



THE MAINE CHILDREN'S HOME

for little wanderers

*Our mission is to build and strengthen families and their children,
instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life.*

Winter 2009

Volume 16 Issue 1

A New Year

This year, the Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers begins its 110th year of service to children and families. Each year, it seems, we are asked to do more because the need is so great. The Home has always responded.

The Maine Children's Home accomplished some wonderful things in 2008. We provided Christmas for 1,568 children and proved to them that Santa Clause still exists. We sent 120 children to a weeklong summer camp experience and had 27 young mothers enrolled in our Teen Parent School Program. The Children's Place provided care and education for 77 children from infancy to school age. The Turner Family Counseling Center provided counseling for 348 children and adults and our Adoption/Family Care Unit impacted 312 lives.

New Board Members



While doing all of that, a new program called CAST (Coping and Support Training) was started, thanks to a seed grant from the Frances Hollis Brain Foundation. CAST is a high school based suicide prevention program targeting youth 14 to 19 years old. CAST delivers life-skills training and social support in a small group format (6-8 students per group).

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A Message from the Executive Director



Sharon H. Abrams

Everywhere you look or even listen these days, headline news and coffee shop talk tends to head in one direction. Market drops by record numbers, major lay-offs expected, government cuts millions from the budget, programs cut services and businesses closing. For most of us, this is the worst of times in our experience. For those of you who are my vintage, you may be even thinking that the retirement of your dreams is just that, a dream, not your reality. But whatever your age, or life calling, clearly we have all been dramatically affected by everything that has transpired economically this past year and will for perhaps the next few years.

One of the things that I have realized during this time is that the old adage, “When the times are tough the tough get going,” is really very true. But the other thing that I have come to understand is that it is during difficult times like this, that make us clarify what is really important in life. It isn’t the money, the big house and stocks and bonds that give quality to your life or are really important. It’s the people, our children, family and friends, neighbors and what they give to you and you give in return that count.

Although most of you reading this newsletter are well connected to the Maine Children’s Home, there are many who have less knowledge about us. What is the Maine Children’s Home? It is an organization that is now 110 years old, whose mission is to build and strengthen families and their children, instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life. Since our inception, we have brought thousands of families together through our adoption programs, and over the years new programs have been developed and expanded our mission. For the past 35 years, our Teen Parent School Program has done just that for over 1000 teen moms and their children, who have become successful parents and adults. Two members of this year’s Board are graduates of this program, and we are proud to employ a graduate for the past 4 years.

The Children’s Place is one of our newer programs since moving to the Bibbi Alford Campus almost 7 years ago. That program offers a wide array of early care and educational opportunities. Quality programs cost dearly and, in order to keep up to the standards for future accreditation and keep our fees affordable for parents, this program and others need financial support from various sources, parents, business and government. What is learned in the first 5 years of life cannot be replaced later without stress, complications and incredible cost.

All of our programs are enhanced with the ability to offer outpatient mental health counseling when issues become too complex to be met under normal programming. The Turner Family Counseling Center will no doubt see increased requests for counseling with the stress families continue to face with our current economic crisis.

Miracles do happen during these difficult times as evidenced by this year’s Christmas Program. Under the direction of Cristen, Steve, Janelle, Devon, our Friend’s members and our unbelievable friends at 107.9 The MIX, even with the financial odds against us, we were able to make Christmas wishes come true for 1,568 needy children. Some individuals chose not to exchange gifts, and gave to “our” children instead. Over 300 volunteers spent countless hours pulling what was needed together. It took the National Guard to bring all the boxes to Augusta, but it was the heart and giving spirit of the greater community that made it all happen. This is the kind of spirit that will continue to inspire and ensure that the work of the Home is there for those who need the programs offered.

This past year, the lives of almost 3,000 children and families have been changed forever thanks to the work of the staff at the Maine Children’s Home, the Board, the Friends and all our contributors. The need is not going to go away, as a matter of fact it will undoubtedly continue to grow during these unsettled times. We must all look inside ourselves and see how we can contribute to strengthen families and their children, instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life. For the most part, our children, grandchildren and others close to us are fortunate to receive the nurturing and mentoring they need to be successful in the world. Unfortunately, that is not true for many other children and youth. Our future as a community, and even as a nation, can continue to be strong if we all do what we can to ensure that each and every child has the nurturance given to them by caring people today and provided with many opportunities to help them make a bright future for themselves tomorrow. Decide today what you can do to help and encourage your friends, neighbors and co-workers to do the same. Now, more than ever, time is of the essence.

A Message from the President of the Board



Rosemary Winslow

Let's Look at 2009's Tea Leaves!

I am both honored and humbled to be the newly elected President of the Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers. As we welcome (8) new Board members, I am confident that our team will provide the leadership, vision and support to continue the mission of the Home.

I've been impressed with the reasons new members have shared for coming onto the Board. Our present Board and staff will continue to support programs and collaborations that are unique, necessary and that work!

Today's economic challenges are causing businesses and non-profits to operate more cost effectively. I think those who have come before us read the "tea leaves" early on and prepared us for these uncertain times. Under the leadership of Sharon Abrams, previous Board Presidents and staff, steps have been taken to stretch our funds and collaborate with other community agencies and businesses, and our mission will continue.

Our Board transition has been seamless. The "tea leaves" indicate a favorable future with volunteers and business connections for our numerous programs in 2009.

A New Year Continued...

The program consists of 12 55-minute group sessions administered over 6 weeks by trained master's level instructors. CAST serves as a follow-up program for youth who have been identified through screening as being at significant risk for suicide. The program was a success and plans call for continuing and expanding the program this year, if additional funding can be found.

With the beginning of a new year comes the start of a new fundraising season. This month, we will kick-off our Annual Campaign. This year's theme is "**Love Begins at The Home**". When you consider the number of lives MCH has touched over the years, the statement could not be truer.

The Home is fortunate to have so many friends and businesses, many of them loyal supporters, who believe in and support the work we are doing. Our Annual Appeal is our first effort in 2009 to raise the funds necessary to support our programs. Please consider making a gift to The Home. We hope that we can always maintain your support and trust in what we are trying to achieve.

1,568 Children Still Believe In Santa

Here at the Christmas Program, it is always hard to convince businesses, organizations and individuals to get their Giving Trees and Toy Drives started early so that we are able to get enough inventory collected in time to meet our packing deadline. There are some pretty scary moments in our building when we realize that we are very low on things to pack, while the phone rings nonstop with calls from families who need our help. With donations slow to come, 2008 was an especially challenging year.

With a record 1,568 children depending on us, and inventory being packed as fast as we could get it, we often found ourselves wondering, for the first time ever, if we could realistically get this done.

Simply put, the donations came slowly. But the volunteers did not. In 2008, we not only had a record number of applicants, we also had a record number of first-time volunteers. Past volunteers also came out in droves, sometimes working along side us into the night to make sure that each box was carefully and thoughtfully packed. We now have a pool of over 200 active volunteers we can rely on to help children throughout the state of Maine to believe in Santa Claus.

And, although, donations were slow, they did come, and donors were very generous. The Christmas Program collected over \$145,000 in inventory from businesses, organizations, churches, schools and individuals who collected clothing and toys. We also collected \$9,521.00 in inventory after distribution, which will be used to start packing next season. We estimate that each child received an average of \$92.00 worth of clothing, toys, books and more through our program.

At the Christmas Program, we are firm believers in planning ahead; our minds are already well into Christmas 2009. With the current economy and promises that things will probably get worse before they get better, we can't help but be concerned about the struggle we may face next season. With bargains to be had on warm winter clothing, thinsulate gloves and mittens and toys, it's a great time to shop and help give us the peace of mind knowing that no child will go without. Additionally, if we can convince our Christmas helpers to start their Giving Trees and Toy Drives early next season, we will be well prepared to meet the needs of the families we serve.

New Adoption Triad Support Group Offered

The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers is an agency that has provided adoption services and worked directly with adoptive parents, birth parents and adoptees for over a hundred years. In response to the new Maine law, effective January 2009, granting adult adoptees, their attorneys and descendants access to their original birth certificate, The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers plans to establish a support group for adult adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents, if there is sufficient interest. The support group would be held once a month on a Wednesday evening, with the starting date to be determined. We would expect a minimum of 6 to 8 attendees to make the group worthwhile. The meetings will be open to any members of the adoption triad including members who have no affiliation with The Maine Children's Home.

If you are interested in attending a support group please contact Cindy Smith, Adoption Unit Secretary, 207-873-6350 or email Csmith@mainechildrenshome.org

EASTER EGG HUNT



SATURDAY, APRIL 11TH

**MAINE CHILDREN'S HOME
93 SILVER STREET
WATERVILLE**

Toddlers to age 3 start at 9 a.m.

Older children in pre-school, kindergarten, first and second grades will start at 9:30 a.m.

2 Special eggs will be hidden. Each is worth a NEW BICYCLE

This is a FREE community event presented by
The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers



Tony Ouellete
Sappi Fine Paper



Gloria Jordan
T-Mobile



Jay & Jenay
107.9 The Mix

Recognitions

At our Annual Meeting, January 29th, at the Waterville Elks Banquet Center, six businesses were recognized for their contributions and support of programs at The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers.

Even with adverse economic conditions the last six months of 2008, MCH was able to finish the year in a strong position. Each award contained the sentence "*No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others*".

The Maine Children's Home is very grateful to have the support and friendship of so many businesses.



Suzanne Moffat
Bangor Savings Bank



Laura Hudson
Kennebec Savings Bank



Mary Cobb
New Balance

Thank You's

Summer Camp Program

I thank you for letting me go to Camp Fairhaven in Brooks. I had a great time and hope to go back next year. - Colby

I'm writing to say thank you for helping us with the scholarship for my grandson so that he could go to Camp Fairhaven. We are so appreciative of this opportunity. Eric really liked the area and staff and stated that he enjoyed his stay tremendously. Because of the funding, he was able to go away for a whole week, have fun and make new friends. He had a really nice time and enjoyed the variety of activities such as the ropes course, canoeing and archery.

- Deborah

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for my son Marques' scholarship to Camp Mechuwana. This is an opportunity that he would not otherwise have if it was not for your generosity. Thank you. He advanced his basketball skills and sportsmanship. Thank You.

- Jennifer

I want to thank you for allowing me to go to Camp Fairhaven. I had a great time. My favorite part was sleeping outside under the stars. I met a lot of people. There were 7 people in my cabin. We would play with our flashlights at night. It rained a little bit, but we went swimming every day.

- Lucas

I would like to thank all of those who made this possible. This year has been a new year for Lucas. His teacher has said he is a new kid this year. He is also the 6th grade Class President. Thank you again.

- Jill

Christmas Program

I would like to thank you for the Christmas package that you have been kind enough to put together for my daughter Ashleigh. She has been through a lot and has been a wonderful girl. She deserves to have a good Christmas. I just want to thank you again for your help and support. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Again, thank you very much for saving Christmas for Ashleigh.

- Joshua

Sponsor a Child For a Week of Camp



Last summer, The Maine Children's Home sent **120** underprivileged children, grades 2-10, to a week of overnight camp. This was a record year. However, we had pre-qualified 180 children, which means that 60 children never received a phone call from us saying they could go to camp.



The reason that 60 children never got a phone call was money. We only raised enough money from donors and the Walk For Camp to fund



120 kids. We intend to do better in 2009. We are making a commitment to send a minimum of **150** children to camp. It's not hard to do; we just need a lot of help to do it.

The cost of sending 1 child to camp is **\$250**. We are asking **you** to consider sponsoring a child. A sponsor can be an individual, a business, church or organization.

Please give this some thought; it truly makes a difference in the life of a needy child.

Camp Sponsor Form

I want to sponsor _____ child(ren) at \$250 for a week of overnight camp.

Name: _____

If business, contact person: _____

Address: _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Please make your check payable to:

Maine Children's Home
93 Silver Street
Waterville, ME 04901



The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers 2008 Contributors

Unfortunately it is impossible to list every donor in the Annual Report, however, without the cumulative gifts of all, growth in income and services could not have occurred. We apologize for any errors in spelling or omissions within the Levels of Giving contained in this report. Please bring the errors to our attention so that future lists will be correct.

\$25,000 and up

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The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers

Mission Statement:

To build and strengthen families and their children,
instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life.

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Ice Fishing Derby

Ray Haskell Ford and Hafford's Restaurant organized an ice-fishing derby on February 15th to benefit the Maine Children's Home. The 1st annual event was a huge success raising \$4,000. Pictured are Ray Haskell, Stephen Dyer II, event chairman, and Bob Hafford. The Maine Children's Home is very grateful for their support and hard work.

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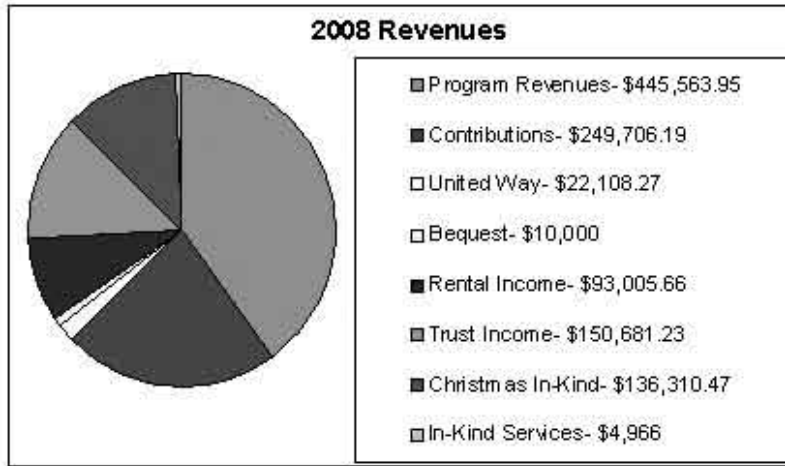
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2008 Figures

2008 Client Breakdown



2008 Revenues



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The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers

Vision Statement:

To empower the children and families we
serve to reach their full potential.

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Dr. and Mrs. Robert S. Galen
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Mr. and Mrs. Raymond A. Gaul, Jr
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The Maine Children's
Home for Little Wanderers
would like to thank all of
our 2008 contributors.

Thank You.

WALK AFTER WORK FOR CAMP



**MAY 13TH
REGISTRATION AT 4 P.M.
MAINE CHILDREN'S HOME
93 SILVER STREET, WATERVILLE
&
AUGUSTA
(place to be determined)**



Help send underprivileged children to a weeklong overnight camp experience

Form a team or walk as an individual. Bring the children and dogs. Display your company logo on hats and t-shirts.

Every walker will receive a t-shirt.

Pledge forms are available at The Maine Children's Home or call 872-0261 and we will mail them to you.

This year's goal is to send 150 children to camp. It costs \$255 for each child. We must raise a minimum of \$50,000.

PRESENTED BY: 107.9 THE MIX

Donation of Used Items

The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers often receives donations of used items. Some of these items are passed on to our Teen Parents for their babies, sold at our annual yard sale to help send children to summer camp and provide hours of play for children in our early childcare and education program. We are greatly appreciative of the thoughtfulness and generosity of people who think of us when they have useful items to donate.

Lately, however, we have occasionally found ourselves sorting through bags that contain rotting food, toys with missing parts and pieces, clothing stained beyond usability and even soiled diapers.

With the cost of disposal rising, and limited storage space, we are no longer able to accept items that are of no use to us. We will still gratefully accept used items, but we ask that donors call ahead to schedule a time to drop off, so that we may review your donation with you and keep only what we can actually use. As always, donations of newly purchased toys and clothing for the Christmas Program can be dropped off any time. Please call 872-0261 if you would like to donate used items.

**The Maine Children's Home
for Little Wanderers**

Administration

93 Silver Street
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel: 207-873-4253
Fax: 207-872-7548

Development

Tel: 207-872-0261
Fax: 207-872-0278

Adoption

Family Care

Tel: 207-873-6350
Fax: 207-872-7548

The Children's Place

Tel: 207-877-2258
Fax: 207-872-7548

Teen Parent School Program

Tel: 207-873-4253
Fax: 207-872-7548

The Harland A. Turner

Family Counseling Center

Tel: 207-873-4253
Fax: 207-873-3795

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www.mainechildrenshome.org

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