



Mission Statement:

Life Enrichment Advancing People (LEAP), exists for the following purpose: To empower people with disabilities to lead joyful lives with dignity, independence, and autonomy by providing comprehensive and individualized supports. The fundamental operating principle followed by LEAP in providing services is to strive for each individual's fulfillment of:

- *Physical Well Being
- * Self Expression
- *Experiences of Joy



LEAP NEWS: Hope, Wellness & Joy are happening here!

Business After Hours

by Kristi Iverson

As part of an initiative to introduce the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce members to local businesses, LEAP hosted an event at Stone Soup Gardens (SSG) for the Business After Hours program on June 16th. Darryl Wood, LEAP's Executive Director, and Lisa Hill, LEAP's Finance Director, spoke to the quality supports LEAP is committed to providing for a small number of our community members, to a crowd of 40+ local business professionals and LEAP-affiliated people that evening. He stated that we strive for our mission every day using the way in which we approach care by emphasizing the importance of meeting individually based needs in order to facilitate a sense of belonging for each individual supported. Lisa Hill spoke to the financial side of LEAP that keeps costs down by investing in our Direct Support workers, to bring them competitive wages for our industry and careful strategic planning to keep administrative and home maintenance costs down.

LEAP is well-known as a leader in this community for our wellness initiatives. The best showcase of this is through the SSG and Fit Trail that we maintain through a number of volunteers and committed individuals. LEAP's main garden yields many fresh vegetables that are available at no cost for the individuals supported, while offering very low prices to the staff and community members. Other plots are



also available for community members to grow their own. The monies from these sales go back into the gardens to help provide better options for the next year's crop.

Darryl led the participants on a tour of the fit trails, stopping to introduce the fit stations where fitness is made fun and pointed out that the stations are built into the woodland habitat. Participants were encouraged to try out the Accessible, Stretch, Strength, Cardio and Contemplation stations on their own in the future. The SSG fit trail is available for public use, and local businesses are welcome to create their own wellness initiatives to encourage their employees to use the trail system.

In the photo above, Darryl Wood leads a group of Chamber members on a sunset trail walk, justly proud of the work that has been invested on wellness over the years at LEAP's Stone Soup Gardens fit trail!

LEAP's Board of Directors 2016-17

- Sherry Walrath, President, Strong, ME*
- Robert Lockwood, Vice-President, Industry, ME*
- Roger Condit, Secretary, Farmington, ME*
- Celeste Turner, Treasurer, Farmington, ME*
- Doug Walrath, Strong, ME*

- Frank Hosea, Wilton, ME*
- Tyler Barnes, MD, New Portland, ME*
- Lance Neeper, Ph.D, Farmington, ME*
- Darryl Wood, New Sharon, ME*
- Lynne Hunter, Wilton, ME*

Important People You Know in Our Communities...

Living Waters Annual Police Appreciation Day

by Tony Bolens



LEAP Represented at Living Waters Annual Appreciation Day – an event for those who serve our communities by keeping us safe and filled with hope. Community members were invited to join together to share big thanks by baking goodies, barbecuing, and donating items to be given away to our local Law Enforcement officers and staff. Notably, LEAP donated two gift bags for the drawing. Fun was had by all, and Ross made friends with several of Farmington's finest.

Caption: Newcomer to LEAP, Ross, enjoying himself at the local Law Enforcement Appreciation event on May 19, 2016.

Lessons from Abby

by Cristy Foss

Abby moved into Davis Road a couple of months ago, and what an interesting ride it has been. In the short time that Abby has been at LEAP's Davis Road program, she has taught the staff and other housemates about emotional wellness with her outlook of "Roll the windows down and turn the music up, and throw your cares into the wind!"



Comfort and Joy

by Carrie Gilbert

Erika V enjoys watching TV on the floor... perhaps not the most comfortable place to sit, but she still loves it!

According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the age of Discrimination Act of 1975, LEAP does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, handicap or age in recruiting, hiring, training or promoting. We also avoid discrimination in admission or access to treatment in all programs and activities.

Welcome to our newest staff members!

Jeremy Young, Vicki Garland, Jessica Thibodeau, Sloan Hanning,
Brittney Sieg, Austyn Michaud, Chantel Dorey, and Elizabeth Chretien

We're glad you joined the LEAP Team!

Celebrating Twenty Six Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act:

The Lives, Faces and Stories Behind the ADA — Department of Justice Blog, 7/26/2016

"Twenty six years ago today, when President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law, he called it "powerful in its simplicity" and explained, "It will ensure that people with disabilities are given the basic guarantees for which they have worked so long and so hard: independence, freedom of choice, control of their lives, the opportunity to blend fully and equally into the rich mosaic of the American mainstream." On the ADA's 26th Anniversary, Vanita Gupta, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, shares stories of those whose lives have been changed by the Department of Justice's enforcement efforts and reaffirms the Department's commitment to fulfilling the great promise of the ADA...

These stories represent just a sample of our success. Despite our impactful efforts over the past 26 years, we recognize that there are many unaddressed challenges and unresolved barriers in our communities. These barriers don't just hurt people with disabilities; they impact all of us. Helping people with disabilities live meaningful, enjoyable and productive lives enables our country to reach its full potential. So we must forge on until growing up with a disability in America no longer leads to discrimination; until we, as a nation, recognize the dignity and value of every person without question and until – to quote President Bush's powerful words at the ADA signing ceremony – "the shameful wall of exclusion finally come[s] tumbling down."

<https://www.justice.gov/opa/blog/twenty-six-years-americans-disabilities-act-lives-faces-and-stories-behind-ada>

Our Mission and Values

At **Life Enrichment Advancing People (LEAP)**, our mission centers on empowering people of all abilities to lead lives with dignity, independence and autonomy by providing comprehensive and individualized supports.

Our foundational principle is to provide services that encourage well being, self expression and experiences of joy.

We carry out our mission by focusing on three main areas for support: maintaining optimum health, expanding communication options, and having many experiences of joy. This is done through emphasizing healthy lifestyles and autonomy, and providing opportunities for community participation.

LEAP supports people in small groups, **individualized apartments**, in various community supports, and through a small **community respite program**. We adopt an individualized and holistic approach to tailor our services to each person and family's goals and expectations.

*"We believe in the worth and dignity of all people.
We promote experiences of joy, wellness, and personal growth."*

Get to Know Our Board of Directors!

By Darryl Wood

Sherry Walrath is the current President of LEAP's Board of Directors, and "Getting to Know Our Board" is a new feature. Come on in...!

Hi Sherry, and thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions for LEAP's newsletter!

This is the first in a series of interviews I am going to call "Get to Know Your Board of Directors!". First, could you tell me a little bit about yourself and your background?

When I was growing up my mother played in a band. I taught tap and jazz and danced professionally. In college I toured with a children's theater group, got my degree in communications, speech and language. I worked a short time in radio and TV, then went back to school for curriculum development, then to NTID for interpreter training. I worked as an educational interpreter and taught special needs children grades 5 to 8 for ten years. We moved to Maine thirty-five years ago and I taught American Sign Language at UMF for eighteen years. I also owned and operated Glad Rags, a vintage clothing and jewelry business for several years.



There are a lot of good causes out there, what is it about LEAP that made you decide to get involved?

LEAP's philosophy goes far beyond just inclusion to encourage "participation" in all aspects of life and community. When you see one of the folks from a LEAP residence singing at an open-mike night at a local restaurant or cashing their check at the bank downtown and being greeted by name and sharing a laugh and a conversation with the teller, you know why LEAP matters so much.

How would you describe the role of a director, or the board of directors for a nonprofit like LEAP?

Keeping LEAP's Mission Statement foremost in all we do while also encouraging forward-looking openness to new paths and opportunities. Conducting meetings that encourage responsible participation of all members of the board. Carrying out our fiduciary responsibilities and supporting all working committees: finance, quality assurance, property and strategic planning.

LEAP Stands for Life Enrichment Advancing People. From your experience, what are some of the activities that enrich the lives of people supported by the agency?

First and foremost these are people just like you and me, so the same things we find meaningful and enjoyable so do they...having friends, feeling safe and respected, going for ice cream, having a picnic, participating in community events, parades, concerts, having meaningful work to do.

Those of us that know you understand your background in American Sign Language and non-traditional communication strategies. Why is communication such an important component to quality of life for people with cognition or hearing difficulties?

Being "heard" is important to each and every one of us...being able to communicate whether with our hands, voice, or gestures what we like, don't like, need, what makes us happy, frustrated, joyous. We can share all these things when we share a language base.

Speaking of quality, how do you know when LEAP is doing a good job? Do you think the community understands what LEAP does and why it is so important?

To know better what we do I would like to see more opportunities for community people to participate in LEAP activities so they can become better acquainted with the people in LEAP residences and programs. There is no substitute for firsthand experience.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Accolades to the 199 people LEAP employs for all that they do to make it an exceptional agency.

Celebrating 35+ years of Wellness, Hope and Joy!

Before...



...and After!



Stone Soup Gardens Update

by Megan Hiltz

One of the best things we can do together is to create spaces where we can grow food and come together as a community! At LEAP's Stone Soup Gardens, the volunteers have been working diligently to turn the land into gardens that are full of seedlings and the potential of growing food and bringing the community together. Check out our spring photos...the gardens get bigger and better every year!



“And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, The Little Prince

Men's Night Out

by Tony Bolens

As a repeat to the Bonfire Boys night out, I had the pleasure of picking up some of the guys and attending.

There was plenty to do with a golf cart to ride, a bonfire to watch, a football to toss with friends, chatter by the grill, musical talents shared by a couple of local artists, and let's not forget the food! :)

It was great to see some new faces at the party since last year, as newcomers to LEAP—Dominick, Alfred, and Ross joined us for the first time. Chris enjoyed the event from the comfort of the van, which we pulled right up to the fire for his enjoyment. Fun was had by all, and here is a big shout-out to Darryl Wood for hosting this great event for the second year!



Lose yourself in generous service and every day can be
a most unusual day, a triumphant day, an abundantly rewarding day!

~ William Arthur Ward

Keep House Happenings...Hello from Rumford!

by Kim Sequoia



Spring Fling at Keep House in Rumford

Pictured at left are some of the 30+ guests that gathered at Keep House for a recent celebration!

A tasty BBQ with freshly made salads and delightful desserts were enjoyed by all, as well as classic folk/rock music and surprise door prizes. LEAP Spirit was running high at the Spring Fling!

Photo courtesy of Megan Goodine.



Special Olympic Oxford County Regionals in Fryeburg: Stephen Dean sporting his Team Sunshine shirt while meeting a Fryeburg fireman.
Photo by Kim Sequoia



Happy 61st Birthday to Roger Chick!

Keep House held a birthday party with cake and ice cream shared by all.



Team Sunshine at Orono.

Photo courtesy of DSP Andrea Wing.

I Can Be a Hero?

by Deelight Zitzelberger

Everyday heroes are all around us, and we even get to hear about them on the news once in a while.

Usually, though, the people doing the greatest good in our communities are acting outside the limelight...on purpose.

Because LEAP is a nonprofit, we rely on sustaining relationships with citizens from all walks of life.

So, **your planned giving makes a difference** in the quality of life for the people we serve, as many of their daily living needs are not Medicaid-funded.

If you are thinking about becoming one of our monthly partners, please accept our ongoing gratitude for the power of your quietly meaningful gifts.

As you are considering where your own giving budget may have the greatest impact at the local level, please do visit <http://www.leapcommunity.org/about-us> for more giving options, or contact Darryl@leapcommunity.org with any questions.

Our family of faithful donors will always have room for YOU!

Please help us save trees and printing costs by subscribing to our e-newsletter at www.leapcommunity.org
Our pledge is to *never* sell, rent, or otherwise make your e-mail address available to third parties.

Safety and Training

by Alfred Dufour

Fire Safety: This past May at management meeting we had fire extinguisher training. We covered the Fire Triangle and Tetrahedron and the role they play in how fire works . Also we discussed how they are used to effectively extinguish fires.

Fire Emergency Response		Fighting the Fire	
R <i>Rescue</i>		P <i>Pull the pin</i>	
A <i>Alarm</i>		A <i>Aim low at the base of flames</i>	
C <i>Contain</i>		S <i>Squeeze the handle</i>	
E <i>Extinguish</i>		S <i>Sweep side to side</i>	

We talked about the different classes of fires and types of extinguishers used on them. The acronyms RACE and PASS, which are reminders for extinguishing and evacuation procedures, were reviewed. (see above) Finally we migrated to the parking lot to practice extinguishing live fires. Everyone had the opportunity to extinguish a fire, and even TFR2's newest resident got to lend a hand!



Mike and Sam at Home

by Matt Levensalor

“Although Mike and Sam have known each other for years through their day program, they have only recently moved in together. Here are some pictures of our pre-move-in BBQ, hosted at WRD. Sam seemed interested to join the house, clearly having a good time. Mike was excited also, to bring in a new housemate. These guys complement each other well, and enjoy living together. Mike comments, ‘I love Sam in my house!’ and although Sam is non-verbal, we all know he feels the same of Mike.”



HR Corner -

by Sarah Judd

The front desk at LEAP

When employees, individuals supported and customers enter Central Office at LEAP, Marge Taylor is there to greet them with a smile on her face and offer of assistance. She has been “the face of LEAP” since 2002, and has worked at LEAP for over 33 years. Recently, she has decided to decrease her hours at the front desk to enjoy some leisure activities such as gardening, traveling, involvement in her community, and family time. Don’t fret; you will still see her smiling face at Central Office from Wednesday to Friday each week.

A new face will be seen at the front desk on Mondays and Tuesdays; Mandi Currier comes to us from a DSP/CRMA role and is excited to learn and grow within the organization. She is a dedicated and hard-working employee and is eager to assist you! Please stop by Central Office to welcome Mandi. We couldn’t ask for a better front desk duo. Congratulations, ladies, on your new adventures! :)



Community Supports UP-dates

by Laurie Blake

Where we catch up on all that is going on in the lives of the awesome people supported by LEAP in our communities! Read on...

A Gathering of Friends

by Katie Drew

On the last Sunday of every month a group of us get together for a special lunch. I have had the pleasure of being Andrea’s staff member every Sunday for the last year. In fact, just about every friends’ lunch is the same three staffers accompanying Mandy, Andrea, and Bill. It bonds us in so many ways, and gives the people we support a chance to be social in the company of those they truly enjoy. I know there is nothing quite like the look of excitement on Andrea’s face when I tell her that today is friends’ lunch day. It gives staff, who normally



work one on one with the person they support, a chance to socialize with fellow staff. But more importantly it gives us, as staff, a chance to get to know supported individuals that we never work with, and to see all the complexities and beauty of their personalities. Through friends lunch, a former staff started to learn ASL (American Sign Language) so she could communicate with Andrea. I learned what an amazing musician Bill is as he often tickles the ivories for us. And we all learned what a happy gregarious lady Mandy is. What has



been truly wonderful has been watching connections grow between Mandy, Andrea, and Bill. There is always an atmosphere of excitement and joy. Andrea absolutely loves to help make food for her friends and after the meal shows excitement over sitting next to staff she is unacquainted with in order to get to know them. She also enjoys being helpful and caring to her friends. Bill loves to entertain us with music and always plays “You Are My Sunshine” for Mandy, which is her favorite...she sings along with pure joy! It’s really quite amazing to watch three individuals come together like puzzle pieces to meet each other’s needs. In a world where most of us only connect on trivial terms, these three people have connected in deep and meaningful ways.

To learn more about LEAP, please visit us at www.leapcommunity.org. Don’t forget to also look for us on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest!

We're All About Advancing a Life of Health, Wellness & Joy!

(LEAP's new informational feature on some aspect of mental-emotional-physical wellness)

Blackbird, blackbird, where have you been?

by Katrina Fay

In the spirit of fun, we have started a migration here at LEAP. We have a pair of fancy black birds that have been seen grazing at a few of LEAP's program sites. They get to stay for a week or so, have a picture taken with the residents or staff of the home, and then they move on for the next visit.

So far they have had quite the migration from Farmington to Rumford, then to Rumford back to Farmington. They still have many homes to visit before their fly north for the summer. Whose place will they stop at next???



Oliver House Update

by Jane Shaw

Hello to everyone from the Oliver House team! We have been busy weeding the flower beds and preparing the window boxes for display. There has been a lot of activity in the garden areas, as well as folks walking the Stone Soup Gardens trails. We hope the photos below show the dedication and pride we take in maintaining this beautiful site on behalf of the people we serve, as well as for our visitors.

In July, Oliver House hosted another terrific Family Fun Day for individuals served, as well as for staff members and their children. We enjoyed a lot of games, as well as musical entertainment. Was so great to see everyone, and glad for a nice sunny day!



Lest We Forget

by Deelight Zitzelberger

On a bright and breezy morning in early April, several hundred people slowed their pace in the Hall of Flags at the State Capitol building in Augusta. The reason for their thoughtful investment of time was for celebrating two important events... First, a mindfully-arranged large display with a bright and varied collection of art pieces, shared by nearly 60 Maine citizens with disabilities.

This was for the 6th Annual “Lest We Forget” event, hosted by MACSP (*Maine Association for Community Service Providers*).

Second and definitely worth celebrating, is that 2016 marks the 20th anniversary of the closing of the Pineland Center, where people with developmental disabilities were at one time warehoused, and in numerous instances, maltreated for many years.

Overcoming this chapter in Maine’s history is no small achievement; we have come so far in how these important people in our communities are respected and cared for in the last two decades! Leaders and staff members in Maine’s community service provider organizations continue to work tirelessly in advocating for timely and respectful care for hundreds of our favorite people. Working in partnership with families in bringing hope and wellness into their lives is an immeasurable privilege.

It’s no wonder that the Hall of Flags was thronged with both adults and student groups who could recognize and celebrate the talent and joy expressed by these artists, and who found it a worthy investment of their time to take it all in! Many of the artists were available to discuss their work, which lent another layer of understanding and relationship. Several pieces of art were purchased immediately, with some good-natured joshing among those who missed out on buying favorite items.

Seeing the expressiveness and heart displayed in their works was far beyond moving... (I found myself wishing for similar artful ways), and am thankful that we each have different means of showing our souls to the world.



On Family Engagement and Resources

shared by Bonnie Jean Brooks, President & CEO of OHI in Hermon, ME.

“Maine has built a fantastic coalition of family members, providers and other interested parties. It started building a few years ago when the father of a young man with disabilities began reaching out to other parents and providers. This group is called The Maine Coalition for Housing and Quality Services. It is chaired by Cullen Ryan, a dad, and also Executive Director of Community Housing of Maine. It meets monthly in Portland. It has several I.T. sites around the state. There are guest speakers every month. They include state leaders, legislators, and providers with particular insights and expertise. This coalition, in conjunction with a small group of providers who have sought legal advice about challenges here in Maine, and our state association, joined forces last spring and did absolutely fantastic things with the media, the legislature and the community. We ended up getting the state to pull a devastating rule that would have crushed the Waiver program. The coalition also inspired a parent group that has chapters around the state called Community Connect. I suggest that you find out more about this by going to: <http://www.maineparentcoalition.org>.”

For this and numerous other valuable family/community/health resources, please visit us at <https://www.leapcommunity.org/useful-links>, thanks.

A snapshot of what YOUR meaningful support can look like!

A Will to Seed Wellness, Hope and Joy into Our Communities

By including LEAP in your planned bequests, you can sow support for the needs of developmentally disabled adults in many western and central Maine communities. This is your opportunity to advocate and provide meaningful impact at the personal level for years to come. We hope that in considering your gift, you will contact our Executive Director, Darryl Wood, at 778-4817 x104. To learn more about other giving and monthly partnering options, please click the Donate Now button at www.leapcommunity.org. Your donations can help to fill the needs not covered by MaineCare & Medicaid Funding. Your support can be targeted to an individual, a program, a specific project, or a general donation. Together, we each can make a difference today and every day!

LEAP is a 501 (C)(3) Charitable Organization. Our mailing address is 313 Farmington Falls Road, Farmington, ME 04938

___ I want to support LEAP. Please have someone contact me at: _____

I want to provide a tax deductible donation to the agency. Enclosed please find my gift of:

___\$25.00 ___\$50.00 ___\$100.00 Other: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Please help us save trees and printing costs by subscribing to our e-newsletter at www.leapcommunity.org.

Our pledge is to **never** sell, rent, or otherwise make your e-mail address available to third parties.

Save the Date - Saturday, August 27th!
LEAP's 10th Annual Golf Benefit and Silent Auction
at Sandy River Golf Club in New Sharon
Registration at 8:30a - Tourney starts at 9:00. Hope to see YOU there!

Designee Agency



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