thanksgiving brings fond memories of family gatherings, good food, and the comforts of home. It's a time of sharing, remembering and counting our blessings.

But, when you are going through difficult times, the joys of Thanksgiving are replaced by fear, concerns about where you will find food to ease your hunger and how you and your family will stay warm in the upcoming Maine winter months, your need to feel safe and secure for yourself and your loved ones.

By the time many of the people we see come to us, they have exhausted all access to other sources of help. They may be hungry, tired, frightened and desperate.

They need a safe haven, a caring word, and a source of help that treats them with respect and dignity.

That's where we come in. At FCS, we provide the necessary resources to help those we serve get back on their feet. From our annual Thanksgiving meals, Holiday Helpline, food pantry, fuel assistance, and our many other programs, we help bring stability to those who are facing difficult times and have nowhere else to turn.

This year, we will have helped over 2,500 people in our community and we will serve at least 300 households over the holidays. All of them need a renewed sense of home, of community, of knowing that others care, and the expectation of a brighter tomorrow.

As you join your family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving, please remember your neighbors, the families, children and vulnerable individuals in our community who rely upon us to help them in their time of need. Your generosity helps to ensure we are here to bring the joys of the season to those who need it the most.

As always, we are thankful to each one of you. You are welcome to visit us at any time. In the meantime, may you have a bright and wonderful Thanksgiving and holiday season!



Community Food BackPack Program is helping kids in need



FCS is pleased to share the initial success of the Freeport
Community BackPack Program during its roll out in RSU5 schools this fall semester. School employees and families alike have begun sharing their experiences with the program over the past few months and they have been

overwhelmingly positive. This program could not have happened without the steadfast dedication of two local women who worked tirelessly with FCS, Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, Good Shepherd Food Bank and the RSU5.

Conversations about the BackPack program began as teachers and school staff across the state found that too often, Monday morning comes, and they are forced to compete against hunger for the attention of their students. The Freeport Community BackPack Program provides children in need of food assistance with nutritious, easy-to-prepare food during weekends, throughout the school year. It is estimated that approximately 65 children in RSU5 need weekend food support.

The community has been very supportive of this program and FCS has received foundation support. The Androscoggin Bank Main Street Foundation provided an initial gift of \$3,000 to help launch the program. The Welch Charitable Funds awarded FCS \$5,000 to continue the program in 2018.

Backpack committee members include: Sarah Lundin, Katie Spaulding, Liz Prescott, Stacey Lodato, Jennifer Pope and Cindy Doolan. As Sarah Lundin, FCS staff stated, "Thank you, Backpack Committee, for your passion and



empathy to start this project, you are truly making a difference in our community."

Interested in helping? Volunteers are also needed to help with the pickup, packing, and delivery of the food. For more information on how you can donate, volunteer, or become a sponsor, please go to http://www.fcsmaine.org/what-we-do/freeport-backpack-program/ or contact Sarah Lundin at 865-3985 ext 205. Thanks to our sponsors:













olunteer spotlight

Each and every one of our 600+ volunteers is special and helps significantly in his/her own way. While personalities differ greatly, the folks who give of themselves daily are quiet in their accomplishments and humble in their giving. These humble members of our volunteer family don't care much for the spotlight, but they shine brightly in their goodness. We are proud to introduce one of these extraordinarily kind people:

Chris O'Neil: Every Monday afternoon, a quiet, loving heart goes walking around in the body of Chris. This gentleman is the "Meals on Wheels" bags of groceries into his car, Chris embarks on his volunteer mission of "making the day" for each of his 12 or so eagerly-waiting homebound friends. ears as he visits the families, sharing much more will call, email or stop by to let us know if anything seems out of sorts during his visits. I am sure we don't know half of the ways Chris has helped folks



thrift shop late

A very successful summer and fall!

summer and our fall is off to a great start too! We have been very busy picking up amazing items from generous donors all over southern Maine. And as always, the donations are pouring in at the center too.

clothes. Our volunteers were saints to work tirelessly to prepare and our customers were wonderful to risk getting soaked to be a part of our day!

We held a big book and antique sale with hundreds of

All of this couldn't be done without our volunteers. Each day we have at least 10 volunteers that come work in the store, sort through donations, hang clothes, and help price. One very special volunteer, her own tags, boxes, and cleaners too! Her husband watches, even at times buying more to donate! We are so lucky to have Martha and Tom on our team! Our volunteers are the heart and soul of FCS!

