



A FRESH HARVEST FROM THE OLEKSIW GARDEN.

WHAT'S INSIDE

YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK	3
RECIPE FROM THE PANTRY	4
THE TASTES OF HOME	5
THE VICTORY GARDEN	6

GROW A ROW

BY THERESA OLEKSIW

Neighbor to neighbor, sharing gifts with others, this is how the Freeport Community food pantry helps residents. FCS's Pantry is there for those who need food as well as those who have extra food to give.

In the spring our family gears up for the growing season. We begin by mapping the vegetable garden and choosing seeds. We put down seaweed harvested from the local shoreline and mulched leaves from our own yard. Every year, we dedicate two thirds of our large vegetable garden to our home and family. We grow one third for the Freeport Food Pantry. It is easy to slightly increase your garden and harvest fresh food for your neighbors.

Despite our low family income, we can share garden spaces, time, and physical energy. Seeds are purchased on sale or with coupons. Friends often donate leftover seeds or deliver extra plants. That six pack of peppers is always one or two too many! Our garden provides plants every year as well. We can count on many tomato seedlings, parsley, Russian kale, and an abundance of sunflowers. Parsley and kale usually come up in the same place, but the tomato and sunflowers spring up all over the garden. If the



THERESA OLEKSIW & GENE BOYINGTON

MISSION STATEMENT

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

2021-2022 BOARD MEMBERS

Liza Moore
President

Jen Panciocco
1st Vice President

Jim DeGrandpre
2nd Vice President

Judy Brown
Secretary

Maury Bohan

Christina Carter

Sharon Foerster

Andrea Gerstenberger

Gary Goodrich

Janice Latulippe

Chris O'Neil

Dean Paterson

Edrol Sandy

Lynne Tyndall

Emily Wesolowski

Victoria Winters

FCS STAFF

Sarah Lundin
Executive Director

Susan Adams
Volunteer Coordinator

Don Buchholz
Facilities Assistant

Cathy Cryoff
AFFP Coordinator

Christine Force
Development & Events Manager

Lindsey Furtney
Material Handler

Michele Guilette
Retail Sales Associate

Robin Harriman
Facilities Manager

Erin Hogue
Retail Team Leader

Kim Hudak
Office Manager

Regina Kusche
Material Team Leader

Christine Lyons
Communications Manager

Miriam Tanner
Thrift Shop Manager

Michael Tausek
Manager of Programs

Andy Wyatt
Food Programs Supervisor



DEAR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS

As I look outside at the greening grass on this gorgeous day, I am warmed not only by the glorious sun but by your incredible support and generosity.

A lot has happened in our corner of Maine since the new year. We have welcomed several new families to the town of Freeport, meeting them with open arms and an abundance of kindness. You rallied around our annual Freeze Out fundraiser to ensure that your friends and neighbors had warm homes this winter. You volunteer each week in our food pantry and thrift shop, greeting new and familiar faces with smiles and a desire to help. Thank you for all that you do!

As you read through our newsletter you will notice a continuous theme, food. You will have the opportunity to learn about food from other cultures, catch a handy gardening tip, and explore opportunities to help us fill our pantry with nutritious food that is inclusive of all who walk through our doors.

Our pantry could not be what it is today without your support. When you donate to our food pantry you are not only supporting someone in meeting their basic needs, you are also giving them the opportunity to sit down and have a meal with their loved ones, to connect with those they care about and form relationships across all cultures.

This past weekend, my husband and I had the pleasure of hosting our neighbors for brunch for the first time since COVID disrupted so much of our lives. It reminded me just how much food can bring people together and its significance within our culture. Countless cups of coffee later, we were lost in conversation and with one another's company, a step towards peeling away yet another layer of the social isolation we have all been so mindful of. This has me looking forward to more in person activities at FCS in the upcoming months. I sure hope you will join us.

