

Homeworkers Organized for More Employment

This Time

Orland, Maine 04472

Outreach: Meeting people where they are...

The sudden surge of the health crisis created a sense of urgency among our team to reach and engage with individuals staying in encampments. Staff participated in a resource drop and mapping effort at the onset of winter. The first step of the process was to start mapping out where reported sites were by reaching out to organizations serving those areas.

Knowledge of and engagement with all partners leads to more strategic use of resources,

more comprehensive coverage, and more accurate information about and identification of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness. This included reaching out to first responders, law enforcement, behavioral healthcare providers, and faith-based organizations. Six sites were reported to us from this effort, and we encountered three tent sites in our search and two of those were abandoned. By January, all the sites had been abandoned and their tents collapsed by snow.

Early efforts to build trust started with leaving items for the tent occupants to keep warm and also information about how to reach H.O.M.E.

Although H.O.M.E. does not have an official Outreach Team, we recognize that outreach to encampments is closely related to the diversion work we are doing, and we anticipate continued relationships with partners to develop a more efficient and regular system for helping people who are unsheltered.



Remnants of a fire pit at an abandoned encampment located in the woods behind buildings in Ellsworth.



Another encampment with signs of occupancy although no occupants were present at the time of H.O.M.E.'s visit.

What can I do to help people experiencing homelessness?

Here are six ways you can help people in your community...

- 1. Donate warm clothing.
- 2. Help prepare warm meals and deliver them.
- 3. Donate money to organizations or charities.
- 4. Guide unhoused people to a homeless shelter or center.
- 5. Create your own care packages and hand them out.
- 6. Volunteer at your local shelter.

New look, new name. H.O.M.E.'s Annual Report has grown along with our programs

**H.O.M.E., Inc. 2022
COMMUNITY IMPACT
REPORT**

H.O.M.E., Inc.
P.O. Box 10
90 School House Rd.
Orland, ME 04472
207-469-7961

www.homemmausa.org

In the past few years, H.O.M.E.'s basic programs have endeavored to help those in our community deal with the issues living in poverty creates. Programs such as shelter for those experiencing homelessness, a food pantry program that saved over 118,000 pounds of food from being carted off to the landfill, and art/craft studios that offer shelter guests and community members opportunities to create items to be sold in our craft store while learning a profitable skill.

Along with the growth of our programs, our annual report has evolved as well. We hope you like the new look shown in the pictures here and appreciate the information within these pages.

Even the name has changed from Annual Report to Community Impact Report as we feel it better describes what we here at H.O.M.E. are doing...impacting our community in positive ways.

If you would like a copy of our Community Impact Report, please send your request to: programcoordinator@homeincme.org.

~Regards,
Julie Ream
Editor

LOCAL STATS

- Maine's rental housing market is among the least affordable in the nation.
- 1 in 8 adults and 1 in 5 children, experience food insecurity yearly.
- Nearly 1 in 12 have no health coverage and many more struggle to afford the cost of care even with insurance.
- The top 4 reasons for homelessness in 2021 were: lack of affordable housing, unemployment, poverty, and low wages.
- Food costs in Maine are nearly 18% higher than the rest of the country.
- The percentage of households unable to find affordable rentals based on median price was 70.4% in Hancock County.
- There are only 59 available rental units for every 100 extremely low-income families looking for one in Maine.
- 37% of Maine's food-insecure population doesn't qualify for public assistance.

Program Numbers 2021

SHELTER AND HOUSING

- **8696 bed nights provided** - 171 guests were sheltered.
- **Dorr House Men's Shelter** - 28 guests - 20% exited to permanent housing.
- **Sister Marie House** - 41 guests - 25% exited to permanent housing.
- **St. Francis Inn** - 27 guests - 37% exited to permanent housing.
- **Emmanuel Homeless Shelter** - 75 guests - 25% exited to permanent housing.
- 28 households provided hotel rooms.
- 15 households housed in H.O.M.E.'s transitional housing spaces.
- 12 households housed in H.O.M.E.'s permanent housing units.
- Applied for waiver and granted to perform on-site COVID tests.
- COVID quarantine spaces used 5 times.

FOOD AND RESOURCES

- 93 children provided with backpacks and school supplies.
- 429 individuals received Christmas gifts.
- 14 unduplicated daycare enrollments - 3 subsidies provided.
- **Food boxes distributed to 938 individuals across 305 families**
- 193 families received Thanksgiving food boxes.
- 159 families received Christmas food boxes.
- **118,641 pounds** of food rescued and distributed.
- 50 households received assistance with linens, hygiene supplies, and household supplies.
- 20 families received heat assistance - firewood
- 80 quilts made for shelter guests



Letters

Please send letters to:
This Time
PO Box 10
Orland, ME 04472
admin@homeincme.org

H.O.M.E. wants to hear from you!

Please send your questions, comments, concerns or whatever else might be on your mind to:

H.O.M.E. Inc.
PO Box 10
Orland, ME 04472

To whom it may concern:

From school supplies to winter gear to Christmas gifts, your organization has helped me provide for my children during the hardest year of our life. Cancer has taken so much--but what you have given has helped more than I can express. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,
Nicole

Dear Endless Workers,

Hope your season went well and your goals were realized. Now on to Christmas!
You might not hear from me cause my circumstances are changing & I must go to a home. I will pray for you all. The work is endless as I remember. You are like Topsy and keep growing. You are a shining light.

Micki

This Time
is published by H. O. M. E. Inc.
Part of the World Emmaus Movement
Editor: Julie Ream
Visit our web-site for a digital version of this Newsletter in full color!
<http://www.homemmausa.org>

On behalf of the First Congregational Church of Blue Hill--we are happy to send you a check for \$500. Please know we honor and appreciate your work and the services you provide in our community.

Sincerely,
Karen Frangoulis
Outreach Committee

I live in a senior retirement community. Several residents have commented on my beautiful wreath and asked where I got it---so, please send me several copies of your current newsletter and you will no doubt get several new subscribers! OK

Jo Herzog

We give this gift in honor & memory of our deceased cousin, Nancy Stine, a champion of the underprivileged & needy.

Rick & Robin Littlefield

Facebook comment:

I first volunteered with HOME almost 20 years ago and then brought my fiancé (now husband) back the next year to spend almost a month there. It was truly one of the best places I've ever been.

Shannon Brescher Shea

H.O.M.E., Inc.

Board of Directors

- Mike Guare, Chair, Bangor
Susan Lessard, Treasurer, Bucksport
Tammie Cox, Secretary, Sedgwick
Karen Botta, Staff Representative, E. Orland
William O'Donnell, Bucksport
Shannon Carpenter, Orland
Fr. Brent Was, Blue Hill
Denise Keene, Verona Island
Dr. Stephen York, Verona Island
Dennis Foley, Orland
Helen Stummer (Honorary), Metuchen, NJ
Lucy Poulin, Board Member Emeritas, E. Orland

Christina and the rest of the staff are AMAZING. We couldn't thank them enough for the level of care they give, and taking care of our two boys

Travis Longtin

Dear H.O.M.E. family,

This donation is made in honor of Jane Saltsman, my sister who is the Penobscot/Castine Community Compass Coordinator. Like you, she works hard to assist people dealing with poverty.
Thanks for all you do!

Beth Miller
Bangor

H.O.M.E., Inc. Spring Appeal 2022



"Serve First Those Who Suffer Most"

Dear Friends,

Last week I received a call from the library. A young man had spent the night sleeping in their doorway on a twenty-two-degree night. A similar message came in from the Town Manager, only this time, the young man was asking for a sub-zero sleeping bag in preparation for another night outside. He had made the journey to Maine from North Carolina and reported that he'd been homeless for a few years. He suffered from mental illness and despite efforts from the public safety director, police department, town office, and library, we couldn't convince him to come into the shelter. The warming center for one night is all he would agree to. He eventually asked for help to go to Oregon where it was warmer for outside sleeping and where he had made roots in his past. With a bus ticket in hand, and his bike folded and tied in a trash bag, we drove him to the bus station. We didn't sleep much that night, worried about his long journey and the challenges he was facing. How does one come to be homeless and alone with mental illness?

As hard as this outcome was for all of us, we found hope in this story, hope in the collaboration of our community, from the public safety director, town manager and librarian, to the minister who once he heard he was with us, paid for part of his journey. Collaboration is the light in the story we must hold on to. Our work doesn't always end the way we want it to, but sometimes the intention and the journey are just as important.

While this story unfolded, our navigators were helping a single parent find housing, she'll be moving out of shelter before this is mailed to you and a former shelter guest is returning to work on a school project. We've hired a diversion specialist whose first case prevented a family of four from becoming homeless due to a car accident. They're staying in their home, which means no change of school, job, or community. Fortunately, donors like yourself provide us with resources to be creative in our human response.

Your generous support is crucially important today, as needs are magnified during a time of uncertainty. Please join us again and donate to H.O.M.E. this Spring. Our families need your support.

Warmest regards,

Tracey Hair,
Executive Director

Excerpts from 2022 Community Impact

Director's Report

Inside every number is a human being..

H.O.M.E. has grown over the years to include a multitude of programs designed to serve its community in meaningful, productive ways. From the food pantry, childcare, and craft programs to housing navigation and emergency overnight shelter, H.O.M.E. is a crucial resource for our community.

Last year, H.O.M.E. provided emergency overnight shelter for 171 individuals across four locations – a total of 8,696 bed nights. The average length of stay in shelter was 50 days. On the coldest nights, we opened the warming center where people found respite from the cold even if they didn't come into a shelter.

The number one cause of homelessness in our area continues to be lack of affordable housing and poverty is a close second. Maine's rental housing market is among the least affordable in the country when compared to income potential for residents.

I have been doing this work for 17 years and last year, there was a noticeable uptick in reports that people were sleeping in their cars or in tents by the water. In the harsh reality of our times, we acknowledge that a percentage of people experiencing homelessness have a serious mental illness, are struggling with addiction, and have other significant barriers preventing them from coming inside.

Some of you have asked what happens to the person tenting on the waterfront or in their car? The simple answer is we drive to where they're at, make contact and if they are willing, we bring them into a shelter. Sadly, shelter living is for some, an impossible choice due to trauma, mental illness or substance use disorder. When that happens, we provide supplies such as food, warm clothing and blankets all with the hope and wish that they will soon come inside.

Beyond emergency shelter, we provided 12 households with transitional housing placement in the Sister Barbara Hance House last year and 12 additional families were housed in our permanent rentals, 3 were subsidized by H.O.M.E. and 3 were subsidized by the Housing Choice Voucher program. To date, H.O.M.E. has built 53 houses and we have one remaining which is occupied by a tenant intending to purchase in the coming months.

On October 6th, 2021, the board adopted the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. The opportunity to step back and take stock after the retirement of long-time founder Sr. Lucy Poulin, to evaluate, and consider our work was crucial, and not afforded by the daily pace of our work. As an organization that represents the interests of low-income people across two counties and more than a dozen towns, we rarely have the time for reflection. Having made that time during this process will prove to be invaluable to the life of H.O.M.E.'s work.

H.O.M.E.'s footprint is as diverse as its work – an astounding 118,641 pounds of food was rescued and distributed through the food pantry last year. The Shelter Quilt Project took off faster than we could keep up with, and our team of quiltmakers lead by Lisa Tenney distributed over 80 quilts to shelter guests and community members.

The Bargain Barn and childcare programs had stops and starts last year, however, in the end, our little thrift store and Childcare Center remained valuable resources for people who need it.

The best way to describe the last two years is building a plane while flying. We have stepped up to meet challenges in creative and effective ways, such as applying for a federal waiver allowing H.O.M.E. to run an on-site testing service for guests and staff and providing hotel rooms for some when shelters were



closed to intakes due to illness. We have not been immune to outbreaks or even the pain of loss due to COVID-19, but we have remained steadfast in our work as shown in the numbers mentioned throughout this report.

Our crew of 42 people is committed to doing everything we can to help make life a little easier. To say that we have a great team and community is an understatement. I am proud to do this work alongside such a dedicated staff and in an area where community members are so engaged in the work. From providing financial support to delivering cords of firewood to people in need, our community stands with us.

I thank our staff, our community, and our dedicated board of directors for their support, as well as our shelter guests and food pantry patrons for the opportunity to learn from them. I'm honored to be on this journey with you!

~ Much love,
Tracey Hair
Executive Director

H.O.M.E., Inc. enhances the quality of life of people who have fallen on challenging times by honoring their dignity, attending to such basic needs as food and shelter, supporting their long-term health and development, and fostering a vibrant and mutually supportive community.

Board of Director's

The board of directors completed its work on the Five-Year Strategic Plan. We engaged the services of an organizational management consultant from Starboard Leadership to help guide us through the process. Through several meetings, the consultant guided the planning group in preparation for the full staff meeting input session which took place in 2019. Following that meeting and several meetings with current and past board members, a plan was drafted which captures the communities intentions and expectations.

The process itself may have as much value to H.O.M.E. as the final plan, since so much can be learned from surveying both the position of H.O.M.E., Inc. and the state of the environment in which H.O.M.E., Inc. operates.

The opportunity to step back and take stock after the retirement of long-time founder Sr. Lucy Poulin, to evaluate and consider our work was crucial. As an organization that represents the interests of low-income people across two counties and more than a dozen towns, relies heavily on the voluntary participation of its members, and employs 42 employees, H.O.M.E., Inc. rarely has the time for reflection. Having

made that time during this process proved to be invaluable to the life of H.O.M.E.'s work.

The Strategic Plan work resulted in a clear vision highlighting five major priority areas. One highlight of the work resulted in providing health insurance benefits for full-time employees and creating Finance and Facilities Committees.

If you'd like a copy of H.O.M.E.'s adopted Strategic Plan, please email Tracey at executivedirector@homeincme.org.



H.O.M.E.'s Board of Director's, some pictured here with management staff, is composed of community members many of whom have experienced homelessness and/or poverty themselves.

Finance Report for 2021

Welcome to 2022. H.O.M.E.’s Strategic Plan was organized around five strategic priorities. The second strategic priority focuses on strengthening the organization itself, including its financial stability, to ensure H.O.M.E. will have the capacity and funding to work effectively on behalf of our community for years to come. The beginning of this process included setting up an endowment. Pivoting from this strategic priority we met the financial goals below:

- a. Created a Finance Committee
- b. Created an Endowment.
- c. Adopted two Investment Policy Statements.
- d. Created a Capital Improvements Budget.
- e. Streamlined quarterly reports to allow for an easy view of H.O.M.E.’s financial health.
- f. Completed a successful external audit.

Covid-19 and grants awarded through Maine State Housing Authority increased our capacity to staff shelters safely throughout the pandemic while at the same time it created more volume of revenue and expenses coming into the organization. In response to this, we brought back the full-time administrative position in the Finance Department.

Staff successfully managed added revenue and expenses across departments and an increase in processes, accounting, reconciling, and audit submissions. The 2021 audit was successful and showed strong processes and financial records for the organization. We are currently working with our accountant on the next audit.

Moving forward, we expect significant increases in our work as we start to implement strategic priorities which have understandably been on the back burner since the pandemic began. Strategic priorities, such as

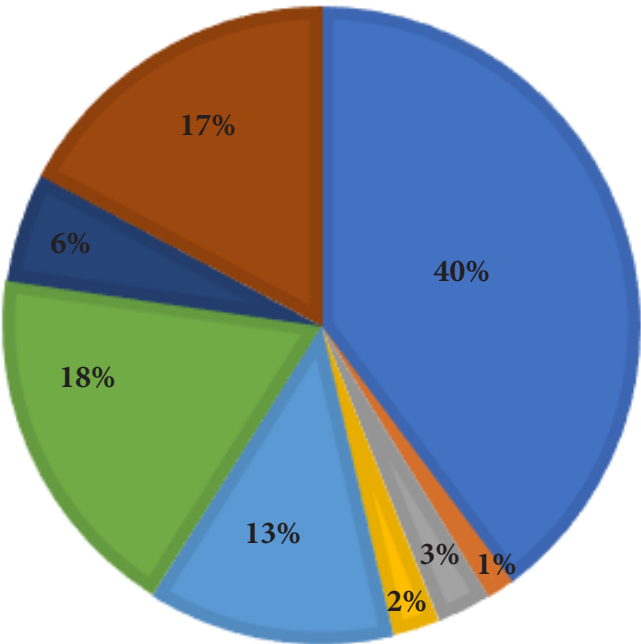
Capital Improvements, will garner more than \$500,000 in support from various funding sources. And the creation of a Capital Write-Down Plan for the physical plant will aid us in the annual budgeting process.

It has been a busy year in finance, best described as drinking from a fire hydrant.

~ Respectfully submitted,
Mary Mahan
Finance Director



Mary Mahan, Finance Director, has successfully led our finance department through an audits of our non-profit for the past 15 years.



Federal Grants	\$56,342.62	2%
State Grants	\$409,532.58	17%
Foundation Grants	\$298,808.93	13%
Rentals	\$132,149.67	6%
Earned Income	\$65,039.00	3%
Daycare	\$33,796.33	1%
Donations	\$949,135.51	40%
Other Incomes	\$437,028.28	18%

Facilities...

Following through with the goals of the strategic plan, the Facilities Committee was established and active in 2021. The facilities committee is focused on providing direction and feedback about the care and long-term maintenance of our buildings and campus. Our committee is composed of knowledgeable people from our community, board members, and staff. The work is ongoing and includes the development of a Maintenance and Capital Improvement plan that will be used to inform H.O.M.E.’s capital budget.

Formal Facilities Committee Description: The facilities committee is responsible for providing guidance, oversight, and, when appropriate, specialized expertise to H.O.M.E. in the following areas: (1) Long-range physical planning; (2) Capital renewal; (3) Capital projects; (4) Facilities-related policies and procedures; and (5) Operations and maintenance.

~ Best regards,
Rosalani Moore
Assistant Director



Assistant Director and Resident Potter, Rosalani Moore wrote the grants to enable H.O.M.E., Inc. to complete the jobs listed to the right.

By collaborating with other committees, as well as employees, the facilities committee can have a direct and long-lasting impact on the look, feel, and identity of H.O.M.E.

Some of our specific capital projects over the last two years include:

- Weaving/Arts Studio**
Basement repair and waterproofing
Planned installation of gutters 2022
- Food pantry/soup kitchen/volunteer center**
Removal of rotten flooring and interior walls.
Rebuild flooring and pour foundation in kitchen
Electrical repair and upgrades
Roof replacement
Renovation and repair of flooring in kitchen and redo plumbing
Planned siding replacement and window replacements with the help of volunteers, renovation of upstairs volunteer center with the help of volunteers
- Emmaus Center Project 1**
Parapet cap removal and reinstall
Masonry selective brick rebuild
Back rods and sealant - 3 areas
Installation of EPDM Base Flashing- roof
- Saint Francis Inn**
Interior renovation
Roof work
Gutter & fascia
Basement stabilization waterproofing
Handicap accessibility
Electrical work
- Sister Barbara Hance House**-Planning Phase - *Work planned to begin in Summer/Fall 2022*
Drainage work
Electrical work
Rehab bathrooms
- SMAH/Dorr House**-In Progress
Window replacement
Gutters, doors, playground, retaining wall
Rehab women’s side bathroom
Kitchen men’s side
Replace boiler
Title insurance

- Emmaus Center Project 2**-In Progress
Flooring
Window replacement
Bathroom renovation
Electrical work
Hospitality House
Interior work
Window replacement
Entry deck, new doors,
Gutters and siding, paving & walkways, retaining wall
Roofing repair

15 households housed in H.O.M.E.’s Transitional Housing units.

FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER

H.O.M.E. has built fifty-three homes for low-income families and although the work of house building is on pause, we look forward to partnering with organizations to provide pathways for homeownership for the people we serve.

A first-time home buyer we began working with more than 5 years ago, recently made her last mortgage payment despite a pandemic and the hardships it brought. Tammie Cox, pictured below, lives at one of H.O.M.E.’s first housing developments. She has returned to serve on H.O.M.E.’s Board of Directors. Please join us in congratulating Tammie and her family for their resilience and hard work!



Shelter

The impact of the pandemic led to a decrease in shelter beds statewide in order to adhere to social distancing best practices. To supplement the loss in beds, we used 28 hotel rooms for guests waiting to enter shelter and guests if they became ill with COVID were transported to a quarantine space. Before the pandemic, Maine was experiencing a critical shortage of affordable housing units and the pandemic only exacerbated that challenge.

NAVIGATION

In a time where Maine is experiencing a shortage of more than 20,000 units of affordable housing across the state, H.O.M.E.'s team of Navigators continue to collaborate diligently with guests so that they leave shelter for permanent housing. Staff work alongside guests to find and apply for housing options, as well as provide support to ensure relationships with landlords and tenants remain strong. H.O.M.E. has a team of four navigators serving four shelters.

DIVERSION

H.O.M.E. has added a new full-time Diversion Specialist position to increase homeless prevention work. A grant was awarded to H.O.M.E. to engage and support families prior to experiencing homelessness and divert families who are at risk of experiencing homelessness from emergency shelter when safe and appropriate.

The program aims to prevent homelessness at the front door. In our area, the construction of new housing alone will not keep up with the pace of people falling into homelessness. Diversion Specialists increase capacity/resources for direct services, advocate for eviction prevention, and collaborates with other programs/services to prevent homelessness. We intend to expand the program this year.

8696 Bed Nights provided - 171 guests were sheltered.



36 families/individuals moved into permanent housing



Daycare

In recognition of H.O.M.E., Inc. and the work it has established, Daycare Director, Christina Witham, was picked as 1 of 15 individuals throughout the state of Maine to participate in a program called LEaP (Leadership in Early Child Education Advocacy and Policy). Hundreds of applications were submitted and a special panel reviewed each one. LEaP is sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Christina will be working with state, local government, and legislators to help advocate for the importance of early childhood education, staff recruitment, and policy changes in support of childcare facilities.

Christina had the privilege to speak with Senators Angus King and Susan Collins, Maine's sitting Senators, one on one. She considered it an honor to have the opportunity to voice her concerns about the importance early education has on Maine's children. She and many others also spoke with them about the struggles childcare, either in a home or center, are having as they cannot afford to match wages an individual can make starting out at McDonalds, Target, and other businesses. The result is that individuals working in the childcare profession are dwindling. Providers have to increase costs to families to try and compensate so there is a constant struggle to meet family's needs, retain staff, and the operating costs of a business. It is estimated that between December 2019 to March 2021 nearly 16,000 programs closed permanently.

Christina's hope is that by advocating for policy changes, increased funding, and supporting early educators, positive changes can be made to the childcare profession one voice at a time.

Christina is also applying for her Maine Director's Credential through Maine Roads to Quality and was



asked to join a pilot program from Maine Roads to Professional Development and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services called Strengthening Business Practices Initiatives. This pilot program is designed with the goal to strengthen program leaders' foundational knowledge of fiscal terms, concepts, and practices.

Christina has been Daycare Director since 2018. She and the rest of the Daycare staff have established that H.O.M.E. Daycare is a place where childcare is personalized by focusing on tailoring a child's emotional, social and physical development in a loving and safe environment. She recognizes the importance of nurturing the identities and personalities of all children and families.

14 unduplicated enrollments
3 in-house subsidies provided.

Wood Bank

H.O.M.E. provides a rapid low-barrier wood bank that reaches out to families when their heating situation is critical.

H.O.M.E.'s wood crew have trucked pick-up loads of split, dry firewood to the new woodsheds built on campus by volunteer groups. The firewood provides an emergency heating wood resource for families who need immediate assistance. The wood bank is not intended to provide all the wood fuel needs of a family or individual – just to carry through the shortage until other resources become available. Sometimes cold weather in Maine comes before fuel assistance credits arrive and sometimes, low-wage workers don't qualify for such programs without sacrificing other basic needs.



H.O.M.E.'s long-time sawyer, Clint Clagget, pictured above, can be seen any day of the year, splitting firewood for the community wood bank.

20 families received heat assistance in the form of firewood.

Volunteers

H.O.M.E.'s Volunteer Program was hit very hard by the pandemic. After a summer of no volunteers in 2020, we were happy to see their return, albeit in much smaller numbers, in 2021. Three volunteer groups were able to make the trek to Maine. Despite the limited number of volunteer groups, we tracked over 1000 hours of volunteer time.

H.O.M.E. was also happy to welcome back our local volunteers to the Bargain Barn and Construction Crew.

Three individuals volunteered their community service hours to H.O.M.E. in the Bargain Barn and in the Maintenance Department. Here's to seeing even more volunteer faces in 2022!

~ Best regards,
Julie Ream
Program Coordinator

- A few of the completed projects included...*
- Deck on pottery apartment rebuilt.
 - Fence along highway repaired and painted.
 - Special Programs shed had roof shingles replaced.
 - Cedar shingles on new pottery building finished.
 - Cedar shingles on wood bank shed completed.
 - Donations for Bargain Barn and Resource room sorted and organized.
 - Gazebo outside Market Stand completed.

Food Pantry

It takes a community to feed a community...

H.O.M.E. has always been about neighbors helping neighbors. And that has never been more evident than during the last year. Food Pantry staff and volunteers rescued over 118,000 pounds of food in 2021 as operations ramped up and food insecurity rose.

The pandemic forced us to adapt and find new and different ways of sourcing food. For instance, we worked with Good Shepherd Food Bank to hold extra pop-up food distributions and increased the number of food boxes distributed to each household.

The area restaurant community and Maine Maritime Academy kitchen team continued to stand with H.O.M.E. even as they faced unprecedented challenges.

Our iconic white food truck picked produce up six

days per week to distribute to families and we continued to provide food delivery for shut-ins. As an organization that relies heavily on community members for support, the challenges required assistance from area churches and neighbors. You stepped up in an extraordinary way!

Gil Tenney and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Castine as well as St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church in Blue Hill provided the meals needed to feed 193 families for Thanksgiving.

Bucksport Hannaford and Tradewinds in Blue Hill provided food rescue for our Orland sites while Hannaford Supermarket in Ellsworth supported our Ellsworth locations. We simply could not have met the need without generous support of these partners.

Food boxes distributed to 938 individuals across 305 families.



Food Pantry Manager, Maureen Hayden, is pleased when there is fresh produce to offer to the patrons of the Food Pantry.

Crafts

“Art washes from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

The handcraft studios: weaving, art, pottery, stitchery, and stained glass sit among the shelters and provide a creative center for people experiencing homelessness as well as community members. H.O.M.E.’s village offers a safe, nurturing space for self-expression.

One way we try to engage people in our work is to create spaces for them to be creative. The new pottery studio was built to expand our crafts program and has been up and running since June. We’ve had students from the community, as well as guests in the homeless shelters, join classes in the new space.

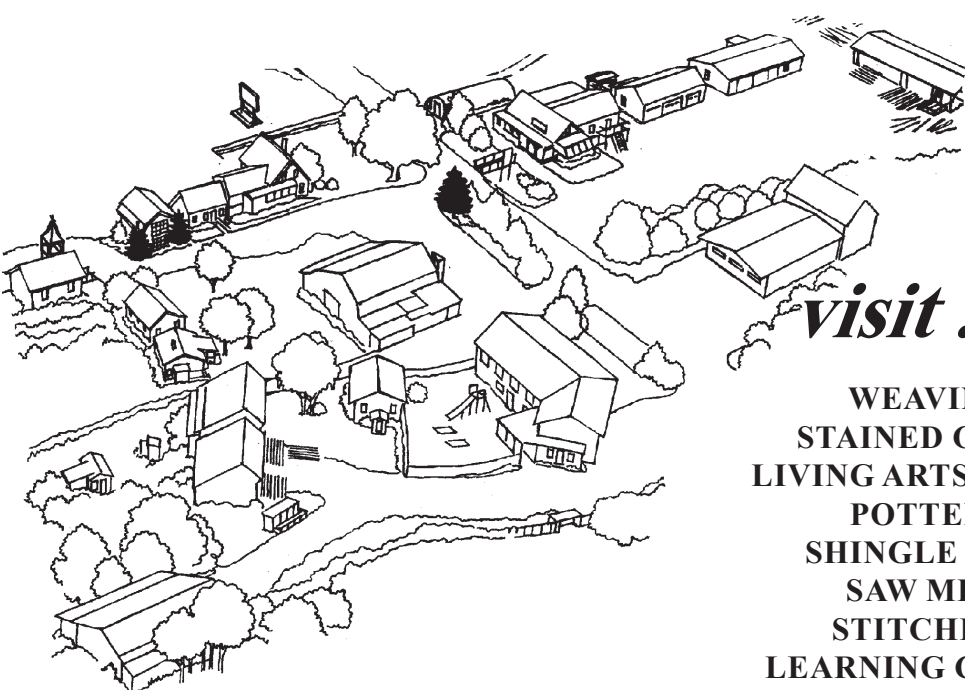
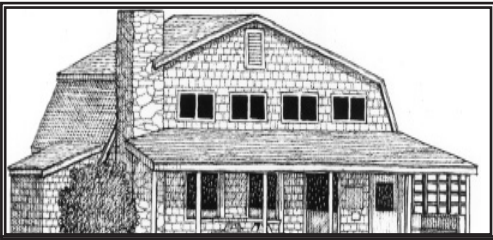
The Shelter Quilt Project at H.O.M.E. was created in response to the craft store being closed during the worst part of COVID. How do we keep the sewing machines humming while still serving our community? We never imagined it would be such a success! So far, more than 80 quilts have been in production and given to homeless shelter guests. Each of the quilts in production is customized to the taste of shelter guests.



The Craft Studios, such as pottery, are open to our shelter guests and members of our community.



**H.O.M.E., Inc.
Craft Village**



visit ...
WEAVING
STAINED GLASS
LIVING ARTS STUDIO
POTTERY
SHINGLE MILL
SAW MILL
STITCHERY
LEARNING CENTER

The Beginning...Emmaus Homeless Shelter Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Acting on a proposal by Sister Barbara Hance, the Federal Building on the corner of Main and Water Street was leased to Emmaus (uh-may-us) by the Housing and Urban Development Corp. The Emmaus Center opened its doors to its first guests on February 25, 1992. The building was built in 1935 and recently received upgrades.

The Emmaus Homeless Shelter is a 25-bed facility which can accommodate four families, six single women, and five single men, ages 18 and up. The Shelter operates (24) twenty four hours a day, 365 days a year.



Above, Sr. Lucille MacDonald, co-founder of Emmaus Homeless Shelter. Below, the current management staff.



36 families/individuals moved into permanent housing with the assistance of a Housing Navigator.

Faces of
H.O.M.E.



Over Seventy Years of Wreath Making

by Julie Ream

Mary Soper. Most of you have probably never heard that name. Here at H.O.M.E. in the Wreath Season department, it is a very important one.

Mary is a local wreath maker who sells her creations to H.O.M.E. to be shipped out all over the country. She drives up in her little, red truck to drop off 50-100 freshly-made balsam fir wreaths 2-4 times a season. Her wreaths are always beautiful and perfect. Bright and fresh. It is happily announced to people buying one of her wreaths off the craft store porch that it is a Mary Soper Wreath.

Mary, who will be 90-years-old in October, learned how to create wreaths back in the early 1950s when she was about 19 or 20 years old. Her mother-in-law taught her the skill in order for Mary to earn some extra money during the holidays. She has sold her wreaths to H.O.M.E. off and on through the years since the fundraiser began.

“I was around when H.O.M.E. started,” says Mary. “I’ve taken a lot of H.O.M.E. classes and shopped in their thrift shop and gift shop and even gone there for food before.”

As tiny as she is at just a few inches over 5 foot tall, Mary does the majority of the work associated with her wreath making. “My daughter, Betty (and it’s Betty, not Elizabeth), helps me with making the wreaths,” says the almost nonagenarian. “A few years ago, I almost gave it up because I wasn’t able to get my own brush. Betty does it for me now and she’s getting up there (in age) herself.” Betty has even taken over the wreath making for H.O.M.E. when Mary would go to Florida for the warmer weather before the pandemic. A skill she learned

from her mom of course.

Mary recognizes that she’s slowed down a little bit as she nears 90 years of age. “I do my own driving but if I have to go to Bangor or somewhere with a lot more traffic,” she states, “I ask one of my daughters to take me because I’m not so quick anymore.” Her attitude about her age is “I’m doing pretty good. I do my own housework and clean myself on my own.”

Mary’s eldest daughter, Debbie, doesn’t participate in the wreath making but she is definitely there for her mom when she’s needed. Just last wreath season, Mary’s truck broke down and Debbie and her husband stepped up to deliver her freshly made wreaths to H.O.M.E.’s wood shop where the wreaths are decorated and shipped out to happy customers all across the United States.

An old trailer in her backyard is set up as a workshop for Mary and her wreath making. There she is protected from wind and weather as she does her work. She not only does a couple of hundred wreaths for H.O.M.E.’s program, she also sells them from her home by putting a sign on the side of the road advertising ‘Wreaths For Sale.’

“I have shelves in that trailer and all the materials are right there where I can get them,” she boasts, “if someone wants a certain size wreath with a blue bow, I can do that for them.” Mary states that some years she does really good business with that sign out on the side of the road.

Mary’s wreaths have not only been shipped all over the United States, she has been told by someone buying a wreath that their plan was to ship it to Germany and another customer told her they were shipping it to Japan.

“My wreaths have gone all over the world.”

Mary grew up in nearby Ellsworth and moved to Orland when she got married in 1950. Here she raised her two daughters and here she plans to remain and H.O.M.E. is the better for it.

“I plan to keep making wreaths for as long as I can,” says Mary, “I’ll see you again in November.”



Wreathmaker, Mary Soper, displaying a couple of the beautiful wreaths she made for H.O.M.E.'s annual holiday fundraiser.

Trading Chimney Smoke for Sunlight

By Julie Ream

The Craft Store at H.O.M.E. is basically the heart of our little village. It’s set right in the middle of the property surrounded by studios, shelters and our offices. It is the home of our first program designed to assist home-workers earn money after the mill stopped allowing folks to do their piece-work from their homes.

Built in the mid-70s by volunteers, it is large and welcoming with a lovely porch, a variety of gifts and our stitchery where the making of quilts is usually in progress.

One of the major highlights of the Craft Store was a massive, stone chimney that allowed the smoke from the woodstove inside to escape to the outside. I say was because, unfortunately, our beautiful chimney had to be taken down.

The stone chimney had always been admired by visitors for its uniqueness. Stones of all sizes were used in its construction, some that were placed quite high probably measured close to a foot and a half wide. It really was a sight to behold.

Last summer it was noticed that a few stones had fallen from the chimney to the ground below. It was not witnessed, but the rocks on the ground were too large

to have come from anywhere else in the area.

Our crew put up caution tape and closed off that end of the porch to keep folks away in case any other stones were to fall.

Assistant Director, Rosalani Moore, got to work calling local masonry companies to come and have a look at what was going on and to find out if we could save the chimney or if it would have to be torn down.

Three companies came to have a look at the project. One brought a drone that travelled up along the chimney and was even able to take a look down the inside to assess for other damage. It was determined that the mortar had deteriorated to a point that the chimney could not be saved without major cost. A couple of the companies said they wouldn’t even try to save it and would only tear it down. When speaking to a company that was willing to tear it down and rebuild it, we found out that it wouldn’t be rebuilt as uniquely as it was before as they would never recommend having such large stones up so high on a chimney.

For a couple of weeks last summer, a mason from Knox Masonry spent his days knocking down a part of H.O.M.E. that has been here longer than any current

employee. Knox Masonry is located in Bucksport and is a full service residential and commercial masonry company that specializes in Historic Building restorations.

Before the stone debris was even removed, Summer Construction Supervisor, Bob Nichols, enlisted some volunteer help from a couple of his friends and they got to work building a wall and installing a window where the chimney used to be. The new window lets in a lot of natural light that pleased Lisa Tenney of our Stitchery Department. The other windows in the front of the store are set at an angle away from the sunshine to prevent items on display from fading. The new window faces straight to the road and the sunshine helps illuminate the space where Lisa sits at her sewing machine during the summer months when the store is open.

It is our plan to finish the wall with cedar shingles to match the rest of the building. Summer volunteer groups are great for such a project.

Although we will miss our marvel of a chimney, we are always concerned with the health and safety of our staff, guests and visitors above all else.



Left, The Craft Store chimney the summer before it had to be taken down. Center, the debris left after demolition. Right, Construction Supervisor, Bob Nichols and friend as they rebuild the wall where the chimney was removed.

A Reflection of Experiencng Outreach

By Julie Ream

H.O.M.E.’s programs are geared towards needs identified within our community. The craft store and studios provide an income for those in need of a place to create and to sell their creations. The food pantry and soup kitchen feed those who are hungry. The thrift store provides needs and wants at an affordable price. And, of course, the shelters provide a safe place to live for those experiencing homelessness.

Unfortunately, nowadays, the folks experiencing homelessness outnumber the beds available in shelters. Living unsheltered in Maine can be dangerous. The risk of hypothermia is extremely high in below freezing temperatures. As H.O.M.E. works to help the guests safely ensconced in its’ shelters, our minds can’t help but worry about those whose nights are spent outside with just a tent or tarp over their heads.

Back in December, Executive Director, Tracey Hair, received a call from a community member concerned that some folks were living in tents behind a store in Ellsworth. There was no more information than that. No idea if it was adults or children or how many were there. In Maine, December doesn’t always have temps far below freezing, but hypothermia is still a threat. Tracey enlisted Assistant Director, Rosalani Moore and Program Coordinator, Julie Ream to travel with her to the reported campsite to see if there was any need that they could meet.

First, a visit to the Resource Room was made for essentials. About 10 knapsacks suitable for camping and hiking were filled with hand warmer and foot warmer packets, hats, gloves, warm socks, a couple of fleece blankets, and basic hygiene supplies. While the real hope was to convince anybody found to come into shelter, if possible, offering assistance in the form of warmth and dignity could be done.

The three walked alongside some railroad tracks

following the directions Tracey had received. A site was located a little ways into the woods where it was obvious some people had been staying, but it also looked like it had been abandoned. There were the remnants of a fire pit and a small grill and lantern were left behind. There was a rope that looked like it had been used as a clothesline and a bike lock still looped around a tree.

Working in this industry, one knows that there are people who are unsheltered. One tries not to focus too intently on it because the weight can be too much. There are other agencies out there that do the “boots on the ground” work. They traipse through the woods and the abandoned buildings and under bridges looking for those unsheltered souls to try to offer services that may get them into a safe shelter or a home. Remembering these things can keep the focus on the job at hand. Seeing the campsite, knowing that human beings are living in the woods, in Maine, in December will tear at your heart.

A few yards down the tracks, an active campsite was found. Tents were erected, tarps were strung up. There was a clothesline, a stack of small logs to throw in the fire pit. A rack held dishes stacked like they had been washed and left there to dry. It looked like any campsite you may come across during the summer. The inhabitants were not present so some knapsacks and business cards were left in the middle of the site with the hope that they would appreciate the gifts and maybe give H.O.M.E. a call.

A few other areas that had been reported as potential campsites were checked, but there was no evidence of inhabitation. They had all moved on.

In January, with snow on the ground, H.O.M.E. partnered with some folks from other agencies to help conduct the yearly count of how many people are experiencing homelessness in the country. The campsite was still there but it appeared to be abandoned. It is a

hope that the items left behind were there because they were no longer needed. That the individuals, the human beings living there had found safer accommodations. There is no way to know.

Currently, H.O.M.E. does not have the staff capacity to do outreach to those living unsheltered on a regular basis. Our day to day work keeps us quite busy, but if another call comes from a concerned community member, we will strap on our cleats and head out. H.O.M.E. has always adjusted its’ services to meet the needs of its’ community so who knows what will happen in the future. The wish though is that such a service won’t be needed because no human being will be without adequate shelter.



The grill and lantern left behind at the first campsite.

H.O.M.E. Daycare Director Chosen to Advocate for Childcare Facilities

By Julie Ream

In recognition of H.O.M.E., Inc. and the work it has established, Daycare Director, Christina Witham, was picked as 1 of 15 individuals throughout the state of Maine to participate in a program called LEaP (Leadership in Early Child Education Advocacy and Policy). Hundreds of applications were submitted and a special panel reviewed each one. LEaP is sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Christina will be working with state, local government and legislators to help advocate for the importance of early childhood education, staff recruitment, and policy changes in support of childcare facilities.



Daycare Director, Christina Witham and her granddaughter, Cassandra.

Christina had the privilege to speak with Senators Angus King and Susan Collins, Maine’s sitting Senators, one on one. She considered it an honor to have the opportunity to voice her concerns about the importance early education has on Maine’s children. She and many others also spoke with them about the struggles childcare, either in a home or center, are having as they cannot afford to match wages an individual can make starting out at McDonalds, Target, and other businesses. The result is that individuals working in the childcare profession are dwindling. Providers have to increase costs to families to try and compensate so there is a constant struggle to meet family’s needs, retain staff, and the operating costs of a business. It is estimated that between December 2019 to March 2021 nearly 16,000 programs closed permanently.

Christina’s hope is that by advocating for policy changes, increased funding, and supporting early educators, positive changes can be made to the childcare profession one voice at a time.

Christina is also applying for her Maine Director’s Credential through Maine Roads to Quality and was asked to join a pilot program from Maine Roads to Professional Development and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services called Strengthening Business Practices Initiatives. This pilot program is designed with the goal to strengthen program leaders’ foundational knowledge of fiscal terms, concepts, and practices.

Christina has been Daycare Director since 2018. She and the rest of the Daycare staff have established that H.O.M.E. Daycare is a place where childcare is personalized by focusing on tailoring a child’s emotional, social, and physical development in a loving and safe environment. She recognizes the importance of nurturing the identities and personalities of all children and families.

Do you have a story about H.O.M.E. that you would like to share? The staff for This Time, would love to read it! Whether you were helped with a food box, stayed as a guest or volunteered on our campus, H.O.M.E. wants to hear it and share it! Please email any stories, anecdotes or even poetry to: programcoordinator@homeincme.org

This Time is available every Spring and Fall!

IT TAKES BIG
HEARTS TO
SHAPE
LITTLE MINDS

JOSEPH BLOUNT
1937-2022

H.O.M.E., Inc. was very sad to hear of the passing of longtime volunteer, Joseph Blount on February 16, 2022. He was 84 years old.

Joe was an architect who donated his services to the drawing of anything H.O.M.E. required from homes to gazebos.

Joe was a member of St. Luke's Parish in Barrington, RI and came to H.O.M.E. with his parish volunteer group for a week every summer for many years.

A plaque commemorating our friend will be displayed on the gazebo outside the Market Stand as it is the last building Joe ever designed for H.O.M.E., Inc.

His kindness, generosity and contagious smile will be missed by us all. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.



The gazebo above was designed by Joe Blount and is situated outside the Market Stand/Volunteer Center. It is the last "building" designed by Joe for H.O.M.E.

THE GIFT SHOP IS OPEN!!!

If you are in Orland, Maine this summer, don't forget to stop at the Gift Shop here at H.O.M.E. This year we are putting a twist on a product we have had in our shop in the past. Pictured below are three balsam trivets that were created on campus in our Living Arts studio. They are the result of a collaboration between volunteer artists Julia Demaree and Sheila Holtz. Each trivet's design is hand-drawn and colored and make excellent gifts. They've even started adding the word HOME to some designs for visitors and volunteers who would like to purchase a souvenir to remember us by.

If you are interested in purchasing a trivet, or any item from our Gift Shop stop in or call 207-469-7961 and select option 4.



BARBARA HORGAN

Our friend, Barbara Horgan passed away on March 8, 2022. She came to H.O.M.E. after hitting hard times and, like so many folks, never really left.

Barbara volunteered her time in H.O.M.E.'s retail department working in both Abby's Attic and the Bargain Barn. She also worked in the Market Stand and served on our Board of Directors.

Barbara will be remembered for her intelligence as she was the queen of crossword answers, her humor and for her kindness to those around her.

The Bargain Barn is
OPEN!!!

Stop in to see if we have what you need!

Monday-Friday
9 am-3 pm

*if dropping off donations, please call 469-3102 to set up an appointment.

Home and Love

By Robert William Service

Just Home and Love! the words are small
Four little letters unto each;
And yet you will not find in all
The wide and gracious range of speech
Two more so tenderly complete:
When angels talk in Heaven above,
I'm sure they have no words more sweet
Than Home and Love.
Just Home and Love! it's hard to guess
Which of the two were best to gain;
Home without Love is bitterness;
Love without Home is often pain.
No! each alone will seldom do;
Somehow they travel hand and glove:
If you win one you must have two,
Both Home and Love.
And if you've both, well then I'm sure
You ought to sing the whole day long;
It doesn't matter if you're poor
With these to make divine your song.
And so I praisefully repeat,
When angels talk in Heaven above,
There are no words more simply sweet
Than Home and Love.

Friends are angels that
lift us to our feet when our
wings have trouble
remembering how to fly

Reflections

Living Madly – Women’s Work

By Emilie-Noelle Provost

My maternal grandmother had a sewing room in her house that she jokingly referred to as her “sweatshop.” Once a spare bedroom, the space was home to her two sewing machines and hundreds of yards of fabric of all types and colors. Throughout her life, she made most of her own clothes, often from patterns she designed. This included complex garments like bathing suits, which she was famous for being able to whip up in just a couple of hours.

If you got a hole in your sweater, my grandmother, also a master knitter, could fix it for you, flawlessly matching the manufacturer’s stitch pattern. When you got your sweater back, it was always impossible to tell where the hole had been.

When my sister, Nathalie, and I were in elementary school, my mother sewed all our Halloween costumes. We got to trick-or-treat in sequined ball gowns and flowing black witches’ robes while the other kids in our neighborhood were stuck wearing the flimsy plastic costumes they sold at Woolworth’s.

My mother had a studio on the lower level of her house. Although she died more than a year ago, the room is still much as she left it, home to several sewing machines, a work table, plastic storage bins full of fabric, dozens of shades of yarn, water color and calligraphy supplies, embroidery hoops and floss, quilting tools, glass jars full of buttons, and a shelf crammed with books containing the instructions to make just about anything, from decorative paper cuttings to macramé bracelets.

She taught my sister and me how to use a sewing machine and make simple items like pillow covers when we were kids, but I was never really interested in sewing until I was in college. My senior year, I bought my own sewing machine, a major expense at the time. In addition to making several outfits for myself, I sewed a beautiful set of curtains for my first apartment, a luxury I never could have afforded to buy.

Traditional women’s handicrafts like sewing and weaving have provided families with essentials like clothing and textiles for much of human history. These domestic arts also provided women with a way to earn an income when few other options for employment were available to them, something that was true until relatively recently in the West and continues to be the case in other parts of the world.

Sewing and weaving have throughout history also served to give women agency, amplifying their voices at times when their opinions, ideas, and even their value as human beings have been viewed as marginal at best.

Examples of this can be found everywhere,

from the suffragettes who used embroidered handkerchiefs to communicate with one another in the 19th and early 20th centuries, to the pussyhat-wearing political protesters of early 2017, to women living in modern day India and Nepal whose handmade pottery, jewelry, and clothing, sold through organizations like UNICEF, have given them the financial means to escape abusive marriages, prostitution, and forced sweatshop labor.

It’s even seen in literature. In the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker’s downtrodden protagonist, Celie—brutally raped, beaten, and abused by the men in her life since childhood—finds freedom and financial independence when she starts a business sewing pants for other women—a still-radical female wardrobe choice in the 1930s, when the novel was set, and one that clearly challenges the authority of traditional pants-wearers.

On a less dramatic scale, creating things allowed my mother, who suffered from an anxiety disorder, to express herself in ways she found difficult in other parts of her life. Always shy and reserved in public, the world inside her studio was hers to control. It was sometimes hard for her to tell people how she felt about them, but if she sewed you a quilt or a crocheted you a scarf, you knew.

Last summer, I dusted off my sewing machine and brought it to a local shop for a tune up. Finding their \$20+ price tag ridiculous, I wanted to make a few neck gaiters to wear while hiking. I enjoyed making them so much that I sewed one for everyone in my family and several of my friends for Christmas. I began sewing other things, too. I made myself a cute wrap skirt, a fleece headband for my daughter, and some toddler-size facemasks for my four-year-old niece.

Rediscovering my passion for sewing has turned out to be an unexpected gift. It calms my mind in a way that nothing else has since the COVID-19 pandemic started. It’s also helped me feel more connected to my mother and grandmother and to appreciate their talents and the contributions they made to our family in a new way. Perhaps best of all, taking the time to create useful things from raw materials has helped me recognize that my skills and the things I make are part of a continuum of traditional women’s work that has bolstered human civilization for centuries. Of that I couldn’t be more proud.

Story printed with permission of the author who is the great niece of Juila Demaree.

Let us Dare to Make a Prayer:

A prayer for peace that passes all understanding.

A prayer for forbearance in time of war.

A prayer for joy in time of sorrow.

Where there is hatred let us sow love.

And where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, let us have faith,

And in despair, a hopeful outlook.

So the saints and sages said

And keep on saying, singing, beseeching.

Let us craft a better world

Where truth holds fast

Where compassion predominates

And where all beings come to realize their own true nature.

You may say that I’m a dreamer

But I’m not the only one,

another singer dared declare,

Envisioning a life to come.

Come what may, I cannot say

But life to come has come today.

There isn’t any other day.

There isn’t any other way.

Anon. 2/24/22

Try to be the rainbow in someone’s cloud.

-Maya Angelou

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This Time

"Serve First Those Who Suffer Most" Homeworkers Organized for More Employment



Maureen Hayden, Market Stand Manager and Clint Clagget, Sawyer work hard daily to provide food to our community with H.O.M.E.'s produce line, food pantry and soup kitchen.



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Part of the World Emmaus
Movement