Come visit soon! There's something there that you can't live without!

First Annual Community Day and Tent Sale

We held our First Annual Community Day and Tent Sale on August 18th. The idea came about in conversations by FCS staff about opportunities to expand the organization's mission



of "neighbor helping neighbor." The purpose of this event was to bring awareness about Freeport Community Services and the resources and services available, support those in the community, and introduce visitors and others who may not be familiar with the organization.

While the day turned out very soggy, it featured a summer tent sale featuring back to school clothes, antiques and collectibles from the popular FCS Thrift Shop. There was food for sale, face painting and school supplies to help students prepare for the upcoming school year. Slugger, the Portland Sea Dogs mascot stopped by at 1:00 pm to visit. Given the weather, we provided an umbrella for him and he still cheered us on!

FCS invited other area organizations to participate as well to learn about the opportunities, and services that they provide in the area. The participating organizations were the American Legion Post 83, Casco Bay YMCA (Freeport), Freeport Chamber of Commerce, Freeport Elders Association, Freeport Public Library, Freeport Rotary, and the Maine Bureau of Veterans "Community Day" continued on Pg. 10

Donor Garden Party

On September 6th, FCS held a Garden Cocktail Party to thank FCS top donors, top new donor prospects, business sponsors, FCS Board, and honor the FCS Founders.

The idea was conceived by Board member Cindy Doolan, and work began in the Spring. Originally, we hoped to have this event in June but with slight change in direction and efforts to develop a focused invitation list, and for best attendance given the summer season, it was concluded to have the event in early September. Our track-record for an outdoor event stayed true as another day of torrential rains came but we moved the event and the "garden" was moved indoors into the Bradley Room and attendees were pleasantly surprised. It was a great evening and, we were able to honor our founders and presented a rendering of a plaque which has been installed



at the entrance to the Food Pantry. A small gesture of appreciation for the amazing, unique idea of this organization.

Midcoast Credit

This Spring, FCS ED Paula Paladino accepted a check for \$500 form Brannon Gee, VP Retail Services at the Midcoast FCU in Freeport.



This donation was a part of the Credit Union League's "Ending Hunger" campaign. Thank you to Midcoast for their support.

Please thank them as well!

"neighbor helping neighbor."





White Pine Church

21 members of the White Pine Community Church of Cumberland spent the day helping others as they celebrate their "Give Love Away 2017" mission of paying it forward in their communities. Organized by Andrea Heidebrink, the enthusiastic volunteers spent their time helping with fall cleaning of the yards of local seniors, and even washing outside windows. "We love to help, Andrea said. Please call us anytime you need something." We are grateful.

Knights of Columbus

Mike Crowley of the Knights of Columbus presented Sarah Lundin of FCS a generous donation of brand new winter coats from the Knights of Columbus, Council 15791 of Falmouth. This is part of their Coats for



Kids campaign. They also collected cash donations on October 7th & 8th at Shaw's in Freeport, to purchase additional coats for FCS.



donor highlights

Recognizing the need

We are fortunate to get such support for our mission

in a variety of ways from folks who all truly believe in

in our community.

Bowdoin College Students

A huge thank you to Bowdoin College students including the hockey team for volunteering on September 16th on a variety of projects for their Common Good Day volunteer event. They helped us prepare for our Bridges out of Poverty Conference and clean out the Community Gardens!



Kennebec Savings Bank

In July, at the Kennebec Savings Bank Ribbon Cutting, FCS and Wolfe's Neck Farm received \$5,000 each as part of their Community Dividends program. We are thrilled and say thank you to them for their support!!



Read to Succeed receives award

On April 28th, Freeport Community Services' "Read to Succeed" program was a recipient of the ADVOCATE Award for Best Small Organization at the United Way of Greater Portland's 2017 United We Thrive celebration held at the Westin Portland Harborview in downtown Portland. Over 200 people attended the inaugural event that included the presentation of awards in a variety of categories including the Advocate Award.

Now, in its 8th year, Read To Succeed of Freeport and Pownal is an outreach literacy program that recruits, trains and places volunteer readers into day care homes in an effort to promote the love of books and lifelong literacy skills in preschool children. Because most homebased day care providers are not able to bring the large number of children in their care to the library, the program brings the library experience to them.

