

The Board and Staff of Island Connections wish you

## **PEACE AND A HEALTHY 2010**

**Thank you** for being there when needed. Our communities, our Neighbors and their families and friends are blessed by your presence. You are torchbearers for a tradition that started in 1997, and that we will keep alight for generations to come.

### **2009 saw heartwarming and exciting developments:**

Several new volunteers joined the team as drivers and in the office. Some work full-time, but their employers are graciously allowing them to help us with the many in-town loops from the Bar Harbor apartment buildings to the healthcare centers on Wayman Lane.

Island Connections efforts over the past 12 years led to the receipt this year of bequests that will form the mustard seed of a multi-year endowment-building effort. As the need for volunteer services grows, as government's role shrinks, and with a static population of eligible volunteers, it is increasingly important that we prioritize our time on provision-of-service rather than fundraising events. There will always be an annual appeal, but bequests and grants will be essential to maintaining and expanding service.

In November we received grants totaling \$10,000 towards our \$60,000 goal of purchasing a 12-passenger mini-bus with wheelchair capacity. We are anxious to bring Neighbors on a daily and weekly basis to the Island's welcoming, well-equipped community centers. Social engagement, exercise, entertainment and good nutrition are all locally and regularly available at no or low cost, and constitute a big opportunity.

As a prelude to acquiring a group-transportation vehicle, Staff and Board Members have begun taking Neighbors to the monthly meals-and-walk program at the YMCA, and to the Common Good Soup lunch-and-music get togethers on Fridays, out at the Seawall. There are similar opportunities at the libraries, Harbor House and Neighborhood House.

In another collaboration, we have begun helping the MDI Campfire Coalition, led by Elena Scotti at Harbor House, and featuring Maine Seacoast Mission, the Neighborhood House, and a host of individuals and other organizations. The goal is to weatherize and help fuel as many homes as possible. Webber Oil has been particularly helpful with low-cost fuel and with free furnace cleanings.

*Donated funds and donated time* enabled us to exchange 4 antique ready-to-crash computers for 3 new desktops, which has simplified our lives, and reduced our anxiety level considerably.

*The Board* looks forward to inviting you soon to a winter get-together. Directors are warming up their pots and skillets in preparation for creating what they call “appetizers”, but which in fact sound more like a substantial meal.

You may occasionally hear the voice of volunteer Kathy Frank on the office phone. Kathy is a per-diem nurse with the Mount Desert Nursing Association, and on her off days is helping Mary with coordinating rides. She is a most welcome addition.

We love visits, and seeing you around the campus. Join us for Friday lunches: third Friday at the Y, and other Fridays at the Seawall, where there’s likely to be some fiddlin’ and pickin’, and recharging of solar batteries while gazing out the Western Way.

*Island Connections*

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