

Neighbors Gather, Music Rises, and Fall Traditions Return to H.O.M.E.

By Julie Ream

In October, H.O.M.E. Inc. staff and volunteers welcomed neighbors back to a beloved tradition revived from years past: our annual bonfire and open mic night, now dubbed “Voices by the Fire Open Mic and Bonfire Community Gathering”. Held on October 10th, the event drew a wonderful turnout from the community and brought an evening full of laughter, creativity, and seasonal fun.

The celebration began in the H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop parking lot with a festive Trunk or Treat. Decorated trunks overflowed with candy and small toys for young witches, superheroes, cats, ghouls, and more. Staff and volunteers from the Bargain Barn, H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop, the shelter team (pictured below), the finance office—and even one of our board members—joined in the fun, arriving in costume to greet families.



From there, guests followed a lighted path to the large field near the highway, where pumpkin carving and face painting awaited. Due to an unusually dry fall, we were unable to secure a bonfire permit, but in true H.O.M.E. fashion, staff adapted with ease. A couple of metal fire pits were set up instead, giving guests a cozy place to roast marshmallows and make s’mores. Hot chocolate and warm cider were available at no cost, and admission—as always—was completely free.

The pottery studio contributed handmade mugs for purchase and hosted a bake sale filled

with homemade treats. Along the path, The Black Sheep Food Truck was selling hot sandwiches, fried dough, and more crowd-pleasing favorites. We were delighted to have them join us and even happier to hear they hope to return next year.



First mug customer sporting a H.O.M.E. sweatshirt available in the H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop

Behind the Stained Glass Studio, H.O.M.E.’s Sawyer, Clint Clagget, built a stage for the evening’s open mic performances. Executive Director, Rosalani Moore, comes from a family with musical talent, and one of her brothers graciously provided speakers, an amplifier, a sound board, and microphones—and even treated the audience to a guitar performance to kick things off.

Program Coordinator, Julie Ream, read an original “scary” story to the crowd, and just as she neared the climax, the stage lights suddenly went out. A blown fuse was to blame, though many thought it was a dramatic twist added for effect—perhaps with a little help from an otherworldly visitor!

Longtime friend of H.O.M.E., Sheila Holtz, continued the spooky spirit with a reading of Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Raven*. Throughout the night, local musicians took the stage to share their talents, leading to plenty of applause and even some

sing-alongs.

H.O.M.E. extends heartfelt thanks to the individuals and businesses who made the event possible. Special appreciation goes to Davis Family Farms and Ellsworth Walmart for donating pumpkins, Hannaford Supermarkets for providing hot chocolate, cider, and s’mores supplies, and the Witham Family Charitable Fund for assisting with last-minute purchases.

Although a bit of money was raised through pottery sales and the bake sale, *Voices By The Fire* is first and foremost a community celebration—not a fundraiser. A wonderful time was had by all, and we are already looking forward to gathering around the fire again next October.



Pumpkin carving above and face painting below were big hits with the young folks.



25 Days of Christmas Brings 25 Days of Hope: Community Support Helps Heat H.O.M.E.’s Shelters

By Julie Ream

H.O.M.E.’s 2025 25 Days of Christmas Matching Gift Fundraiser was only the second time H.O.M.E. held the event and this year, thanks to many amazing sponsors who supplied the matching gift seed money, H.O.M.E. was able to raise enough money to heat our shelters through the frigid Maine winter.

H.O.M.E. Executive Director, Rosalani Moore, and Program Coordinator, Julie Ream, hit the pavement in Ellsworth, Castine, and Blue Hill, looking for new sponsors for the fundraiser. Finance Director, Shannon Carpenter, stated that H.O.M.E.’s four shelters cost approximately \$28,000 to heat through the winter. A couple of local businesses, churches, and individual donors provided the seed money for the fundraiser, giving us a goal of raising \$13,540 from our local and online communities.

For the 25 days leading up to Christmas, H.O.M.E. kept a constant presence on Facebook with information about H.O.M.E. and its programming with a daily ask to help us reach our

goal. Each donation was doubled thanks to our amazing sponsors.

Despite an outpouring of love and donations from our community, we were a few hundred dollars from reaching our goal by Christmas Day. The decision to continue the fundraiser until the first of the year was made, and thankfully, the extra time helped us not only reach the goal, we surpassed it by raising \$13,731 plus some last minute donations that helped put us over the \$28,000 needed shown by the advent calendar pictured right.

Raising this money for heat in the shelters, will take some of the burden off our general operating budget and allow us to direct funds elsewhere where they are greatly needed.

H.O.M.E. would like to thank all of our sponsors: Mainescape in Blue Hill, Flexit Cafe in Ellsworth, Trinity Episcopal Church of Castine, First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, Trinitarian Congregational Parish in Castine, the Reichard Family, Libby Craig & Jerry Uhlbricht,

Caroline Pryor, Kevin & Roxanne Coady, and our anonymous donor for making this fundraiser possible. We are ever so grateful

We also want to thank all of you who donated towards this fundraiser making it more successful than last year and hopefully, you will all come back at the end of this year to see if we can beat our goal a second time.





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!

Dear Good People,

Thank you for all you do to serve those who need it most.

Warm wishes for a new year filled with light, warmth, and compassion.

Mary Rackmales

The members of the United Women in Faith of the First United Methodist Church Bangor, are pleased to make a donation of \$150 to H.O.M.E. Inc.

We thank you for the work you do.

Paula Ballesteros
Treasurer

This Time is published by H.O.M.E. Inc.
Editor: Julie Ream
Visit our website for a digital version of this newsletter in full color!
www.homeincme.org

Spring Greetings,

I would like to make a donation to/in honor of "Carol Smith" formerly of Stoughton & Falmouth, MA. Carol & her husband, Alan, were fond supporters of your mission at H.O.M.E.

She was an incredible person with a heart of gold. Her faith was a major part in her long and active life.

In loving memory of her,
Paul & Cindy Smith
Groton, MA

Dear Director Moore,

Your recent letter informing me of Lois Magenau's donation to H.O.M.E. Inc. in memory of my late husband, George, rekindled memories.

George's mother, Fern White, lived in Orland for a few years when she was a child in the early 1900s.

I was born and raised in Augusta and the State of Maine is dear to me.

Bless you for the work you do
Debbie White

**H.O.M.E. Inc.
Board of Directors**

Christine Witham, Chair, Bar Harbor
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Please use these (quilts) where you see fit--
Homeless shelter
Child care
Xmas gifts, etc.

Made with love & prayer in Hillsborough, NC
Hay Family Catholic Church Quilting Ministry

Thank you for all that you do!