This program has been introduced to seven Maine communities with heartwarming results of the love of books, better preschool reading readiness skills and steady access to excellent stories. "The volunteer readers love this program as much as the children do, and the childcare providers are thrilled with the program, as well. I attribute 100% of the success of "Read To Succeed" to the happy collaboration of readers, childcare providers and of course, the children they serve," said Debbie Daggett, FCS Volunteer Coordinator

Chowdah Challenge



We had another successful Chowdah Challenge on Oct. 7th on the porch of the L.L. Bean home store. We teamed up once again with L.L.Bean and FreeportUSA for the 24th Annual Chowdah Challenge at the Freeport Fall Festival, which draws 30,000 people to the L.L. Bean campus.

One of FCS' popular and successful fundraisers thanks to the support of the business community our participating restaurants and friends of FCS.

We always get great support from volunteer pie makers, ice cream from Ben & Jerry's for the pie and ice cream, and Starbucks Coffee and Poland Spring Water. and the restaurants in the area who showcased their best chowder with a little friendly competition as well.



A Judge's Choice and a People's Choice winners were chosen. The Judge's Choice was Gritty's and the People's Choice was Freeport Café. Judges: Jim Keithley, WMTW News 8, Jim Bailey-The Yankee Chef, and Board President Marc Miller had a tough time making their final decision. Board Chair Sharon

"Chowdah Challenge" continued on pg. 10

White Nights Gala revamped!

FCS' Annual White Nights gala celebration will be held on Thursday, January 25th at the Hilton Garden Inn Downtown Freeport. The location and day is a new focus to generate a larger more diverse attendance. A brainstorming group met to come up with suggestions for improvements to the event. As a result, the new space will allow more flexibility for additional features and amenities to the event. Feedback from the Board, attendees, staff, and past committee members/participants supported the change.



This is FCS' largest fundraising event and the 2017 event raised over \$34,000 to support the organization. The last event featured an online auction to broaden the reach about the organization and the generous donors. The online auction ran from January 25th to January 31st via

the nonprofit online bidding site BiddingforGood.com. There were local online bidders as well as, bidders from as far away as Kansas and California. The goal is to expand the number of items to bid online to encourage more bidding.

We're busy gearing up. We're excited about the opportunities. Check back on the FCS website for more details or contact Nancy Trottier, Events and Communications Coordinator at 865-3985 x 220 or ntrottier@fcsmaine.org for more information.



Bridges Out of Poverty Conference

In September, FCS hosted a two day conference entitled "Bridges Out of Poverty" with a national trainer, Prudence "Pru" Pease.

The purpose of the conference was help participants to better understand poverty and what it takes to help individuals build they resources they need for a better life. The Maine Community Foundation provided a grant to help make the conference possible.



Pru Pease

It was a lively and thoughtful two days with 70 people in attendance and it had diverse representation from the community. Attendees included representatives from Tedford Housing, Goodwill of Northern New England, Caring Unlimited Domestic Violence Agency, Spurwink, Maine Behavioral Healthcare, Oasis Free Medical Clinic, Restorative Justice, FCS staff, board members, volunteers and consumers.

In 2014, MEJP conducted a survey to ask about the causes of poverty and how to reduce it. With striking agreement, the majority of the general public and people living in low incomes understood that the poverty is the result of a lack of opportunity and the economy as a whole. They found that 14% of Mainers are living below the poverty level.

Paula Paladino, FCS Executive Director said, "Right now, it is particularly troubling that we have 1 in 5 young Maine children growing up in poverty." In 2015-2016, 48% of Maine school children were eligible for subsidized school meals but not all children were enrolled for a variety of reasons.

One participant noted "The data about poverty in Maine is overwhelming. This conference helped me to understand how important a role we all have to play if we truly want to help people get the skills to leave poverty behind once and for all."

Paladino said "Poverty is a community issue. We need to come together to create and implement solutions to address the issue of poverty. Everyone has a role to play in addressing the root causes of poverty and in developing new initiatives and solutions."

She adds "These two days were the start of an important conversation that we intend to continue through future meetings and forums. It was apparent we all care deeply about this issue and I'm confident we have the tools and resources to make important changes in our community. We just need to make it happen."

Consider this...

Consider thexperiences of hardship among Mainers with low incomes in the last 12 months:

had to go to a food pantry or soup kitchen

60% went without food

40% fell behind on electric or heating bills

couldn't pay full mortgage or rent

36% had their car broke down and had no money to fix it

paid more than half of their monthly income for housing

24% had to move due to inability to afford housing

"The diversity of those in attendance helped to make this a very successful conference. I appreciated the opportunity to learn from different points of view and realized that we really need to take into account all the factors that contribute poverty when we are in a helping role."

Conference participant

F C S M A I N E . O R G

Annual meeting highlights

The FCS Annual Meeting was held on October 23rd and it was a great evening to meet friends and celebrate our success. Welcome, refreshments and snacks were a part of the evening, and voting on the Board slate took place as well. Nearly 50 people attended.



Jessica Maurer, Esq.

Jessica Maurer, Esq. of M4A spoke on the topic of aging in place with her Building Communities that Last a Lifetime theme. Jessica is the Executive Director of the Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging (M4A). On behalf of Maine's five Area Agencies on Aging, she advocates for healthy aging at the national, state and

local levels. She also assists the area agencies in strategic planning, program development and implementation. She is one of the lead authors of the 2012-2016 Maine State Plan on Aging and of Building a Collaborative Community Response to Aging in Place. Given the attention on our aging population and the quality of life aging in place is, her presentation was timely and interesting.

Edrol Sandy, a longtime FCS volunteer received the Carol Kaplan Award. This important award is dedicated to the memory of Carol Kaplan, who served as Freeport's General Assistance Administrator from 1982 until her death in 1997. Carol was known for her generosity and compassion in serving the needs of those who came to her for assistance. This award honors her legacy of working together with the community to build a better future for residents.

Edrol has been volunteering with FCS in multiple ways for eleven years, beginning by helping the pantry where his wife also volunteered. He now serves Fridays in the thrift shop from 12:00 – 2:30 every week, where the customers and fellow volunteers love him. Edrol also helps with numerous special projects throughout the year. Based on the nominations received, he was a natural choice and we were delighted to honor him. He is the embodiment of volunteerism. Thank you to Edrol for all of his hard work.





Edrol Sandy and family



Edrol Sandy, Carol Kaplan Award Recipient

Because our volunteers mean the world to us...

On April 14th, FCS held its annual Volunteer appreciation luncheon in recognition of and appreciation for our volunteers' annual contributions. It was a wonderful celebration of all that our wonderful volunteers do to support the organization. Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Daggett and the rest of the FCS staff wanted to make this luncheon a celebration about the value of volunteerism in so many ways and how much they mean to us. The celebration was

> sponsored by Edward Jones and our special guest was Maine humorist, Tim Sample. It was a wonderful day of joy and celebration.



Data was collected and volunteer time in Maine is valued at \$21.31 per hour, Humorist Tim Sample and with a total of 22,659 volunteer hours that our volunteers contributed in 2016, the total value in dollars was nearly \$500,000! Our volunteers' efforts and dollar savings are important to what we do. We simply couldn't do it without them.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Debbie Daggett, Volunteer Coordinator at 865-3985 xt 206 or ddaggett@fcsmaine.org.



Gearing up for the holidays!

Here at FCS, we are gearing up for the holidays. It is already November and we have been busy preparing for the upcoming holiday season. We are thrilled that the Azure Café will again host our annual community Thanksgiving meal here at the Center, which is open

to the public and free. We are also offering Thanksgiving boxes to those families who wish to have their meal at home and thanks to our many volunteers, we will be delivering hot meals to homebound individuals on Thanksgiving Day and our wonderful volunteers will be serving hot delicious meals on that day.



If you wish, you can participate in a variety of ways: if you want or need a meal, call us! Or if you want to volunteer we still need volunteers. And if you want to donate money or food to our pantry, we welcome your help! Please contact Debbie Daggett, Volunteer Coordinator at 865-3985 x 206 or ddaggett@fcsmaine.org and she will help you identify what works best for you!

We are also hard at work with our annual Holiday Helpline providing assistance to individuals and families so that they can have a memorable holiday. We are in the process of sign-ups for families to receive assistance. We also need the community to help adopt



families in need. If you know someone that can benefit from this, please pass this information on. And, if you care to adopt a family or donate please contact Sarah Lundin, our Community Services Coordinator at 865-3985 x 205 or slundin@fcsmaine. org. You will help to make someone's holiday special.

How you can help

The gifts of money, time, food, clothing and many acts of kindness that come from individuals and businesses in Freeport and Pownal helps us meet our mission to provide services to our neighbors.

If you have something to offer — from time or money to your returnable bottles, extra food or produce from your garden— FCS would be happy to share it with those in need.

Monetary Donations

Make a donation online via PayPal: fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/donations

Or mail a check:

Freeport Community Services PO Box 119, Freeport Maine, 04032

Via Amazon

Are you an online shopper? Shop via Amazon Smile and they will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to FCS. Go to: smile.amazon.com.

Thrift Shop

Drop off donations at the Loading Dock at FCS 24/7 or in the building during business hours. Contact Susan Dyche at 865-3985 x 216. Or go to: fcsmaine.org/what-we**do/thriftshop** for a list of accepted items.

Volunteer

The volunteer opportunities are endless here at FCS!

Contact **Debbie Daggett at 865-3985 x** 206, or at ddaggett@fcsmaine.org. Visit our volunteer page and download the application at fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/volunteer.

Bottles

Returnables donated to FCS provide UP TO \$15,000 of annual income. Drop off your returnable bottles and cans at one of three conveniently located "Yellow Boxes" in Freeport.



Cumberland County Sheriff's Department's Community Crew provides helping hands

The Cumberland County Sheriff's Department has been a longstanding volunteer corps for Freeport Community Services. In 2016 they volunteered 995 hours and the total amount of savings to FCS was \$21,243. Deputy Mary Sorrels says "My workers enjoy the interactions at the Community Center. My guys are treated with the utmost respect and find dignity in the work.. At the same time the Community Center receives assistance with all of the many projects." From White Nights set-up to yardwork to painting, each task they complete benefits both FCS and these men in the process.



Among other necessary tasks, the community crew helps maintain the FCS gardens and grounds.



Jackson's lemonade stand

Aunt Lara) for their \$60 donation to the Food Pantry. Jackson and his family visit their aunt Lara Bailey each year and for the last 3 years School Street here in Freeport. This year it was held on August 4th. They donate a portion of the proceeds to benefit food pantries



FCS founders honored

We honored the FCS Founders in September at the Garden Party with a rendering of a plague to be permanently installed in

the building. The completed piece was installed by the Food Pantry, which was one of the Founders first projects when they began 44 years ago. Stop by and see it.





Vaughndella Curtis still volunteers at the Food Pantry. Here she is after the installation was done.

"Community Day" continued from pg 3

Services, Mobile Vet Center. Connecting Veterans to to services in our community is an important need. Through Lewiston Vet Center the mobile van was able to provide benefits information and questions about the VA claims process. Veterans were also invited have lunch in the Community Center as part of the monthly Third Friday Free Lunch program being held on the same day.

While torrential rains slowed us down, the energy of the participants, volunteers cheered us on and feedback was that it was a great event and will be held next year... with a rain date!

"Chowdah Challenge" continued from pg. 7

Foerster led the charge for this successful event and \$5,000 was raised for FCS to support a variety of programs that service residents of Freeport and Pownal.

We would like to thank the participating restaurants for their support: Freeport Chowder House, Harraseeket Inn, Lobster Cooker, Linda Bean's, Gritty's, Hilton Garden Inn Downtown Freeport, Freeport Café for supporting us.

Next year is the 25th Anniversary of the Chowdah Challenge. Look for some special added activities for this milestone.

In 2017, FCS had great support from so many businesses and organizations. We appreciate that they value what we do and believe in the community and mission of "neighbor helping neighbor".

thank you!

SUSTAINING BUSINESS LEADER



BUSINESS SUPPORTER





SIGNATURE EVENT SPONSORS



















ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Dead River Company Freeport Woman's Club Lee Auto Malls

Mainely Hair **New Beginnings Consignments** Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA)

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Freeport Rotary Club Shaw's Supermarket

Bow St. Market First Parish Church Congregational

the date!

Upcoming Activities

Every month 3rd Friday Free Lunch (unless noted)

12/01 Sparkle Parade

First Friday Just Desserts

White Nights

02/02 First Friday Just Desserts

Freeze Out (Various locations in Freeport)

03/02 First Friday Just Desserts

First Friday Just Desserts

Hand to Hand Food Drive

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

First Friday Just Desserts

First Friday Just Desserts

Community Night

Summer Lunch Program begins

07/04 4th of July Parade

08/17 Annual Community Day and Tent Sale

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 <i>please</i> print:						
Email it to me at	Email address					
Mail it to me at:						
	Name	Street or PO Box	Town	State	Zip	

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

FCSMAINE.ORG









Freeport Community Services

53 Depot Street Freeport, Maine 04032

207.865.3985

Community Programs and Services Ext. 205 Donations Hotline Ext. 216 Volunteer Coordinator Ext. 206 Open 8:00 am to 5:00 pm



Check our Facebook page for latest news & information.

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