



ANDY STANDS NEAR WELL-STOCKED PRODUCE SHELVES, THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

A BIRTHDAY TRADITION BEGINS	3
THE JOY OF FLOWERS	4
THRIFT SHOP UPDATE	5
ANNUAL MEETING 2025	5
A FALL FULL OF NEW EVENTS	7

## FOOD PANTRY STAFF REACTS TO SWEEPING CHANGES TO MEET NEEDS

When news came that SNAP benefits might be paused in November, our Food Pantry team, including Andy, our Food Programs Supervisor, and Kara, our Director of Programs, sprang into action. While this could have been a moment of uncertainty, our community quickly showed its strength. Neighbors and local businesses stepped up with donations, food drives, and shared meals, proving once again that together, we can ensure no one goes hungry.

Andy said there was no way to anticipate or prepare for a situation like the Food Pantry and our community experienced this fall, but the generosity of our neighbors made a positive impact. "We're really well-stocked, and the donations keep on coming," he said. "My biggest challenge now is making space to store it all." Andy credits Susan, our Volunteer Coordinator, for recruiting volunteers to sort, cull and re-box food to keep in storage.

In addition to food needs, Kara manages requests for FCS' Carol Kaplan Fuel Fund and has been helping community members apply for the Home Heating Assistance Program (HEAP), an initiative that also experienced delays due to the government shutdown in November. She said she's noticed an

"CHANGES" CONTINUED ON PG. 6



## MISSION STATEMENT

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

## 2025-2026 BOARD MEMBERS

Gary Goodrich <i>President</i>	Lisa Abbot Zach DeWitt
Evan Libby <i>1st Vice President</i>	Carolyn Jensen Maureen Littlefield
Christina Carter <i>2nd Vice President</i>	Catrina Milliman Edrol Sandy
Deborah McLean <i>Secretary</i>	Barton Seaver Christina Semanyshyn
Bo Chesney <i>Treasurer</i>	Victoria Winters

## FCS STAFF

Sarah Lundin <i>Executive Director</i>	Kim Hudak <i>Office Manager</i>
Susan Adams <i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>	Darius Iranpour <i>Facilities Manager</i>
Don Buchholz <i>Facilities Assistant</i>	Kara LaRochelle <i>Director of Programs</i>
Christine Force <i>Development Director</i>	Parker Pepper-Jones <i>Donation Curator</i>
Lindsey Furtney <i>Donation Curator</i>	Marie O'Donnell <i>Age-Friendly Program Manager</i>
Michele Guillette <i>Donation Curator</i>	Tina Randall <i>Events Manager</i>
Jen Hazard <i>Communications and Engagement Manager</i>	Miriam Tanner <i>Thrift Shop Program Manager</i>
Erin Hogue <i>Thrift Shop Assistant Manager</i>	Andy Wyatt <i>Food Programs Supervisor</i>

## DEAR FRIENDS,

Over the past weeks, our community served as a reminder of how truly special our neighbors can be. During a time when the federal government shutdown threatened key needs-based programs, I worried about how families would manage and whether critical support would reach those who need it most. But that uncertainty quickly blossomed into feelings of awe, thanks to the remarkable generosity of our community. Neighbors sent donations, organized food drives, offered meals, and simply showed up for one another. Watching these acts of kindness unfold has left all of us at Freeport Community Services feeling inspired and thankful.

Our incredible team works every day to support families in Freeport and Pownal. But it is your support that makes our work possible. Together we have seen the difference we can make when a community rallies around those in need. Your kindness is something to treasure, and it is never something we take for granted.

As you will soon read from Andy, we have one small request — in times of uncertainty, some families worry about being able to care for their pets. These furry members of the family give us comfort, companionship, and joy and they deserve our support, too. Donating pet food and supplies to our Food Pantry is an easy way to ensure that every member of the families we know and love, human or animal, has their needs met and can stay together safely at home.

Thank you for being a part of this community, for showing up for one another, and for reminding us of what generosity, care, and compassion truly look like.

With gratitude,



Sarah Lundin, Executive Director



## A LETTER FROM OUR NEW BOARD PRESIDENT

My family and I have personally been involved with FCS for over 35 years. Our children have participated in various fundraising events, and we are decades-long contributors to the fuel fund.

I am privileged to be a member of the Board, and equally fortunate to work with others who care deeply about the Freeport and Pownal communities. Fostering Community and helping neighbors is core to the FCS mission.

As we approach the New Year, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible communities we serve. The combined support from our neighbors, staff, volunteers, and donors enrich lives, connect

neighbors, and help those in need.

I am especially impressed with how the community rallies in special times of need, such as stepping up food donations in rapidly changing times. I am buoyed and encouraged by 50 years of continuous and steady support. The response to help our neighbors is ongoing through the wonderful efforts of the FCS family.

Thank you for your continued care and support of FCS, and our neighbors.

– Gary Goodrich





5-YEAR-OLD ARTHUR MILLER-WOMERSLEY, DELIVERS A WAGON LOAD OF DONATIONS TO THE FOOD PANTRY.

## A BIRTHDAY TRADITION BEGINS

On the new children's book shelf at the Food Pantry, there is a picture book titled, "Saturday at the Food Pantry" by Diane O'Neill. The book, which explores two classmates who meet unexpectedly at their local pantry, is a favorite of 5-year-old Arthur Miller-Womersley and his mother, Maurine Miller.

There is a repeated line in the book that Maurine enjoys, "Everyone needs a little help sometimes." With this idea in mind, Maurine asked Arthur to consider Food Pantry donations in lieu of gifts for his fifth birthday. "We talked about why swapping presents for donations would be a simple and kind thing to do," she said, and promised to let Arthur pick out a special gift after the party.

On his birthday, Arthur was overjoyed to see party guests bringing food to fill up his wagon. Maurine said she also asked friends to bring homemade cards, which was an added highlight for Arthur. "I liked that people made special designs just for me," he told his mother.

When asked about how he felt about the generosity of his party guests, Arthur said, "I was proud because all my

friends brought me food to donate, and that makes other people feel special, too."

After the party, Arthur walked to the Food Pantry with his mom and little sister with his wagon full of donations. "The best part is that I got to see all of the foods that lots of people eat," he said. "Then we got to weigh it all, and it was bigger than any number I can remember!" In total, Arthur and his friends donated 60 lbs. of food.

For his good work, Maurine treated her son to five small gifts – one for each of his 5 years – from Island Treasure Toys, which included a storytelling figure called a Tonie, a coloring book, slime and two tiny wiglets. She said the whole experience left Arthur feeling excited to repeat his new birthday tradition again next year.

Maurine also hopes Arthur's example will lead others to give. "I do hope it [the party] sparked some follow up conversations amongst other families," she said, "... so that donating and a more purposeful trip to the toy store will become a trend."



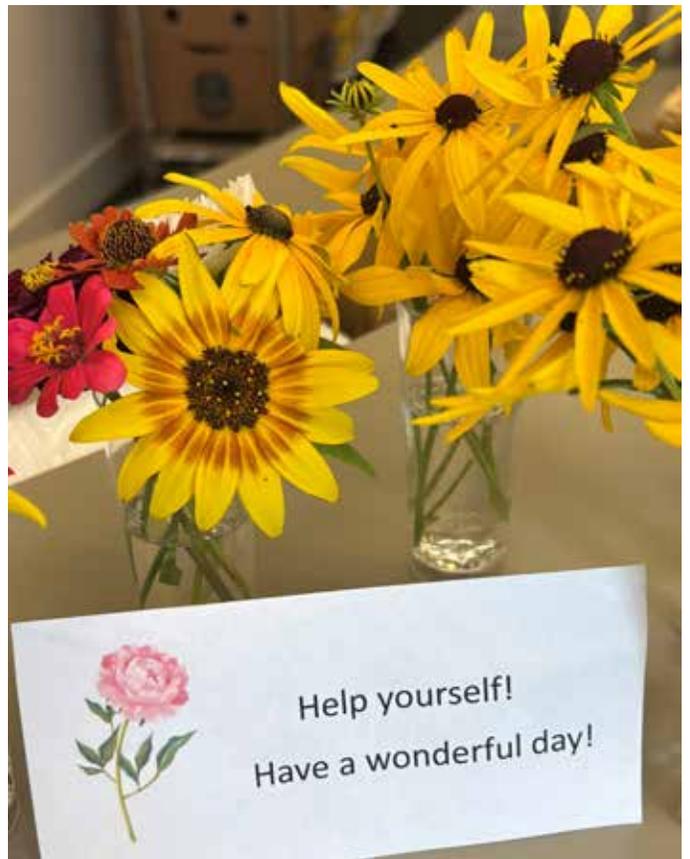
FCS VOLUNTEER ANNIE FLEWELLING AT HER HOME GARDEN IN FREEPORT.

## THE JOY OF FLOWERS

It's hard not to smile when a dozen small vases of fresh flowers appear on the FCS café counter. Even more so when the bouquets are free for anyone who needs a reminder that there is beauty in the world.

Food Pantry volunteer and gardener Annie Flewelling delighted FCS staff, volunteers and visitors throughout the 2025 growing season with her flowers. When asked how the idea began, Annie said she and her husband, Greg, were preparing for a getaway in May, just as their daffodils were beginning to bloom. "They were so beautiful. I couldn't leave them behind," she recalled. Inspiration struck, and the couple decided to bring a few bouquets into FCS during Annie's volunteer hours.

Annie's daffodil bouquets were so popular, she continued bringing flowers weekly. Throughout the growing season, FCS visitors enjoyed her sweet daisies, daylilies, peonies, colorful zinnias and sunflowers. Front desk volunteer, Charlotte Ingersoll, especially loved identifying all the lovely varieties. "What a pleasure it was all spring and summer to arrive at the Food Pantry to a counter full of flowers!" she said. "Thank you, Annie, for the joy you brought us all."



ANNIE'S WEEKLY BOUQUETS OFTEN ARRIVED WITH SWEET NOTES.

# UPDATE FROM THE THRIFT SHOP

In October, The Thrift Shop at FCS lost a valued partner who helped find new homes or creative uses for donated items that couldn't be sold in the shop. As the Thrift Shop works to build new partnerships to continue that effort, we ask our generous community to keep donation guidelines in mind. When we receive items that can't be sold or repurposed, FCS must pay to dispose of them, which means fewer resources are available to help our neighbors.

If you've visited our award-winning shop, you know it's filled with vintage finds, antiques, collectibles, household goods, jewelry, clothing for kids and adults, toys and books. Sales from the Thrift Shop are a primary source of revenue for FCS and go directly towards programming for our community.

FCS LOVES your thoughtful donations, and we are always in need of more to stock the shop, but we kindly ask everyone to donate items that are in complete, clean and working condition. When you donate, always ask, "Would I buy this item at a store?" If the answer is a resounding "Yes!" then you know you have a donation our shoppers will appreciate. Thanks so much to all for your kind cooperation.

## the thrift shop at Freeport Community Services

Following our donation guidelines helps  
FCS programs thrive!

### WE DO NOT ACCEPT\*:

- Underwear & socks
- Baby equipment & car seats
- Beds or mattresses
- Electronics, including:
  - TVs & media players
  - Computers & printers
- Large appliances & tools
- Exercise equipment
- Helmets
- Paint, chemicals or hazardous waste
- Hangers
- Recycling or garbage

\*When unacceptable items arrive,  
FCS must pay for disposal.

Questions? [thriftshop@fcsmaine.org](mailto:thriftshop@fcsmaine.org)

# ANNUAL MEETING 2025: AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION

Many thanks to everyone who attended our Annual Meeting in October. Andrew Lardie, from Tedford Housing in Brunswick, was our keynote speaker for the evening. He discussed the importance of community and shared Tedford's exciting news that construction was nearing completion and a beautiful new emergency shelter for individuals and families would soon be open in Brunswick.

We said goodbye to board members, Chris O'Neil and Suzi Benoit, and welcomed new members, including Lisa

Abbott, Carolyn Jensen, Maureen Littlefield, Christina Semanyshyn and new board President, Gary Goodrich of Replenova Farm.

Executive Director Sarah Lundin congratulated FCS staff members, Don Buchholz, Susan Adams and Miriam Tanner on their longevity anniversaries. Awards were also given to Midcoast Federal Credit Union (Community Award) and Liza Moore (Carol Kaplan Award). Many congrats to all!



FCS STAFF WITH LORI MARQUIS AND TENA WALLACE (MIDCOAST FCU)



SUSAN, FCS VOLUNTEER  
COORDINATOR, CELEBRATES  
5 YEARS.



LIZA MOORE, TWO-TIME  
KAPLAN AWARD WINNER.

uptick in heating requests, as well as for firewood from the Freeport Wood Bank, who graciously installed an emergency wood bin at FCS this fall. “I’ve noticed a lot of buzz around heating costs, which started as early as August this year,” she said.

During Food Pantry hours, it’s not unusual to see people of all ages gathering in our halls – families with young children, retirees, and neighbors with their service animals alongside. There is a fresh pot of coffee at our café counter, and on many days, there are baked goods for visitors to enjoy. Recently, Kara selected picture books for a children’s bookcase along with toys and coloring books to make kids visiting the pantry feel welcome. Our Facilities Manager, Darius, re-purposed the donated bookcase and gave it a whole new look.

Coupled with the new children’s library, Andy reports there are so many other acts of kindness that have benefited Food Pantry visitors. Ben, a chef from Goodfire Tasting Room and Kitchen in Freeport, donated a spiced pumpkin puree with a simple, 3-ingredient recipe for pie filling, along with 20-quarts of a flavorful, roasted pumpkin soup. Dennis, a volunteer at the Lisbon Falls Food Pantry, regularly connects with Andy to provide a weekly bread delivery, a true gift since bread donations are sometimes sparse. “I can’t say enough about our steadfast volunteers and community members,” Andy said. “They really ‘bring it’ every day.”

Mondays are the busiest at the Food Pantry, as it aligns with the day donations are received from Hannaford, Shaw’s, Bow Street Market, Royal River Natural Foods, and seasonal



KARA, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS, CREATED A CHILDREN’S LIBRARY FOR THE FOOD PANTRY.

produce from Growing to Give. Mondays are also the same day the Food Pantry distributes food through their Home Delivery program.

To help meet growing demand, Andy is testing evening hours on select Mondays, and whenever possible, he keeps extra bread, produce and baked goods, so that anyone in need during Food Pantry off-hours on Thursday or Friday can be accommodated.

In addition to our food pantry, our Backpack Program for RSU5 students is also in high demand this season. The program ensures bags are left on the Food Pantry Loading Dock on Thursdays from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The bags are designed to provide weekly snacks while also bridging the weekend gap when students don’t have access to food at school. They contain everything from two easy to prepare meals like ramen or macaroni and cheese, breakfast items, healthy snacks and treats. The Backpack Program is supplied solely by FCS, and we often turn to large groups to lead food drives to meet the growing needs of the program. “The main difference is we need 60 of one item to fill all the bags. Placing 14 items into 60 bags each week adds up, quickly” Kara said.

While Kara looks for more bulk assistance with the Backpack Program, Andy is also hoping neighbors might consider donating pet food, which he maintains can often be hit-or-miss. “I hope people will also consider our four-legged friends,” he said.

With the winter months fast approaching, and the slow process of restoring funding, it is impossible to know what the future holds for those with food insecurity. However, with the generosity of our community, and dedicated staff like Andy and Kara, there is hope.

# A FALL FULL OF NEW EVENTS AT FCS



BYRON KERN, CO-OWNER, WELL & GOOD BREWING

## Sip & Shop

At FCS, bringing community together is what we are all about! Beginning in July, we kicked things off with a fundraising event called Sip & Shop, where guests could taste and enjoy local brews, and shop for fun, specialty goods at the Thrift Shop.

## Clothing Swap

In September, FCS joined forces with RSU5 to offer a free Clothing Swap for elementary school kids. Thanks to the donations from local parents, the Clothing Swap was a big success!



AN RSU5 PARENT WITH AN EARLY DONATION.



KRIS GIBBONS (FREEPORTCAN) HELPED GUESTS LEARN FUN FACTS WHILE PLAYING PLASTIC JEOPARDY

## Green Living Fair

We also kicked off the Green Living Fair in October to support sustainable practices. Local farms, artists and Freeport Climate Action Now all helped make this a fun and free event for the community.



## Age-Friendly Freeport & Pownal Events Winter 2026



**YOGA**  
Mondays at 10am



**UKULELE JAM**  
Mondays at 3pm



**STRENGTH & STRETCH**  
Wednesdays at 10am



**ART VAN**  
2nd and 4th Fridays  
10:30am



**BINGO**  
2nd Tuesdays, 1pm



**SOCIALS**  
4th Tuesdays, 1pm



**COMMUNITY FREE LUNCH FRIDAYS**  
1st and 3rd Fridays, 12pm



**MONTHLY TECH SUPPORT**  
1st Thursdays, 1pm

**JOIN US!**



All events are free and take place at 53 Depot Street, Freeport, ME  
fcsmaine.org/age-friendly  
(207) 865-3985 ext. 222



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

# L.L.Bean



Jensen Financial Services LLC



THANK YOU TO OUR  
FOOD DONATION PARTNERS



**VISIT US**

53 Depot Street  
Freeport, Maine 04032

Freeport Community Services  
Monday - Friday 9-5

**THRIFT SHOP HOURS**

Monday - Friday 12-5  
Saturday 10-3  
Closed Sunday

**Donations**

Tuesday - Friday 10-3  
Saturday 10-1

**COMMUNITY CENTER HOURS**

Monday - Friday 9-5

**FOOD PANTRY HOURS**

Monday 11-3  
Tuesday 9:30-11:30  
Wednesday 11-1:30

# NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR

NEWS FROM FREEPORT COMMUNITY SERVICES

**CONTACT US**

207-865-3985

- Main Office x202
- Executive Director x204
- Thrift Shop x207
- Food Pantry x211
- Programs x205
- Volunteers x206
- Age-Friendly Freeport & Pownal x222
- Communications x220
- Development & Events x221

[fcsmaine.org](http://fcsmaine.org)



Photo credit: Dawn Czech Webster



**WHAT'S INSIDE**

A BIRTHDAY TRADITION BEGINS	3
THE JOY OF FLOWERS	4
THRIFT SHOP UPDATE	5
ANNUAL MEETING 2025	5
A FALL FULL OF NEW EVENTS	7

**STAY IN TOUCH!**

Sign up for our digital and print newsletters:  
[FCSMaine.org/get-updates](http://FCSMaine.org/get-updates)



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