Narramissic Valley Friends

We were very sorry to learn of the water damage you sustained and are happy to provide a \$1,000.00 donation in support of your Christmas program.

Sincerely,
Robin Merchant, Communications Coordinator
Versant Power

H.O.M.E. Inc. Spring Appeal 2026

Dear Friends of H.O.M.E.,

It has been a bitter winter. This cold is stubborn. H.O.M.E.'s small wood bank has struggled to keep up with the need, providing a record 32 cords over the year to support families in our area struggling to keep the cold at bay. Please donate today to support our work.

In 2025 we provided shelter to 204 individuals and families, offering over 18,000 bed nights of safety and care. These numbers tell an important story. People are staying longer because safe and affordable housing is becoming harder to find. What was once a short stay is now often many months or maybe even a year, as families and individuals wait for a place to call home.

Families like Susan's have many hurdles to overcome to get to housing. H.O.M.E.'s staff work with them with determination to connect them with resources to support their goals. In this case it was the humble dream of an apartment big enough for mom and daughter to be together - allowing reunification from state custody.

In this moment, your donation is not just a gift— It is a lifeline.

The challenges people are facing are becoming more complex. Increasingly, we are facing the hardships caused by mental health and trauma. According to Maine State Housing Authority's 2025 Point in Time count, around 27 percent of homeless Mainers, are adults with a "serious mental illness."

For people already facing homelessness or hardship, the road to stability is long and only getting longer.

Today your support is more critical than ever. There is no one size fits all solution to homelessness. Flexible funding allows us to meet each person where they are in the moment. It allows us to respond with what is needed, whether that is a safe place to stay, access to food, connection to care, or the time and support required to stabilize



Susan and her daughter happy to move into their new apartment after a process of reunification.

and begin again.

That same flexibility also allows us to look beyond the immediate crisis. H.O.M.E. is not just responding to homelessness. We are working toward long-term solutions by creating real housing opportunities and providing ongoing support. This is not a band aid approach. It is a commitment to helping people move from crisis to stability.

Behind every number is a person. A parent doing everything they can to keep their children safe and together. Someone recovering from illness. A neighbor who experienced a sudden loss and had nowhere else to turn. When someone comes to H.O.M.E. in need, we walk beside them. With your help, we offer support, community, and dignity.

As the ground begins to thaw, we are reminded



"Serve First Those Who Suffer Most"

that at H.O.M.E., hope is something we are building every single day. In many ways we are just as stubborn as the cold, hanging on till the bitter end. H.O.M.E.'s stubbornness though is one of warmth. We welcome those left on the sidelines of society with open arms, without judgement and with faith in a better future together. Spring is a season of renewal. Together, we can make sure that renewal is possible for everyone in our community. Thank you for standing with us and for helping create a place where hope can take root and warmth can push away the cold.

With gratitude,

Rosalani Moore
Executive Director



H.O.M.E.'s 2026 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Board Report

Dear Community,

2025 certainly had its challenges with federal budget cuts and program needs continuing to rise at a sharp pace. I am happy to report that our staff held up strong as ever and met those challenges head on and services were uninterrupted.

Rosa Moore is settling in quite well in her new role as Executive Director. Her willingness to support the Board has been a true and trusted asset. Lisa Reynolds has moved into the role of Staff Representative from the Emmaus Shelter. Lisa also participates in our monthly Board Meeting.

An update about our current board members, Sue Lessard retired from her position with the Town of Bucksport and has also retired from our Board in June 2025. Sue will be missed, and her insight was invaluable to our Board over the many years she served as our Board Treasurer. We wish her the best in her much-deserved retirement. Rev. Dr. Andi Lloyd has stepped down from the Board as of August 2025. She has been transferred to New Hampshire from Castine. We wish Andi the best with her new move. Mike Guare stepped down from Board Chair after many years of serving but continues to remain in the role of a Board Member. We appreciate Mike's willingness to continue serving.

We welcomed three new members to our board, Rich Feldmann, Paige Johnston, and

Veronica Breceda. Our Board is strong, and I deeply appreciate all who continue to serve on our Board, and your unwavering compassion to support H.O.M.E. and its mission.

Our committees are solid. Adam Sheehan leads our Finance Committee and has been instrumental in navigating our finances during these uncertain times. Rich Feldmann has been unstoppable in leading our Facilities Committee. He has great insight as well as solutions to resolve issues around our campus. Rosa has been leading our Development Committee, resulting in many successful events and fundraisers.

Our Board attended a retreat with Starboard Leadership Consulting in April. As a result of our retreat, we were able to formulate a solid strategic plan for the next several years. This has been instrumental in focus and goal-oriented benchmarks. We are committed to staying on track with our 2026 Strategic Plan and look forward to reporting our successes in 2026.

H.O.M.E. has designed a new road sign which we are all excited about. We hope to install it in the spring.

We would like to also recognize our volunteers and their dedication that helps shape H.O.M.E. with continued services. There is a lot that goes on behind-the-scenes at H.O.M.E., and the fabric of our community allows us to continue to provide

compassion to all.

We welcome anyone who would like to learn more about H.O.M.E., and we offer campus tours. We would like to recognize all who have continued to support H.O.M.E. and our mission. On behalf of the Board, we would like to thank all of you. You allow us to continue to serve our community in ongoing vital needs.

Christine Witham
Chair, Board of Directors



Finances

H.O.M.E.'s Finance Department reports a deficit of over \$200,000.00 despite the fact that donations were up from 2024 to 2025. The deficit required us to seek funds from our endowment to be able to balance the budget. H.O.M.E.'s fundraising department continues to diligently work at increasing donations from fundraising activities such as our Empty Bowls Fundraiser, and from the amazing supporters of our programming who answer our spring and fall appeals. They continue to bring awareness to our community of the great need we are seeing on a daily basis. A special thanks to our monthly donors. Your faith in our mission drives us to do better.

H.O.M.E.'s crafting department increased the number of craft fairs we participate in yearly to help increase sales for H.O.M.E. and for our faithful crafters on consignment. They utilized volunteer help more consistently than in years past and increased the number of paid classes held in the art studios.

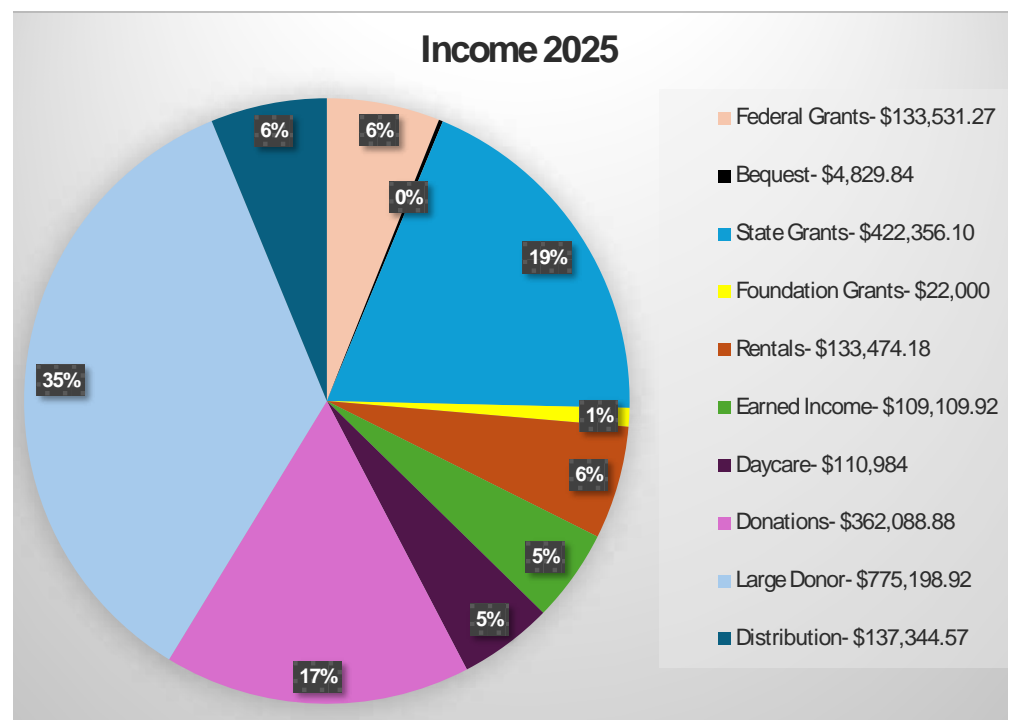
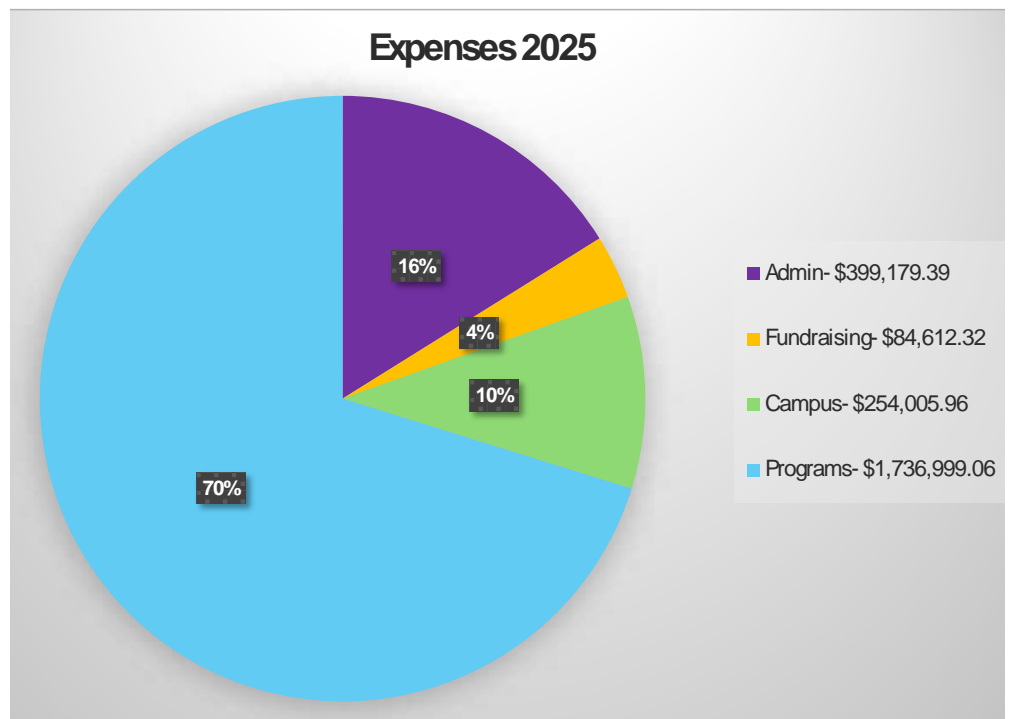
The Bargain Barn was staffed completely by volunteers in 2025 thanks to the good work of Gwen, Nick, and Paul. Their willingness to keep the doors open five days a week is a testament to their dedication to helping others and allows the thrift store to end the year without a deficit.

H.O.M.E.'s 25 Days of Christmas Fundraiser was able to meet its goal of raising \$28,000 to heat the shelters through the freezing cold winter. Thanks to amazing sponsors of the fundraiser and all who donated, we will not have to use general operating funds for shelter heat. State and Federal funds provide less than \$20 of the \$102 per night it costs to shelter individuals so this fundraiser was very important to the shelter budget.

H.O.M.E.'s Hardship Fund was able to assist 8 households for a total of \$619.22. The Wood Bank distributed 32 cords of firewood to families in need. \$35,250 was distributed through the diversion program that kept 71 households (155 individuals) from having to enter shelter. Considering that the average length of stay in shelter in 2025 was 91 days, diverting these households cost much less than a stay in shelter.

In December 2025, long-time H.O.M.E. employee, Ruth Bennett, retired. Ruth began working as our Accounts Payable clerk in 2006. Ruth's relationship with H.O.M.E. goes far beyond the 20 years she spent in the finance department. Ruth graduated from the alternative high school that was a part of H.O.M.E. in the early years and lived at Hospitality House when she was a young mom. Ruth is a generous spirit who would go out of her way to assist her coworkers or folks who accessed our programs in whatever way she could. She refused any repayment in any form many times. H.O.M.E. staff wish her a very happy retirement though we will miss her and look forward to seeing her face out and about in the community.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon Carpenter
Finance Director



H.O.M.E.'S 2026

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Director's Report

A Message from the Executive Director

As I reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude for the extraordinary community that surrounds H.O.M.E. This year was one of challenge, growth, advocacy, and renewed commitment to our mission of honoring the dignity of people experiencing challenging times by providing safe shelter and other critical resources in a vibrant and mutually supportive community.

The need in our region continues to grow. In 2025, H.O.M.E. provided more than **18,000 bed nights** of shelter to individuals and families across Hancock, Washington, Waldo, and Penobscot Counties. Our shelters remained at or near capacity throughout the year. The average length of stay has increased as affordable housing remains scarce and rental costs remain high, meaning families and individuals are staying longer because there is simply nowhere else to go. Even so, our team continues to meet each guest with compassion,



Shelter staff attended a homelessness demonstration at the Augusta State House

perseverance, and a focus on long term stability.

In 2025 our Maine Health Access Foundation grant supporting Wraparound Housing Navigation and stabilization services grant was implemented in our shelter programming. Through this work, we strengthened our shelter work with individuals experiencing high barriers to being successfully housed and expanded housing navigation capacity, while deepening coordination among shelter staff, case managers, and community partners. We also continued our collaboration with Downeast Restorative Justice through a grant from Northeastern Workforce Development to strengthen facilitation skills and trauma informed practices across our team. Our goal is not simply to provide a bed, but to support people towards long-term stability and moving forward through the crisis that led them into homelessness.

We were encouraged by the enactment of **LD 698**, which provided one-time statewide shelter support. The funding represented meaningful bipartisan recognition that emergency shelters are critical infrastructure needed to keep people safe and alive. We remain committed to ongoing advocacy for sustainable operational funding so that rural shelters like H.O.M.E. can continue to serve as a safety net of last resort.

In addition to strengthening operations, we made significant progress toward expanding permanent housing opportunities. We acquired and began renovation of a home on Facticeau Drive behind our Orland campus that will become permanent supportive rental housing for a chronically homeless family with children. Volunteer groups, staff, and partners have worked tirelessly on demolition, drywall, roofing, plumbing, and systems upgrades. With additional support from the Emmaus Habitat Fund and generous donors, we anticipate this home

becoming available in early 2026. This project reflects our long-term commitment to creating pathways out of shelter and walking with families towards better futures.

2025 also marked the completion and adoption of our Three-Year Strategic Plan for 2026 to 2028. This plan was the result of deep



E.D. Moore and other wood bank directors at UM Machias wood bank conference

collaboration between board, staff, volunteers, and our consultant Mary Budd of Starboard Leadership. It affirms our commitment to sustainability, lived experience leadership, responsible stewardship, and strengthening our core services. The process itself renewed our clarity and shared purpose at a pivotal moment for H.O.M.E. as we focus our attention on sustainability.

Beyond shelter and housing, our broader programming continues to serve as a foundation of community support. Our food pantry and soup kitchen remained busy throughout the year, offering meals twice weekly and holiday food distributions during Thanksgiving and Christmas. Special meals at Easter, Thanksgiving, and our Christmas meal brought warmth and connection during seasons that can otherwise be isolating for people struggling with homelessness and poverty. We are transitioning toward a self-service pantry model with new



Shelter staff gather for a Restorative Justice Training

shelving and improvements that allow patrons of our pantry greater choice in selecting food for their families.

Our Annual Empty Bowls fundraiser was our most well-attended celebration yet, raising over **\$6,000** for our food security programming. We are especially grateful to the volunteers from St. Andrew's who helped make the event such a success. The spirit of community, art, shared meals, and mutual support remains central to who we are.

Our 25 Days of Christmas campaign to heat the shelters was another highlight. With strong seed funding and widespread community support, we raised \$28,000 to offset heating costs in our shelters during the coldest months of the year. This effort ensures that families and individuals in our care remain safe and warm throughout the winter.

The Bargain Barn continued to provide earned income and essential household items for families transitioning from shelter to housing. Our daycare program navigated enrollment challenges while continuing to provide nurturing early childhood care and access to healthy meals. Our craft store and art studios expanded memberships, took part in regional fairs, and created opportunities for connection, creativity, and earned income. These programs are at the heart of our work and are part of what makes H.O.M.E. a community rather than simply a service provider.

We successfully completed our annual financial audit with no findings, strengthened internal controls, and welcomed new leadership capacity with plans for a dedicated HR role and an expansion of our volunteer coordination. Our board remains deeply engaged in governance, facilities planning, with a keen eye on long-term sustainability. I am also deeply thankful for a dedicated team that supported the work of H.O.M.E. through my recent maternity leave. There is no place like H.O.M.E.



Baby Eva wins cutest trunk or treat decoration at the Voices by the Fire Community Gathering

when it comes down to what matters most and no better place to be when a friendly face or a helping hand is needed.

The reality is that the math of shelter operations remains difficult. It costs far more to provide safe, staffed, year-round shelter than we receive in public reimbursement. Yet 2025 demonstrated what is possible when community members, donors, volunteers, staff, and public partners work together. From a **\$225,000** major gift supporting housing stability work, to **\$5,000** community grants, to small individual donations dropped off in envelopes at our office, every contribution matters.

H.O.M.E. began more than fifty-six years ago with a simple commitment to serve first those who suffer most. That commitment continues today. In 2025, we did more than keep our doors open. We strengthened programs, deepened partnerships, advanced housing solutions, and reaffirmed who we are.

Thank you to every staff member, volunteer, board member, donor, and community partner who makes this work possible. Because of you, our greater community we are able to continue our work bringing shelter, food, warmth, dignity, and hope to those we serve.

With gratitude,
Rosalani Moore
Executive Director

H.O.M.E.'S 2026

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Shelter

The Shelter Department had many experiences throughout 2025, that contained a common thread - "Collaboration." This thread wove through our work on every level. We saw it in our direct client work with guests in our shelter and warming center. At our local community level, we experienced collaboration through outreach efforts and those who supported us with donations of time, funding, and advocacy. Still, at the broader community level we see it reflected in our combined work with other organizations to petition legislature that is in support of those experiencing what it means to be unhomed.

In our direct work, shelter staff made amazing contributions. Together we managed to exit 45 households without children to permanent housing outcomes, and 11 families with children --representing 45 individuals-- to permanent housing outcomes. We have continued our work with our MEHAF grant funded program, Wraparound Navigation, and to date have successfully supported 100% of our housed participants, to remain in their homes. Lastly, we have continued our effort to grow professionally, through trainings and our combined knowledge and experience--Go team U.N.I.T.Y.! Furthermore, we managed all of this, while experiencing staffing shortages and program interruptions that impacted our guests.

While all staff participated in an introductory training in Restorative Justice methods, our Shelter Managers began to implement the techniques in our house meetings. This fostered empowerment for those in our houses in meaningful ways and contributed to a mutual sense of seeing and being seen within this community. In addition, shelter staff participated in annual navigation and multiple interagency training opportunities. Moreover, multiple staff

Diversion

Diversion is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them retain/return to permanent housing. Diversion utilizes a number of familiar homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing approaches.

In 2025, H.O.M.E.'s Diversion Department was able to assist 71 households representing 155 individuals. Within these households there were 97 adults and 58 children. These families underwent a full Diversion intake.

Diversion distributions were as follows:

- \$35,250 from H.O.M.E. funding
- \$22,434 by sourcing outside agency funding. While this dollar amount represents approximately 39% of the total funding, it may be closer to 50% when considering non-financial contributions for several cases. (e.g. donated wood stoves and furnaces, discounted appliances, and free labor/installation)
- 42% of cases were in financial partnership with other agencies
- 28 households were assisted with security deposits toward new housing (nearly 40% of cases)
- 14 households received utility assistance

members participated in trauma trainings, with Orland Shelter Manager, Karen Botta, completing a program qualifying her as a Certified Trauma Informed Coach. This service is something that we have striven to build over the last year, as experiencing homelessness is a traumatic experience in and of itself.



Primary Housing Navigator, Amy Smith with a guest at his new apartment

Community outreach efforts led to multiple opportunities to connect and collaborate with other service-work agencies. This year we had a team travel to Washington County to participate in a McKinney-Vento meeting. While two members traveled, the remaining staff attended this meeting by web. Having noted that an annual source of funding, \$750 per child, was no longer available, it was imperative for our team to share knowledge of our resources with this group of education professionals. Our team was acknowledged by the presenters for our commitment to supporting school-aged children who are experiencing homelessness.

(20% of cases)

- 27 families were provided with rental assistance (non-deposit, 38% of cases)

The top three communities assisted by the Diversion Program were Orland (23), Ellsworth (20), and Bucksport (11).

In addition, in the last nine months of the year, a minimum of 49 more calls were fielded from individuals seeking assistance bringing the total of cases to 120 households. These ranged from non-successes (e.g. disconnected phones at callback) to probable successes (e.g. steering callers in Penobscot County to services available in their community). Some cases were unsuccessful in preventing homelessness but did result in getting the caller safely housed in shelter. The breakdown by county for these calls was:

- Hancock 26
- Penobscot 9
- Unknown 5
- Washington 3
- Waldo 2
- York 2
- Piscataquis 1
- Somerset 1

Respectfully Submitted,
Reese Keller
Diversion Specialist

At a time when funding cutbacks and federal freezes have an impact on the lives of so many of our community members, making access to basic needs a difficult task. When food, housing, and heat become ever more challenging to afford, we need to continue to work together. We need all of us to continue to contribute our gifts so that everyone in our community can meet their most basic human needs.

It is on that note that I share an especially important and beautiful collaboration which our shelters received in 2025, which happened at the close of the year. In December, remarkably close to Christmas, our Emmaus shelter experienced a flood. This flood destroyed necessities and gifts we had gathered for multiple children in our community. Promptly, a call was put out to the broader community to help us gather bedding and toys for the children. The response was overwhelming. In no time at all, we had met our losses -- and then some.

Sincerely, we thank all of you who have supported our efforts to serve our community members. We could not do this work without you.

It is my honor to acknowledge our Shelter staff and commend them for the work they do.

Ellsworth Shelter: Stacey Herrick, Lisa Reynolds, Anita Black, Susan Walsh, Linda Reidy, Brad Perry, Karley Perkins, Matt Mulvey, Jimmy Merrill, Brailee Joy, Madison "Evan" Carter

Orland Shelter: Karen Botta, Amy Smith, Shawna Lovely, Gerald Botta, Reece Keller, Michelle Lindsay, and Dalores French.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Franck, LMSW-cc
Director of Social Work

**Support our
Shelter and
Housing
Navigation**



H.O.M.E.'S 2026

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Arts and Events

If you stepped into the Craft Department at H.O.M.E. this year, you could feel it immediately — the hum of creativity, the laughter drifting from the studios, the quiet focus of someone learning a new skill, and above all, the unmistakable presence of community. This was a year shaped by the hands and hearts of volunteers, both seasoned and brand new, who brought our studios to life day after day.

We expanded our offerings to more than 15 workshops and over 150 combined classes in Stained Glass, Pottery, and Mosaics. Thanks to the generosity and expertise of our intern, Ryan Wishcamper, and gifted instructors, each class became a gathering place where volunteers, guests of our shelters, and community members learned side by side.

At the start of the year, our intern rolled up her sleeves and spent long hours organizing both Pottery Studios and the Living Arts space. Her dedication set the stage for a fresh year of creativity — and once the dust settled, she began teaching hand-built pottery, her true passion.

Volunteer, Marybeth Allen, working with the small loom she repaired, patiently guided shelter guests through the rhythm of weaving. Paula Bartley shared her love of crochet, and Sheila Holtz tended to the garden beside the Living Arts studio, filling the space with color, stories, and warmth.

Every week, Linda Greer arrived to organize the sewing room and prepare it for creation. Joyce Kuzman joined her to stitch potholders, bowl cozies, and a variety of works — items that now brighten our gift shop and craft fairs. Their work is more than fabric and thread; it is a testament to the joy of making something together. Roxanne Poulin continued her weekly stained glass classes, offering a steady, welcoming presence for both shelter guests and community members.

In May, we opened our H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop for the season, led by Gift Shop Manager Leslie Wombacher, whose leadership and care keeps the shop thriving. At the opening, we held our annual Pathways to Creativity event, which brought the studios to life. Visitors wandered through demonstrations by:

- Kayla and Carolyn in Pottery
- Linda in Stitchery
- Joyce in Living Arts
- Roxanne in Stained Glass

On the Gift Shop porch, we had George Rossi singing and playing guitar while Stevie Bridges offered seated massages. It was a day that highlighted not only artistic skill but the generosity of those who share their gifts with others.

The pottery studios were a whirlwind of activity throughout the year as volunteers gathered to prepare for our annual Empty Bowls Fundraiser in July. Artists Kayla, Carolyn, Steve, Elena, Jean, Maya, Marianne, Doug, and Keith — along with guests in our shelters — shaped and glazed bowl after bowl.



Their collective effort resulted in over 400 bowls, our most productive year yet. The fundraiser raised the highest amount to date,

supporting our mission to combat food insecurity and homelessness. We had a wonderful group of volunteers from St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Madison, Connecticut, who made all our soups and salads, helped set-up, serve, and clean-up for the event. Each bowl carried a story — of hands that shaped it, of community that gathered around it, and of neighbors supporting neighbors.

In October, Janis Behm led a watercolor workshop at the gift shop that spilled out onto the porch through our new door installed by our returning St. Luke's volunteers, letting artists paint in the crisp autumn air.

We also held a "Voices by the Fire" fall event, where we invited people to participate by singing, telling stories, face-painting, and pumpkin carving. We served homemade desserts along with hot beverages and sold handmade mugs from our pottery studio.

In November, the Buck Memorial Library in Bucksport hosted our second annual "Together We Create" art show. The exhibition featured work from shelter guests, volunteers, staff, and local artists who sell in our gift shop. The show was a beautiful reflection of the H.O.M.E. community — diverse, creative, and deeply connected. Its success has now made it a cherished annual tradition.

Revenue from classes and workshops helps sustain our studios and allows us to offer free weekly classes to shelter guests. These classes provide more than skills; they offer confidence, connection, and a creative outlet during a challenging time. Guests can sell their artwork in the gift shop, keeping 100% of the proceeds. Local crafters create work to sell in our gift shop and volunteer at shows and in the shop.

We expanded our craft show lineup this year, and volunteers were the backbone of every event. Paula, Kayla, Suzanne, and Robert — along with many others — packed, set up, sold, and broke down displays with enthusiasm and teamwork. Their dedication made it possible for H.O.M.E. to shine in new spaces and reach new supporters.

Every class taught, every bowl glazed, every stitch sewn; every garden tended — these moments were made possible by volunteers who showed up with open hearts and willing hands. Their generosity fuels our mission and fills our studios with life.

This year, we did not just create art.

We created community.

We created opportunity.

We created hope.

And we did it together.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Perkins

Arts and Events Coordinator



Left, volunteers glazing bowls for the Empty Bowls Fundraiser. Above, young volunteers from Connecticut are ready to serve soups and salads.

Events and Craft Fairs

Keep your eyes on H.O.M.E.'s Facebook page and website to find out exact dates.

January

- Shelter from the Storm Fundraiser to raise awareness regarding the Point-in-Time count.

February

- Valentine's Day pop-up at the H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop
- Flexit Cafe Valentine's pop-up Craft Fair in Ellsworth

March

- Spring Pop-up at the H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop

April

- H.O.M.E.'s Annual meeting and potluck dinner.

May

- H.O.M.E.-Made Gift Shop Season Opening
- Pathways to Creativity Open Studios

July

- Empty Bowls Fundraiser
- Blue Point Church Craft Fair in Scarborough

August

- St. Brendan's Episcopal Church Craft Fair in Deer Isle
- Blueberry Festival in Blue Hill

September

- Orland River Days
- Common Ground Fair

October

- Voices by the Fire Community Gathering
- Ghostport in Bucksport
- St. Luke's Craft Fair, Barrington, RI

November

- Together We Create art show at Bucks Memorial Library
- Blue Point Church Craft Fair in Scarborough
- Old Greenwich Craft Fair, Old Greenwich, CT
- Ridgefield Craft Fair, Ridgefield, CT

December

- Wellesley Village Church Craft Fair, Wellesley, MA
- Orland Craft Fair
- Castine Holly Berry Fair
- Flexit Cafe Holiday Pop-up Craft Fair in Ellsworth

H.O.M.E.'s 2026 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Volunteers

H.O.M.E. is grateful to all the men and women and boys and girls, who volunteer to help us do all that we do. In 2025, the Bargain Barn was able to be staffed completely by volunteers. Gwen and Paul along with Nick and others, keep the thrift store open 5 days a week. This has enabled H.O.M.E. to bring in retail income to help run our shelter programs. This is the first year that the Bargain Barn was able to sustain its operations on its own. We are grateful for the dedication of our amazing volunteers.

Summer of 2025 once again brought volunteer groups from Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, and Pennsylvania. These amazing groups helped begin the rehabilitation of a home that was built by H.O.M.E. in the early 2000s but had gone through foreclosure. The amount of work accomplished during the summer months was very impressive.

H.O.M.E. staff began the project by removing the majority of personal items and debris from the property. This enabled our groups to jump right into the rehabbing of the house.

Bob and Tammy Roth of the First Congregational Church in Ridgefield, Connecticut started the summer off at the end of June by removing the damaged drywall from the walls and downstairs ceilings. They were joined on a couple of their days by their daughter, Sydney, and her partner Benton. It wasn't the most fun of jobs, but they did excellent work and left the building ready for the next crew.



That crew was the amazing folks from St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Madison, Connecticut. (Pictured above) The St. As crew has been volunteering at H.O.M.E. for well over a decade and can slide right into a project with barely a ripple. They put up drywall and ceiling boards. They gathered trash and debris from all around the house and made a pile for metal and filled multiple

construction dumpsters. They also built a new back porch, making it a much safer entrance/exit.

New this year for the St. A's crew was their participation in our Empty Bowls Fundraiser that we hold each year to raise money for our food programs and bring awareness of hunger in our state and country. They helped cook, set up tents and tables, and were all around gracious to all who attended. They left on a high note by purchasing the bowls that were left over after the fundraiser. Their generosity is beyond measure.



The next group to arrive came all the way from Fleetwood, Pennsylvania. Members of St. Paul's UCC (pictured above) did a great job finishing up the drywall through most of the house. Their crew of 11 individuals were new to our program and did fantastic work. We hope they visit again!

In August, the experienced crew from St. Luke's Parish in Barrington, Rhode Island, arrived to put in the windows and doors as well as new siding on the front portion of the house. They also created a new door on the porch of the gift shop so that classes held in the back area could spread to the porch during the warmer months and other small projects around campus. The time and effort this group puts into H.O.M.E. is amazing and so appreciated.

Our last group, though small, is very mighty. Steve and Sam from Trinity Reformed Church in Rochester, New York along with newcomer, Dan, came and put in the trim for the windows and doors of the house. H.O.M.E. is so grateful to Steve and Sam for showing up every summer and doing what they can to make our lives easier. They are appreciated more than they know.

More highlights of volunteerism revolve

around the arts and crafts department. Linda and Joyce keep the stitchery humming, making quilts and potholders and other items sold in the gift shop. The amazing volunteers from Momentum, now known as Living Innovations, volunteer weekly helping in the Bargain Barn, at yard sales, creating crafts and decorating wreaths to sell in the gift shop. These amazing volunteers were sponsors of H.O.M.E.'s Empty Bowls Fundraiser and Voices by the Fire Community Gathering. They prove that we all can do our part to help others.

We can't forget our super volunteer, Peggy, pictured below, who raised over \$800 and more than 30 grocery bags full of Thanksgiving fixin's for our food pantry Thanksgiving Food boxes. Peggy helps out at multiple fundraisers and also volunteers in the Bargain Barn. At 78 years old, she is more proof that anyone can do their part for their community. When she isn't out raising money for H.O.M.E., Peggy volunteers in the Bargain Barn and for other nonprofit agencies. She's also an athlete in the Special Olympics and won a ribbon in bowling! Great job Peggy!



In total, volunteers contributed over 7301 hours to H.O.M.E.

Lastly, H.O.M.E. would like to welcome our new Volunteer Coordinator, Brooke Dunkel. Brooke may be a new employee but she is very familiar with H.O.M.E. as Sister Lucy was her grand aunt and our Stained Glass Artist, Roxanne Poulin, is her mum. We look forward to more of the new energy Brooke has already put towards the volunteer program.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Ream
Program Coordinator

Daycare

H.O.M.E. Daycare had a total of 31 enrolled children during 2025. Sixteen were enrolled in our after-school program, nine were full-time, four were part-time, and two were drop-ins. Two of these children were guests of our shelters. All of these children resided in Hancock County.

H.O.M.E. Daycare assisted two families with our in-house subsidy to help during a hardship period when other child care subsidies were not available.

With the assistance of a special grant, The Hatch Community Youth Fund, and additional financial support from the Trinity Episcopal Church in Castine, we were able to send seven children full-time to the Young Bucks Summer Camp Program with the Bucksport YMCA. This is the third year we have been able to provide this amazing experience to children. The Hatch Community Youth Fund is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing financial support for youth programs in rural communities. The fund aims to enhance access to recreational and athletic activities for children and teenagers, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent participation in these essential programs. H.O.M.E.'s Daycare also received a grant award from the Helen and George Ladd Foundation

again in 2025. The Foundation has been a staunch supporter of H.O.M.E.'s daycare for many years and we are grateful for their continued faith in our work.

H.O.M.E. Daycare was able to provide 12 families with turkey baskets for their Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday meals. These turkeys were provided by local churches with the help of H.O.M.E.'s food pantry. Sixteen of the children in daycare were provided with new backpacks and school supplies for the 2025-2026 school year.

We were very saddened to learn that Joan Austin, a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Castine had passed away earlier this spring. Joan would bring the needs of the daycare to her congregation's attention and secured donations from the church multiple times a year. She had a way with words and raised so much support for our daycare. She will be greatly missed by many. Thank you Joan and our condolences go out to her husband, Karl and her friends and family.

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Witham
Daycare Director



Daycare teacher, Petra, brought in her rabbit for the children to learn hands on about different types of pets

H.O.M.E.'s 2026 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Special Programs

Wood Bank: H.O.M.E.'s Wood Bank was able to distribute 32 cords of firewood to households in need in Hancock County. Grants available to assist with the purchase of logs to be used in the wood bank became more complicated this year with the requirement that a portion of the firewood purchased must come from federal lands making it more difficult for us to purchase more logs. H.O.M.E. is hopeful that we will be able to make such a connection to assist us next winter season. We are grateful for the many volunteers that helped with stacking the firewood for this year.

Backpack Program: H.O.M.E.'s Backpack Program was able to distribute backpacks with school supplies to 41 children who attend RSU 25. Once again, friend of H.O.M.E., Libby Craig, held a Facebook Backpack Drive and brought in over 30 LL Bean backpacks. Parents appreciate the sturdy backpacks. Donations of school supplies came from community members and from the First Congregational Church in Ridgefield, CT. The Ridgefield church has been a major support of the school supplies drive for many years.

Food Programs

H.O.M.E. is always trying to improve our services to enable us to provide those in our care in the most dignified way possible. From not requiring shelter guests to leave during the day where they may have to find a place to stay warm and dry, to making access to our programs as low barrier as possible, dignity is high on H.O.M.E.'s list of values. We consider it a fundamental value that reflects the intrinsic worth of every individual and is essential to ethical treatment and respect in society.

In 2025, H.O.M.E. began working on renovating the Goodness Sake Food Pantry. Our goal is to move from a standardized food box/bag model to a client-choice model. The client-choice model allows consumers of the pantry to walk through and select the items they want or need and leave anything they know they will not consume. This not only preserves the dignity of our consumers by allowing them choice, but it also prevents consumers receiving items their family would not use. Just another way H.O.M.E. is working to cut down on the amount of food waste in our community.

The renovations began in the summer with volunteers from St. Luke's Parish of Barrington, Rhode Island. They removed old wooden shelving that was no longer useful and installed metal shelving (pictured below) that will better display what is available to our patrons.



During the winter, H.O.M.E.'s construction crew, when not busy with other projects, began the process of opening walls in the food pantry area to allow for more space in which items can be displayed for folks doing their "shopping." A grant from the Good Shepherd Flourish and Nourish Grant Program provided us with \$5000 allowing us to buy the shelving, carts, shelf label holders, and tote bags to get us started off on the right foot.

Christmas Program: Once again, First Congregational Church of Old Greenwich, CT, provided Christmas gifts for 100 individuals in our community. These gifts included each man, woman, and child in our shelters as well as children who attend RSU 25. Another 16 children received gifts from the First Congregational Church of Georgetown, MA. H.O.M.E. was also happy to receive calls from community members looking to help make Christmas merry for those in need. There were also gifts for the adult shelter guests from the First Congregational Church in Blue Hill, ME. The support we receive from these churches and community members fill us all with holiday cheer and we are grateful.

Hardship Fund: H.O.M.E.'s Hardship Fund covers those in need who do not qualify for our Diversion Program but are still in need of assistance. In 2025, H.O.M.E. distributed \$619.22 to members of the community.

Winter Coat Program: At least 44 coats were distributed to community members through the winter coat program. A rack of coats with hats

and mittens were left available in the soup kitchen enabling more people to access the program. The coat program saw a huge influx of donations, so much so we had to ask a local group to do a drive for blankets and towels for our shelter department instead of coats. The Women's Interfaith Coalition of Castine did a winter coat drive and a blanket/towel drive and we are thankful for their generosity.

Resource Room/Free Clothing Room: The Resource Room at the Orland Campus was accessed by shelter guests for hygiene supplies and warm clothing 117 times. The community in Orland had 54 households access the Resource Room. The Free Clothing Room at the Emmaus Homeless Shelter was accessed over 1494 times. The Witham Family Hotels' Charitable Christmas celebration brought in many donations of hygiene supplies for the Resource Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandy Baron, Finance Admin

Julie Ream, Program Coordinator

H.O.M.E.'s goal is to finish the remodel by summer 2026, if not sooner.

In 2025, H.O.M.E.'s food pantries were able to distribute 453 food boxes to community members. H.O.M.E.'s pantries also distributed 278 food boxes



Donations of fresh produce are always a welcomed treat

for Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday meals.

Each morning before any of the programs open, H.O.M.E. staff and volunteers are at the local Hannaford, TradeWinds, and Shaw's supermarkets to gather all the food that was pulled from the shelves but weren't ready for the garbage can or compost pile. Both the Goodness Sake Food Pantry and the Emmaus Homeless Shelter make the food available to the public at no cost. It is also a low-barrier program as income information is not gathered from the individuals who access this program. The rescue lines together were accessed a total of 8424 times. The program prevented 204,983 pounds of food waste from ending up in a local landfill.

The H.O.M.E. soup kitchen served 1895 meals in 2025. Presently the soup kitchen serves lunch every Tuesday and Wednesday, and we are hopeful to be able to serve lunch five days a week at some point. A dinner was served on the Easter holiday, Thanksgiving, and Christmas meals were served the Wednesday before each holiday to anyone who wished to attend.

H.O.M.E.'s Gardening Program has been very limited in the last few years but not completely shut down. H.O.M.E. Gardener, Tyler Baker, does spend a lot of time helping Maureen run the food pantry, food rescue line, and soup kitchen daily, but he is still actively growing in the green houses when he has the time.

A highlight that has been mentioned in other reports but that we would also like to mention is the assistance of the volunteers from St. Andrew's



Folks gather in the soup kitchen twice a week for a homemade meal

Episcopal Church of Madison, Connecticut. The young folks and their chaperons prepared the soups and salads for the Empty Bowls Fundraiser back in July. Their enthusiasm and friendliness was appreciated by H.O.M.E. staff, volunteers, and the community as a whole. The adults in the group included the young people in every aspect of the fundraiser from cooking, preparing vegetables and salads to serving buffet style and in general being kind and friendly to everyone. It was a very special evening and we look forward to having them return in 2026 to help again.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Hayden

Market Stand Manager

H.O.M.E., Inc.
Website QR Code



Donations welcome!
Help us help others.

Rebuilding Hope: H.O.M.E. Revitalizes Housing Efforts to Serve Chronically Homeless Families

By Julie Ream

Summer of 2025 saw H.O.M.E. volunteer groups returning to rehabilitate a H.O.M.E.-built house. Something they haven't had the pleasure of doing for several years.

A little backstory: Over the 56 years of H.O.M.E.'s existence we, along with our faithful volunteer groups, have built 55 houses that were sold to low-income families, opening doors to stability and independence. In 2016, when Sister Lucy Poulin retired, H.O.M.E. had the responsibility of 12 homes that had fallen into foreclosure. Management took that responsibility seriously and worked with our volunteer groups to rehabilitate most of the homes and successfully placed them with new families. Only two were beyond repair and required demolition.

By 2022, the last of the houses were sold and the decision was made to stop building as the market had become too expensive for H.O.M.E.'s efforts. We turned our attention to our rental housing programs and how we could create more affordable housing in our area. We did this with the intention that the focus would be on providing housing to individuals and families that have experienced chronic homelessness.

"Chronically homeless" is defined in section 401(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11360 as an individual or family that is homeless and resides in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, and has been homeless and residing in such a place for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years. The statutory definition also requires that the individual or family has a head of household with a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability.

H.O.M.E. has a long history of providing rental housing. Sister Barbara Hance House (SBHH), located in Ellsworth, is a single-room occupancy sober living home and can accommodate nine individuals. The house also has a small apartment built behind it that houses a father and adult daughter who struggled when living on their own but are now thriving with H.O.M.E. staff nearby to make sure they are doing well.

Hospitality House in Bucksport evolved from a shelter into a fully rented apartment building serving many tenants on fixed incomes. After significant renovations, the building now accepts housing subsidies and is financially sustainable—an important milestone for H.O.M.E.

We are not alone in our mission to create more affordable housing. H.O.M.E. received a grant award a few years ago from the Bezo's Day One

Fund with \$300,000 set aside for building or buying homes with the intent to create multiple apartments for chronically homeless families. Building affordable housing here on campus would require us to fund raise over a million dollars and is currently out of our reach. H.O.M.E. management looked at many local buildings hoping one of them would be affordable enough for H.O.M.E. to purchase and rehabilitate, but nothing local really fit the bill. We have not given up on the dream of building on campus in the (hopefully) not too distant future.

H.O.M.E. Executive Director, Rosalani Moore, turned her attention to two homes that are located right next to the H.O.M.E. village. Both had gone into foreclosure, but unlike prior situations, H.O.M.E. was not financially responsible for them. Rosa successfully worked with St. Francis Community, the land trust owner, to acquire the land beneath one home and partnered with a local bank to purchase the structure as-is. The second home remains unavailable due to its bank's high asking price, but it has not been forgotten.

Putting the purchase of the second home on the back burner, H.O.M.E. concentrated on preparing the house we did acquire for our summer volunteer groups to work on. H.O.M.E. employees emptied



Yard clean up by St. Andrew's Episcopal Church of Madison, CT.

the majority of debris from the home and topped off a construction dumpster before any volunteer groups even arrived.

Throughout the summer, the home got a new roof, windows, and doors. The siding on the front of the home was replaced, and the yard was cleared of all the debris. The drywall was replaced throughout and by the end of the summer; the home was in good shape for the H.O.M.E. construction crew to take over. A new heat source was installed, and they have spent much of the fall and winter months taping and mudding and laying flooring and preparing the home to be finished and ready to be rented hopefully by the summer months.

The intended purpose of rehabbing the house is to provide a family that has experienced chronic homelessness an affordable rental. With H.O.M.E. wraparound services nearby, they will have help maintaining their home for as long as they need



Above, St. Luke's crew removing old siding. Below, prep work for the new siding.



it much like the folks renting the small apartment behind SBHH. These services could include navigation to help find medical resources in their area, connecting them to programs that assist with rental payments and heating support, as well as spaces for meeting with case managers and social workers. Our experience shows that closeness to supportive services significantly increases long-term housing success for those who have struggled the most.

H.O.M.E. will continue to honor the dignity of people experiencing challenging times by providing safe shelter and other critical resources in a vibrant and mutually supportive community. If you would like to contribute to our housing initiatives and help us provide secure homes for families in need, please mail your donation to H.O.M.E. Inc./Pathways to Stable Housing, P.O. Box 10, Orland, ME 04472, or give online at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/peer-to-peer/donate-to-home-create-pathways-to-stable-housing>.

Regional Artists Gather for Dialogue on Rural Arts and Storytelling

By Jackie Perkins

On Thursday, October 23, 2025, