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

The First Sunday in December
By Megan Goodine
The Henderson Baptist Church has been hosting individuals supported by LEAP and others living in the community for many years at their Annual Christmas Party. The joy and fellowship shared among those in attendance is something you don’t easily forget. If you’ve ever had the pleasure of being there, you have likely been greeted by Barney Google, Santa, his Elves and many others who make this event so memorable. Staff at LEAP have accompanied folks to these celebrations for years and recently reminisced about the rich history of the party. Like Paul Harvey, we reached out to Brent Smith to learn “The rest of the story....”

Brent and his wife Bertha led the Youth Group at Henderson in the early 1970’s. The group was actively involved in community outreach with the elderly, struggling young families, and local nursing homes. Their commitment to their neighbors lead to the inception of the Special Friends Christmas Party. Starting with a 1970’s guest list of about 8 people who were living with their families and in private homes, it has grown to over 50 participants in recent years. Guests continue to be their friends and neighbors living at home along with people who receive support from LEAP.

Many hands make this party a success and ensures an Experience of Joy for everyone. The kitchen crew works behind the scenes to make sure guests are offered a nice meal with plenty of treats. The Elves are both present at the party to help with activities and shop prior to the big day. Volunteers come from the Smith Family, the Henderson Church Family and others from the community who share their talents and time to make the Special Friends Party a success.

So, who is Barney Google? To keep the spirit alive, I can’t really divulge this. I can tell you that this persona started at the age of 10 when the coveted character was a tap-dancer. It just grew from there and the suit still fits 60 years later. You do the math. If you know the players, maybe you know the identity of Barney?

For 40+ years, the first Sunday in December has been a place to experience the Magic of Christmas, Fellowship and Friendship. We are very appreciative and humbled by the spirit in which this party was conceived and continues to be shared year after year. Thank you to Brent, Bertha, the Henderson Church Family and the many other elves that contribute to make this a festive and merry event. And to Barney Google, we hope you never lose your captivating persona. You bring Pure Appreciation, True Joy and allow us all to Hold on to the Magic of the Season.

(for a little more Joy, please see page 2)
Important People You Know in Our Communities...

Thanks to Our Friends at Franklin Savings Bank!

At right, Darryl Wood receives a $1,000 check from Bernice Cote as part of Franklin Savings Bank’s nonprofit giveaways as they celebrate 150 years of community banking. LEAP plans to use the money to help pay for a week at the Camp Tall Pines for LEAP-supported individuals in the summer of 2019. 

Thank you so much, Franklin Savings Bank...this gives us something to look forward to all winter long!

Wellness is incorporated into so many facets of our lives, including getting out in the community and having FUN!

Here, Cynthia and Michael get a little holiday shopping done, while pretending not to notice that Sam is up to his casually festive photobombing tricks!

In sharing more from our feature on Page 1, Arlene also shines with the Joy she feels in sharing fellowship and fun activities at holiday time!

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!

Sara Bobson, Briana Corriveau, April Duval, Timothy Lamoureux, Nicole Quick, Mary Rackcliffe, Taryn Schorr, Caleb Skillin, Karmen Curry, Sally Daigle, John Howard III, Jennifer Perez, Jenna Adams, Chloe Couturier, Rena Deschenes, Hollieann Harrison, Richard Osden, Melissa Phillips, and Bryson Steward

We’re glad you joined the LEAP Team!

From the Training Center
By Alfred Dufour

On Developing our Art and Music Program to include art and music therapy...

Recently, LEAP sent Administrator Katrina Fay and Training Coordinator Alfred Dufour to the University of Maine at Augusta to Co-Occurring Collaborative Serving Maine’s seminar on Art & Music Therapy for individuals with intellectual and development disabilities. CCSME describes the seminar as follows:

“Art therapy is a gentle, direct, and non-threatening clinical intervention that aims to empower individuals living with disabilities. Art therapy interventions are client-based and support individuals in identifying and communicating emotions, increasing creative problem-solving, and in discovering their strengths. Music therapy is a safe, effective integrative treatment used to address the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional goals of clients of all ages. This part of the day will help caregivers and professionals learn how they can incorporate the concepts of music therapy into their clients’ daily lives.”

We currently offer a variety of art and music-based activities, as well as, healthy relationship education and counseling. Our goal of attending the seminar was to see how well we are currently using art and music socially and to identify was to implement the therapy aspect into some of our events and education and counselling sessions.

We found that our current programs have a strong foundation and are running quite well. We also came away with many ideas that will be implemented over the coming year starting with our art show, “Embrace the Possibilities” and acquiring some new adaptive and exciting instruments. Stay tuned!

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.”
DSP of the Month for October 2018—Carla Nile!
By Katrina Fay

I nominate Carla Nile for DSP of the month. Here is what her peers had to say about her. Carla Nile is:

- Really great to work with
- A level-headed problem solver
- Compassionate & supportive team player
- Very good friend and always wants to help
- Works well as a team member; very helpful with advice and problem-solving
- Very good at her job and is a great team player
- Very good teacher of our house policies and good teammate
- Hard worker and dependable
- Problem solver- great person – go to person
- Easy to talk to and understanding
- You are amazing in all that you do. Keep Rockin’!!
- Always calm and ready to tackle the hardest situation. Supportive, efficient, and the best morale booster. Hands down incredible in her role— I’ve loved working with and learning from her.
- You’re FABULOUS!! Thank you for being an amazing friend!

For me, Carla is one member of my team that I rely on to get things done. She is an advocate for one individual but has been an advocate for others. She has taken on the role of being the wellness champion of Our House. She helps by coming up with craft ideas for the Brown Bag Social. She is a strong person for the team; the team relies on her to take on the tough situations. She coaches and guides the new people to become strong team members and helps build up the ones that are not new but need a little extra encouragement.

I Can Be a Community 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 considering becoming one of our Monthly Partners,
please accept our ongoing gratitude for the power of your quietly meaningful gifts. As you reflect on where your own giving budget may have the greatest impact in our own communities, please do visit http://www.leapcommunity.org/about-us for more giving options, or contact Darryl@leapcommunity.org with any questions.

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

On behalf of the families we serve, Thank You for your generosity.

If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.
~ Mother Teresa

Celebrating 38+ years of Wellness, Hope and Joy!
DSP of the Month for November 2018—Tarra Bernaiche

By Kristi Iverson

Tarra Bernaiche is a Direct Support Professional at LEAP’s Davis Road home in Farmington. Her manager says that Tarra comes to work with a smile and engages each of the individuals. Tarra often takes the individuals to family visits, and before she switched to overnights she was big on attending wellness events. She reports to work on time and keeps an eye out for any safety issues in the home. Tarra regularly reports important needs. She accepts and gives positive feedback, and is always willing to pick up hours or switch shifts to help coworkers. Tarra makes homemade soaps and lotions, and whenever it is a coworker’s birthday she leaves them a small package of these homemade goodies. Tarra’s peers state that she has a kind soul and wisdom beyond her years. She is a hardworking, positive, and efficient worker and a great team player. She works hard to create and maintain positive relationships with the people supported.

Tarra started working at Davis Road just over two years ago. She was working in the healthcare field as a CNA in the surrounding nursing homes and at the hospital. One day Tarra saw the LEAP “Now Hiring” sign in the parking lot at our central office and decided to stop by. Tarra stays at LEAP because the hours work well for her and her family, but also because of the family atmosphere. Working in a LEAP house you truly have the feeling that this is much more than a typical group home and you’re able to build the relationships with the individuals much easier than in other settings. Tarra has one individual who always greets her with an “I love you” when she walks in the door. Tarra remembers that shortly after an individual moved into Davis Road they were feeling nervous about living in a new setting. Tarra took them out to see fireworks, eat ice cream and do a bit of shopping. It was an awesome trip and really helped the individual feel they were connecting and would have different opportunities in their new home.

Outside of LEAP Tarra recently bought a house in Fayette and has been busy fixing it up. She loves to ride her motorcycle and hopes to have time to get some good rides in this upcoming summer. Tarra enjoys hanging out with friends and family. She has 4 kids ranging from young adult to newly teenager which take up a lot of her time outside of her two jobs. Tarra takes life one day at a time and enjoys watching her kids grow into themselves and be who they want to be.

Thank you, Tarra, for working at LEAP, supporting your team and striving to make a difference in the lives of the people you support daily.

“A HERO IS AN ORDINARY INDIVIDUAL WHO FINDS THE STRENGTH TO PERSEVERE AND ENDURE IN SPITE OF OVERWHELMING OBSTACLES.”
— CHRISTOPHER REEVE
Judith Fischer is a Direct Support Professional at LEAP’s Town Farm Road Apt 3 (TFR3) home in Farmington. Her manager says, Judy’s number one focus and priorities are on the individual and program needs. She advocates for a good home environment for the individuals and works on ways to improve the program to benefit the agency, program, staff and supported individuals. She is proactive with preparing for appointments and supporting individuals in their interests and activities. Judy follows policies and procedures and holds others to the same standard. She is respectful of others and works to problem solve in a professional manner when there are dilemmas. She takes feedback well and provides input to benefit the program and/or the supported individuals. Judy is safety oriented and takes initiative when needed. Judy is proactive in seeking out ways she can be helpful to others and comes to work, ready to work. She is reliable while on shift and is considerate of her shift partner in sharing responsibilities. She enjoys being a helper and covers extra shifts when needed. She assists with onboarding new staff, engages staff meeting discussions and provides useful communication and documentation in Therap. She brings new ideas and took initiative with the appearance of the grounds/outside and volunteers to lead the duties for Pride in Place at TFR3. Judy’s peers state she is very helpful and stays with the routine. They noted that Judy creates a warm atmosphere for the home and is a great advocate for each supported individual. She has spent the time to build good relationships with the supported individual. As a teammate, Judy works well with others, is hard working, problem solves and gives good feedback. Judy is friendly, has a big heart, is funny and brings laughter with staff and the people served by this program.

Judy started working at LEAP at the FARE House and has since worked at Hidden Circle and TFR3 where she has found her home. She started working in human services because she was always interested in working with people. She heard about LEAP through her nephew who is supported by LEAP. Working with him she learned some sign language which has since helped build stronger relationships with others. She enjoys working at LEAP because of the individuals she supports. Judy’s priorities as a DSP are establishing trust and role modeling for her individuals. One of her best memories working at LEAP were outings to the park with one person where they picnicked with ducks and reviewed sign language flash cards. She still keeps in touch with the individuals at that home and enjoys seeing them attend LEAP events.

Outside of LEAP Judy spends her time knitting, crocheting and cooking. She keeps busy making crafts with her 9 grandkids. One of the other favorite past times is days together at Popham Beach. Judy also collects fairies. This upcoming summer she plans to take part in the fairy walk at Mackworth Island near Falmouth where they build beautiful little fairy houses in the forest as they walk. She also plans to work at LEAP until she retires several years from now. Thank you, Judy, for working at LEAP, supporting your team and striving to make a difference in the lives of the people you support daily.

“Health is the thing that makes you feel that now is the best time of year.”
- Franklin P. Adams
LEAP’s 2nd Annual Wild Game Dinner & Moose-Calling Fundraiser!

Nothing but Thankful!
by Darryl Wood

I’m happy to share that our Wild Game Dinner & Moose-calling fund-raising event on January 26th went off without a hitch. **Tuck’s Ale House** was filled with people & goodwill, the food was great, and generous funds were raised on behalf of the people we serve at LEAP. Thankfully, nine LEAP board members also joined in on the fun. For an event like this, in my opinion, the ability to network, create and sustain relationships, and talk about what we do means just as much or more than the funds raised. I’d like to thank everyone who came, and the following people specifically:

**Nate and Amy Morin** and all of the Tuck’s staff, for opening up their joint to the LEAPsters, and who know how to throw a party.
To grill master **Tom Saviello** and photojournalist **Scott Landry**, who also got their hands dirty making a couple hundred burgers with me on a Friday night.
To **Becky and Natalie Wood**, meatball recipe maestro and hostess who kept the flow moving throughout the event.
To **Roger Lambert**, the jovial emcee and moose-calling judge who in the end, saw through the smoke and judged the contest authentically.
To **Larry Lord, Russell Black, Colon Durrell and others** who donated the bounty for the feast.
Thanks again, **everyone**...without you and the passionate energy you bring, our community-driven mission wouldn’t be quite as impactful in supporting the western Maine citizens who help to make our beloved state so awesome!

Heere, moosie! Above, Michael Stufflebeam from Monmouth is all smiles, enjoying his reigning moment of moose-calling glory with Governor Janet Mills!
New Local Author Publishes Colorful Farm Book

by Brianna Rush

During her Literacy Volunteers sessions, Jaimi Buck often had different ideas about how the stories we would read together could (or should!) end. She decided to write her own version of The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss. Soon she was writing her own original stories, often coming up with new ideas before the current story she was working on was finished! Jaimi brings her love of farming and animals and her concern for others to her storytelling. This is certainly the case in her first illustrated children's book, Trouble Wave the Rooster.

Illustrated by local artist Alana Knapp, Trouble Wave is the story of a rooster who develops a passion for playing soccer, so much so that he turns the farm yard into a soccer field complete with cheerleaders (the goats) and announcers (the horses)! But when Trouble Wave plays too rough, his teammates decide it is time for them to stand up for themselves and restore peace to the barnyard. Jaimi has often mentioned that she wants to write stories to make others happy, and this unique and colorful storybook is sure to bring smiles! Jaimi has plenty of other stories, so be on the lookout for more from her in the future!

QA Committee Updates

by Kristi Iverson

LEAP’s Quality Assurance Committee is in its 13th year since establishment in 2005. Over this time, the committee has been responsible in monitoring the quality of services provided at LEAP from multiple angles, including regulation compliance, setting up some internal expectations and more recently, attempting to quantify in real numbers the concept of joy. To that end, we have sent out surveys to individuals supported, staff, and family members seeking to meet our goal.

This year, our committee mostly has been comprised of our board of directors, community members, and LEAP management members. We now welcome two new members to our ranks. The committee would like to introduce Tracey Pease, Joy Pierce, and Wesley Babula as our new DSP additions! Their perspective will be invaluable as the committee continues to move forward in increasing the quality of the supports LEAP provides. Thank you all, and welcome aboard!
Community Supports UP-dates
by Laurie Blake

Here’s where we catch up on all that is going on in the lives of the awesome people we support in our communities! Here, Andrea and Bill enjoy the fellowship, festivities and fun of the 2018 holiday season... filled with all the dreams and wishes that keep our hearts merry!

One of the special moments recently captured at our monthly Jam Sessions shows just how much we believe in the cornerstones of our mission...

*Hope - Wellness - Joy - Inclusion*

And as we Embrace the Possibilities, Alfred and Mandy rock out!
Pre-Holiday Community Goings-on!

by Darryl Wood

Farmington was certainly hopping over the first weekend in December, and LEAP played a big part. First up, on Saturday morning the 1st, the LEAP team decorated the tree for the Festival of Trees while the friendly folks at Tuck’s Ale House opened their doors early for a pre-parade party, with the tips from dedicated sales set aside to benefit LEAP.

Later that evening, the LEAP tree generated $500 in income towards the Farmington Rotary’s largest annual fundraiser, the Festival of Trees.

On Sunday, the wonderful folks at Henderson Memorial Church hosted a Christmas party (an annual tradition) and the people served by LEAP were invited. Despite the weather, lots of folks attended and rumor is that a good time was had by all.

Also on Sunday, I commandeered the covered LEAP trailer and with a bunch of volunteers delivered 23 Christmas trees to people as far away as Anson.

One of the cool things about the Festival of Trees is that some people buy a tree and donate it to a friend, acquaintance, or family in need. At one stop in West Farmington, we delivered a tree like this to a young lady and her two daughters who had been gifted a tree. This person had recently returned to Maine and the apartment was sparse and dark. The addition of a fully decorated tree, complete with gift certificates and presents was pretty emotional for her and also for the 3 grown men who delivered the goods. We called it a Rotary moment, and LEAP was privileged to take part.

Without the covered trailer, delivery would have been difficult in that day’s weather.

I guess the moral of the story is that Chester Greenwood continues to be a catalyst for good, and when you do good, good comes back to you.

Happy Holidays! LEAP celebrates being an organization that serves our communities and families!

LEAP Believes That Community is a Key Factor in Whole-Person Wellness...

[and this info from NewsUSA’s copyright-free article agrees]

“Social isolation is a little-thought-of, but growing, factor in the health and well-being of people 65 and older - and it may play a greater role than obesity as a public health hazard, according to research at Brigham Young University. But what does "social isolation" really mean? It’s how often we interact with others, and how much we enjoy those connections. In fact, social interaction is so important that it’s actually a key factor in maintaining good health.”

http://www.newsusa.com/articles/article/easing-senior-loneliness---its-more-important-than-we-think.aspx
One Memorable Chase!

*By Cristy Foss*

Future LEAPer, Chase Foss, was hunting with his dad in Solon when he shot his first deer back in November. The deer was a rare 4-point doe with antlers!

Chase’s mom, Cristy Foss, is an administrator for LEAP’s Davis Road home. She thinks that the orange LEAP hat brought 9-year-old Chase good luck on this day, and this unusual hunt was even featured in the Daily Bulldog!


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The Christmas Carol — A Local Musical by the Sandy River Players

*By Kyla Wheeler*

“The folks from Anson Street took in a play during the holidays when they were invited to a dress rehearsal of the Sandy River Player’s production of *A Christmas Carol – The Musical*.”

Heather, staffer Deb Leclair, and her great-grand daughter Rosie all enjoy showing off their holiday smiles!

Heather is holding a picture she took of a Santa, at the Auburn Mall. Giving Deb a shout out, as she is the reason FARE was so successful with the Art Show. FARE had 100% participation, as all four ladies made art entries. They also entered multiple pictures and projects. Deb organized the whole thing for the house and made sure each girl created something special and meaningful as their entry.
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: __________________

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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.

“A Will can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.”

~ Thornton Wilder