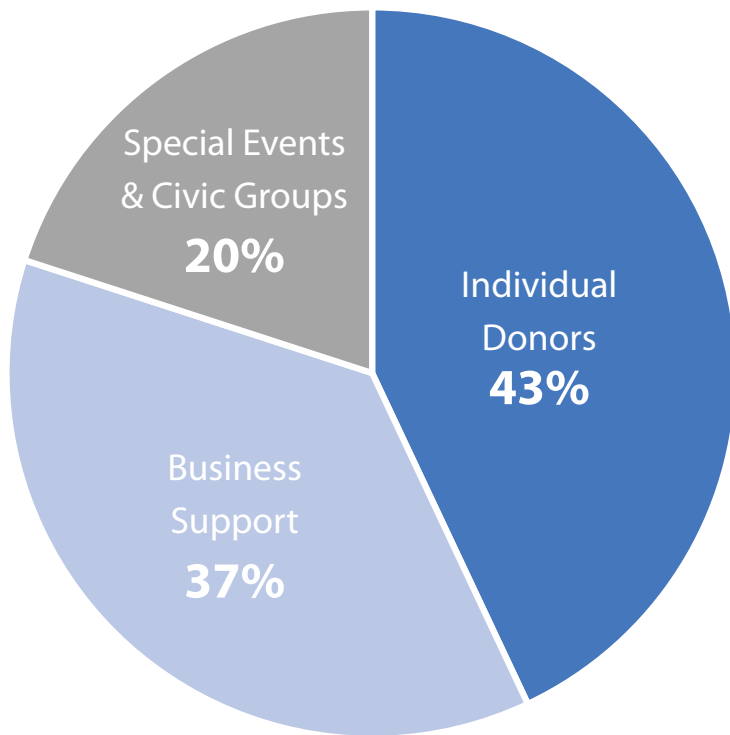
Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Lundin".

Sarah Lundin
Executive Director

YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK

Day-to-Day Food Program Funding Sources



Community donations fund the day-to-day work in our Food Programs. Individual and group donations of food and money sustain our Food Pantry and Free Friday lunches. For bigger projects and bigger ticket items, FCS turns to grant funding.

Our Pantry's Gone Mobile!

Generous grants from Tom's of Maine and Good Shepherd Food Bank allowed FCS to purchase a brand new van! From its first day at FCS, this van has made an impact. Food donation pick ups are a breeze and home deliveries come in a friendly, recognizable, and reliable vehicle. We have big plans for this big van, so stay tuned!



Good Shepherd helped us get wheels and keep our cool!

Their generous donation allowed our Pantry to upgrade our coolers. This means less hands-on moving of food items for our pantry volunteers. Food stays fresher longer. The best part? Our old coolers have a new home down at the Casco Bay Inn providing increased and improved food storage for the New Mainer's staying there.

FROM OUR PANTRY TO YOURS



At FCS, we plan our meals around what we have in our pantry — just as you do at home. Our Free Friday Lunches recently featured the culinary magic of Freeport Rotary's Michele Bois-Gilbody, who whipped up a wonderful meal that makes amazing weeknight leftovers.

What do you get when you cross chicken pot pie with shepherd's pie? A crowd-pleasing, comforting meal that is destined to become a family favorite! This recipe can be adapted to almost any vegetable. Get creative by adding squash, spinach, parsnip, or whatever you have on hand!

Chicken Shepherd's Pie

INGREDIENTS

Meat from one whole, roasted chicken (store rotisserie is a great time saver!)	4-5 med sized potatoes (skin on or off depending on your preference)
Olive oil 3+/- tbsp	1 C fresh/frozen peas
1 C chopped onion	1 C fresh/frozen corn
1 C chopped celery	2-4 C Chicken Stock, as needed
1 C chopped carrots	1/2 C Flour
2-3 cloves of fresh, chopped garlic	1/2 stick butter (1/4 C), plus extra to 'dot' the topping
Thyme fresh sprigs or 3 tbsp dried	

Remove and set aside the meat from the roasted chicken, along with pan juices. Sauté onion, celery, carrots, garlic cloves, and thyme in olive oil until softened.

Add pan juices from the roasted chicken and simmer the vegetables and herbs for 20-30 minutes. If needed, add chicken stock to the pan juices.

While the veg is cooking, boil potatoes until the flesh is tender all the way through when pricked with a fork. Once cooked, whip or mash the potatoes for your pot pie topping. Set aside. Keep them warm makes them easier to spread. Note: A little garlic powder is a delicious addition to the whipped potatoes.

Melt butter in small pan, add flour to melted butter, whisking until incorporated. You are making a roux, a thickening agent for gravy or sauces. Let the roux cook until slightly browned, giving it a nut like flavor, softening the flour taste.

Take a small amount of the liquid from the stock and vegetables, and whisk quickly into the roux, once the roux is smooth, it can be added to the remaining stock and veggies. Let it all simmer until thickened.

Add the chicken meat, peas, and corn.

Coat your square or rectangular baking pan lightly with grease or cooking spray. Once your chicken and vegetable mixture is thickened, ladle it into your pan. Scoop mashed potatoes and spread over the chicken mixture. Dot the top of pie with a little butter and sprinkle with black pepper.

Pop into a 350° oven for 20-30 min. until the butter is melted & pie is heated through. Serve with fresh salad and cranberry sauce!

Cooking ahead?

Cover your assembled, pre-baked pie with foil and refrigerate up to 1 day. To freeze, stop before adding the potato topping. Wrap your cooled pie tightly with parchment or saran wrap and foil. Freeze. When ready to bake, thaw fully before adding the potatoes and bake for 40-60 minutes at 350 degrees until heated through.



WHAT DOES ROTARY DO?

They do more than cook up a storm in our kitchens! Rotary International is a world-wide organization of over 1.2 million members. There is a Rotary Club right here in Freeport, part of a Rotary District made up of 40 clubs with roughly 1600 members throughout Maine and New Hampshire. Freeport Rotary meets weekly at the Freeport Community Center.

Since its start in 1983, Freeport Rotary Club has been rooted in community service. They:

- Host food and fuel fund drives, as well as scholarship fundraisers
- Collect for holiday help and school supply drives
- Donate to fund the Elder Association's van and equipment for local schools
- Built 5 habitat houses in town and work on home repairs for elders

Rotary is just as active internationally as they are locally. Over the years, their international projects have:

- Provided clean water, installing and training people on water filtration systems
- Promoted maternal and child welfare
- Improved education and literacy, building libraries, outfitting schools with books
- Offered vocational service, helping to grow economic stability in developing communities



ROTARY CHEFS AT FCS

"The best thing about Rotarians is, although we are an organization of "doers", the underlying philosophy that drives all our projects, our fundraising or activities is a desire to see people living their best lives," says Michele Bois-Gilbody, Freeport Rotary President. "We want to help people for sure, but we also want to support growth and empowerment."

Rotary meets Wednesdays at 7 am at FCS.

To find out how you can get involved, contact Michele at 207-415-2157 or michele@bois-guilbody.com

THE TASTES OF HOME

Ester, a New Mainer living at the Casco Bay Inn, remarked how deeply comforting it can be to eat the 'tastes



of home.' Ester loves creating hearty food with the trademark spicy flavors of Nigeria, which she shares with her family and her neighbors at the Inn.

She uses an Instant Pot to make her Okra stew. Like many African dishes, her okra stew is accompanied by fufu or banku, a cassava or corn maize doughy ball used to scoop up this hearty stew. Want to try it? You can find her recipe on our blog.

Grow a Row for New Mainers

Want to grow veggies that provide a taste of home for our newest Mainers? Here are some suggestions!

- Onions
- Okra
- Collards & other sturdy greens
- Peppers of all sorts
- Eggplant – both purple and white



A VICTORY IN YOUR BACKYARD

BY KATHLEEN MEADE, PRESIDENT,
HARRASEEKET GRANGE NO9 & FCS
COMMUNITY GARDEN COORDINATOR

The COVID-19 pandemic made many people aware of the value and joy of growing their own food. A garden plot means fresh food and outdoor experiences—not to mention yummy food on their plate. Gardening also contributed to some relief for family budgets. It provided fresh food when a stressed supply chain left store shelves bare.

Gardening during times of national crisis has a long history in our country. During World War I, President Woodrow Wilson called on Americans to plant vegetable gardens to ward off the threat of food shortages as a civic and patriotic duty. It was the birth of the Victory Garden. The movement gained momentum during World War II. Eleanor Roosevelt had a Victory Garden at the White house in 1943. Millions of gardens were begun that year. People were encouraged to plant vegetables that took up little space and could be tucked into existing gardens. They grew tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, and

tomatoes. Soybeans, nicknamed wonder beans, served as a protein substitute when meat was rationed. By May of 1943, 40% of produce in America came from Victory Gardens. This eased pressure on the supply chain and helped people discover the joys of fresh air and fresh home garden vegetables and fruits.

When COVID-19 hit our shores, our generation suddenly faced supply chain shortages. They effected more than toilet paper! With time on our hands and empty store shelves, many tried their hand at vegetable gardening—some for the first time, while others expanded their backyard plots or repurposed flower beds. From the suburbs to the inner city, modern-day Victory Gardens sprung up all around the country. Seed catalogs arrived in mailboxes. Tik Tok shared ideas on container gardening in city apartments. Instagram feeds showcased fresh backyard lettuce.

It's not too late to get in on the gardening trend, especially now that inflation is adding extra pressure to family budgets and compounding

the woes of pandemic. If you are eager to get your own plot going, now is the time to start with seeds or seedlings. These can be nurtured in a sunny windowsill until they are ready to pop into the ground. Need a little help along the way? Call on the Harraseeket Grange. An original proponent of farm-to-table lifestyle, the Grange offers support to large-scale farmers as well as urban farmers and home gardeners.

Don't have a place to grow? Try container gardening. Start with a small corner of your yard. Or, rent a plot at the Community Garden.

Need some inspiration? Plant a salsa garden of tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers. Go for a green smoothie garden full of kale, spinach, and cucumbers. Tuck some edible flowers, asparagus, or rhubarb into your perennial flower garden. You can even plant root vegetables instead of flowering bulbs like tulips.

Whatever you choose, you'll find joy in this healthy, delicious, and totally retro way to free yourself from supply chain woes.

seedlings are gently lifted in the cup of your hand, they can be resituated. I love how the back edge of our garden hosts sunflowers of different heights and colors—waving at us throughout the gardening season, supplying plenty of bird food, and flower bouquets for the pantry!

We try to use only organic seeds and our gardens are nourished with local ingredients. Our compost comes from our yard leaves, grass clippings and semiannual layers of Casco Bay seaweed hauled from up the street. All year round we toss kitchen vegetable scraps over the garden. Somehow this magical mix produces an overabundance of organic vegetables. Our property rests on clay soil, so planting happens a week or more after Memorial Day. By July, you would have no idea we planted later.

Our first donation is usually rhubarb, we always have extra, delivering a banana box a week throughout early Spring. Harvest takes less than 15 minutes – just slice the stems, wipe off any dirt, and pack in boxes. Sturdy boxes can be picked up at the food pantry and reused throughout the season.

Our next harvest starts in early July. Mixed greens, romaine, red leaf lettuce, and beet greens make regular appearances. We deliver these greens, along with our first kale and Swiss chard, to the Pantry every week throughout

July and August. Trimming beets and chard produces more crop, making it easy to share the bounty! Harvest is simple. It takes us just fifteen minutes to trim greens and pack them in banana boxes. We drop off at FCS on our way to run errands or go to work.

Green beans arrive early August along with parsley, dill, sage, and basil. We are able to donate a quarter of every green bean harvest. Our herbs are delivered fresh to the Pantry with instructions on how to dry in a low oven. And,



Easy Ways to Grow a Row

- Sow an extra row or two of carrots
- Plant half dozen more green beans
- Add a line of zinnia and cosmos behind your herbs
- Plant a few more basil and parsley seedlings

every week, we tuck in fresh flower bouquets to brighten our neighbors homes. People delight in sunflower bunches, surrounded by cosmos, and sweet pea. As the summer turns to fall, we bring in pumpkins and squash, carrots and celery, parsnips, and beets. One year we delivered 68 round pumpkins!

Growing and donating food is our way of giving back. We get a feeling of great satisfaction from helping our neighbors.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

L.L.Bean



THANKS TO FREEPORT COMMUNITY SERVICES' BUSINESS FRIENDS

Bow Street Market

Cartmell & Associates of

Keller Williams

Dead River Company

Island Tressure Toys

The Maine Water Company

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

NEWS FROM FREEPORT COMMUNITY SERVICES



WHAT'S INSIDE:

YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK 3
RECIPE FROM THE PANTRY 4

THE TASTES OF HOME 5
THE VICTORY GARDEN 6



Freeport Community Services

VISIT US

53 Depot Street
Freeport, Maine 04032
Freeport Community Center
Mon. - Fri. 9-5 pm

STAY IN TOUCH

Subscribe to get regular
emails at
fcsmaine.org/get-updates

CONTACT US

207-865-3985
Main Office x202
Executive Director x204
Thrift Shop x207
Food Pantry x211
Manager of Programs x205
Volunteer Coordinator x206
AFFP Coordinator x222
Communications Mgr. x220
Development &
Events Manager x221

fcsmaine.org



Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit #492