



Harpswell
Aging at Home

Inside HAH

December 2022



Wintertime

Dear Harpswell Aging at Home Volunteers-

Happiest of holiday greetings to you all! What a year it has been for HAH with record-breaking meals prepared and served, more homes repaired and miles driven, and notes written both to and from our grateful neighbors. The long hours that the Communications team put into the new website and the time the Admin team spent with banking forms and lawyers to get our non-profit designation in place with the IRS were long-term milestones for 2022 as well.

It all happens because of you! Your skills, your dedication to HAH and your hard work are such a blessing, and the holidays make us celebrate them even more.

As new volunteers join the working groups and the committees, others change their roles. Co-chair of the HAH Steering Committee Jerry Klepner will step down as Co-Chair but will stay active with the Finance and Nominating committees and enjoy the

hands-on work of driving and delivering when he is in town. Jerry has worked with HAH since 2017 and leaves quite a legacy—his gifts of photography skills, his wealth of connections and his non-profit experience and management wisdom are lasting facets of his years of work. I'll especially miss his dry and wry humor, his ability to see the long view, and his sense of fun. He has promised to keep his email on so we can still check in as he and Karretta travel the globe, so we all wish them our deepest thanks and Fair Winds and Following Seas.

Thank you, dear volunteers, for the many hours of time you have shared with HAH and your neighbors this year, and all best wishes for a healthy and happy 2023.

Happy Holidays,
Lili Ott - Co-chair

Reflections - Jerry Klepner

It is with mixed emotions that I am stepping down from the HAH Steering Committee after 5 years and from my position as Co-Chair. My wife and I decided for the next year to spend more time with our widely dispersed family and to travel to places on our bucket list that we have yet to see. While I will no longer be a member of the Steering Committee, I will continue to be involved in HAH activities.



Having served on a number of boards of non-profit organizations, I am constantly impressed by the enthusiasm, creativity and dedication of the HAH Steering Committee members and the volunteers who are serving our community. From preparing meals for those who are home bound, to giving rides to those who can no longer drive, and providing necessary repairs so people can safely remain in their home, HAH volunteers are giving meaning to the phrase “neighbors helping neighbors.”

These are just a few of the Steering Committee programs to which HAH volunteers are devoting hours of their time. Lili Ott, as Co-chair, has provided dynamic leadership, created innovative programs, and, with others, has brought HAH greater financial stability. It has been a pleasure being her partner and serving with the other Steering Committee members.

I am so pleased and proud of what HAH has given to Harpswell and wish everyone involved a wonderful holiday season and a healthy New Year.

Embracing the Common Good

On a late October day,
eleven students from

Bowdoin College, inspired by the college's Common Good philosophy, joined forces with HAH to lend a hand to some of our neighbors with Fall chores.

The students decided to divide and conquer with the heavy lifters heading off to stack wood, while others rolled up their sleeves to attack 1000+ apples in the creation of applesauce and apple crisp for our Meals in a Pinch program.

Jared Lynch, a Junior from Guilford, CT and a leader for Bowdoin's Public Health Club, organized the effort.



Jared shared that for him the spirit of Common Good is largely about reciprocity, that we all learn from one another and that is what draws him to community service. Bowdoin's way of embracing this perspective is a big part of what attracted him to Bowdoin. Volunteering for HAH was an opportunity for him to build on time spent in high school supporting an organization called C.A.R.E. (Care and Respect for the Elderly).

The woodpile proved a bit more challenging than first assessed, but the students were well rewarded by the graciousness of the homeowner who invited them into her home and shared reflections on her years as a creative artist, an interesting and warm memory for the students.

When the wood stackers returned to the church, they were rewarded with freshly made apple crisp and ice cream. A quick look around proved that their colleagues had also had a productive afternoon with containers brimming with applesauce and apple crisp to be shared with HAH's Meals in a Pinch recipients.

Seems clear that these students are experiencing one of Bowdoin's Offer of the College:

To lose yourself in generous enthusiasms!

Happenings

Meals In a Pinch

December 20

January 3, 17 & 31

Lunch with Friends

Returns!

January 24 - 12:00

Orr's Island Schoolhouse

Cooking at 43° North

One Fish, Two Fish, Seven Fish, Local Fish

December 14 - 4-6:00

- "Sold Out" -

Come learn about our local fisheries and do some cooking and tasting.

Holiday Cookie Swap

December 18 - 1-2:00

Bring one of your favorites (4 dozen in packages of 4 cookies each) to share and collect others to take home to enjoy. You will also be treated to joyful caroling by Harpswell Girl Scouts - a double treat!!

Email, text or call Julie Moulton to register:
(juliemoulton28@gmail.com, 330-5416)

More details at
hah@hah.community.org



-----HAVE A SEAT-----

Observant HAH volunteers noticed that the picnic tables at Mitchell Field are often in use by Harpswell's older residents who enjoy driving down to take in a pretty sunset or to have a picnic or just sit and read on a breezy Harpswell day.

The picnic tables are quite old - they date from the old Harpswell Festival days - and have splinters and broken boards that present a safety hazard.

The HAH Home Repairs team last year had a lull in their requests for repairs, so they made a couple picnic benches for Mackerel Cove. Seemed like a great possibility for a blending of a community need and HAH volunteer skills. What ensued was a talk between HAH's Home Repairs team and members of the Mitchell Field Committee. It is hoped that when the current backlog of home repairs is caught up, HAH volunteers will take on constructing some new tables for Mitchell Field as a separate community project.

Get ready for some **snazzy**, comfortable and safe places to sit and enjoy the view next summer!



Partnering Makes Us Stronger

As HAH works with our Harpswell neighbors to thrive at home as they age, we are extremely fortunate to have the support of committed partners that provide HAH with important resources to enable us to do some of the work we do. Somehow there is always more to "it" than you think, and these partners help us in innumerable ways. One of those partners is Habitat for Humanity – 7 Rivers Maine based in Topsham.

Working together, HAH and Habitat have succeeded in a shared mission of bettering the living conditions for many of our neighbors who are in need of home improvements by providing home repair and safety upgrades to help them stay safer, warmer, and drier in their homes.

The volunteer resources of HAH and the established foundation and financial resources of Habitat combine to achieve more together for Harpswell than either could independently.

On the front end, Habitat handles the vetting of prospective HAH volunteers ensuring they pass required background screening and training on the methods to be used. This training supports increased requirements by insurance carriers.

Once a new HAH volunteer completes these tasks, they are ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work in the field bringing their skills and heart into play. HAH's Home Repairs Team Leader, John Ferraro, welcomes them to the fold and puts them to work!

Habitat also secures much of the funding that is used to buy the materials used for our projects. They acquire these funds through grants, donations and ReStore proceeds.

Debbie Atwood, the Donor & Volunteer Engagement Specialist for Habitat, shared that there are over 90 communities in Maine with some sort of volunteer-operated aging in place programs and that HAH was by far the most complete and the most effective.

She also provided some thoughtful perspective for us all to contemplate. She stated, "And while we all want to do more, faster, and better, we need to keep in mind that we are truly pioneers on a new frontier; we need to be gentle with ourselves and others and feel good about our rate of accomplishment and what we've managed to do in a fairly short time...We can do what we do only one homeowner at a time and we continue to improve both the scope of our services and the number of older adults we're serving."

Another one of those valuable partners is the Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN) of People Plus based in Brunswick. From its earliest days, HAH has partnered with VTN in the transportation arena, benefiting from the ground work they laid years prior, allowing us to focus on "simply" getting people where they need to be.

VTN handles much of the administrative efforts associated with onboarding a HAH driver, managing the system that connects riders and drivers and the requisite record keeping.

Before hitting the road, each HAH driver is required to complete a background check with the Maine State Police and VTN handles this coordination for us.

The initial effort to connect riders and drivers is handled by Lynne Smith of VTN. Receiving calls from residents in need of rides from all over the area, Topsham, Brunswick, Bath or Georgetown, not just Harpswell, Lynne works to match rider with driver. And while Hugh Hardcastle, HAH's Transportation Team Leader, focuses on ensuring Harpswell residents are covered, HAH drivers often provide rides to those from neighboring towns as well. Not surprising that HAH volunteers' generosity crosses town limits!

Additionally in the spirit of going the extra mile, there are certain VTN protocols that restrict them from providing certain services that HAH drivers are able and willing to

provide such as trips to the Respite Care in Bath, or doctor appointments in Portland or Scarborough, or needs on weekends, like dialysis on a Saturday.

Together, Habitat & HAH and VTN & HAH, provide vital services to our community that are only enhanced by the synergy of these three dedicated organizations.

Friends Together A Pilot Program

From September to November HAH offered an 8-week program called Friends Together. The purpose of the program was to decrease isolation and encourage socialization. Wow! Did HAH meet that goal! The drop-in program included exercise, craft, and health and safety talk options. Some of the options were Yoga, Tai Chi, and stretching, fly tying, jewelry making, pebble art, fiber art, making needle felted buoys, taking better cellphone photos, and autumn centerpiece making. The presentations included how to prevent falls, Harpswell emergency & other services, estate planning, navigating updates to Medicare & Social Security, and avoiding scams.



The exercise programs were the most attended activities week to week. The tai chi and stretching classes both centered on balance and was appreciated by all. Many felt the sessions were just a hair too short!

One important theme that we heard above all others was how good it felt to reconnect with people, especially since the pandemic. Another in the same vein was that it was nice to meet new people, to see old friends, to just talk with one another, and have a mix of inter-age people.

The art programs were also very much appreciated. One participant said she liked the hands-on, ability to move about, having a variety of selections each day, and she loved the drop-in factor with no need to register or commit. Others mentioned laughing and learning together. Having more time in each session is a good comment – we didn't bore them! The last craft program was autumn centerpiece making. The room was alive with participants helping one another find just the right flower or weed to add to complete the centerpiece. The excitement in the room was palpable! Everyone thought this was a great event just before Thanksgiving.

The feedback from participants makes HAH know that this is a program that we need to offer each year. The comments for future craft programs included more felting, more seasonal centerpieces, mosaics, making things from the garden, painting tiles, more sea glass/pebble art, making holidays cards, and making soap/moisturizers/spa kits. Balance and exercise were requested. For discussions healthy diet & medication advice/tips, shopping efficiently for health foods, interesting & fun & interactive non-age-related programs, and CPR training/warning signs when someone should go to the hospital, and ambulance costs.

At the end of the 8 weeks the Food Team provided Lunch with Friends. The soups, provided by the Mingo Club and the Salt Cod Cafe, along with sandwiches, and

desserts were a big hit! This was just another place where people came together in conversation and laughter.

Planning is already underway for next year and if there are particular programs you would like, please email us at hah@hah.community.



Volunteer Opportunities

While HAH has loads of opportunities to utilize the talents or interests of those inclined to join in, from time to time we have specific roles that need to be filled. If you are versed in these skills and are interested in a new avenue to lend a hand, please reach out to Jane Clavet, our Volunteer Coordinator, at volunteer@hah.comunity

Communications Team

- is looking for folks interested in handling HAH's Social Media efforts, as well as Photo Editing.

Cooks for Meals in a Pinch

- we continue to need food for MIP. While we have never been short, it can be tight. So, **ANYTHING ANYONE** wants to make is much appreciated. It doesn't have to be gourmet food (although we have some amazing things...). We often need simple things like plain vegetables. Main dishes like meat loaf and mac and

MIP Hits a Milestone

November 22nd was a **banner** day for Meals in a Pinch.

We delivered **246** meals to 49 Harpswellians. In addition to their "regular" meal delivery, each recipient received a Thanksgiving feast as well.

The effort of preparing, packing, and delivering was accomplished by 58 volunteers.

While the numbers are impressive and set a new record, the greatest gift of all was the camaraderie and generosity of ALL involved.



cheese are always a good bet and we have entered soup time.

If you'd be willing to cook now and then check out the [Sign-Up Genius link](#) below for dates and needs. If you've never cooked for HAH before, feel free to reach out to Julie Moulton for details on how things work!

Julie Moulton
juliemoulton28@gmail.com

[HAH's Meal in a Pinch Sign-Up Genius \(SUG\)](#)

Generosity Abounds

Fund raising is a critical part of any non-profit organization and HAH is no exception. There just are things only money can buy.

HAH is very fortunate to exist in a town filled with generosity of spirit. Our volunteers selflessly give the gift of time and personal resources to support the numerous programs and efforts we have in play.

The Harpswell Community also generously supports our financial needs.

We have again this year received a very generous opportunity provided by the [Merriconeag Fund](#).

They have offered to match all donations to HAH up to \$10,000 gifted by the end of 2022, doubling the value of any gifts twofold.

Sharing your perspective about HAH with friends and neighbors will help to expand awareness of our efforts in the community. It is our hope as news of our programs and spirit spread, neighbors will consider HAH as a good place for some of their 2022 charitable contributions.

[Click here to donate online](#)

Neither snow nor rain...

While "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds" is the motto of the post office, much the same could be said for the drivers of HAH's Transportation team.

As we take time to pause and reflect on all that we are thankful for, we come to rest on the people in this community. You are what truly make Harpswell the amazing place it is. We hope that you will use this card to purchase something for yourself that would make your Thanksgiving extra special. If you would rather, please regift it to someone else who would benefit from it.



Thanksgiving Gifts

While we often focus on the many and varied gifts our volunteers share, we all know in our hearts that what makes this such a special community is the wholeness of "our town". Neighbors helping neighbors, sharing conversations, laughter, reflections, remembrances, a meal, a ride, a smile.

This Thanksgiving HAH provided some neighbors with Hannaford gift cards to perhaps make their day that much more special. The gift cards were funded from donations received at year-end 2021 in support of the challenge grant from the Merriconeag Fund.

The response to this has been heartwarming, including a note from one recipient who had passed her card on to someone else. We are always so struck how kindness begets more kindness.

HAH is lucky to have **13** volunteers who drive thousands of miles every year helping to get neighbors to where they need to go - be it a grocery store, a doctor's office, respite care, or a friend's place for a visit.

This year we want to recognize Judith Wylie for all that she has given. As of this writing Judith has set to the road 156 times this year, logging nearly 2000 miles of the 7880 driven by HAH drivers this year. While the statistics are certainly impressive and generous, what we also know is that during all those drive times conversations were had that brighten the days of driver and passenger alike.

And while many of our driving needs are planned in advance, Karin Soderburg and Lili Ott are always ready to step in when an emergency need arises.

Thank you, ladies!



Flower Power

Thanks to the creative efforts of HAH's Health & Wellness Team, Hannaford of Cook's Corner is donating their purged flowers to HAH when available. Volunteer Sarah Chandler picks up the bouquets and delivers them to the Meals in a Pinch team for delivery to MIP recipients. These bring so many smiles. Recent recipients were exuberant - one mentioned how lovely the flowers looked on their recently refinished table - just the right touch!



Elves on the Loose

HAH's holiday elves have been busy out delivering lovingly created decorative holiday mugs donated by the Harpswell Garden Club.

Imagine the simple joy each mug brings each time it catches a recipient's eye.

'Tis the season!

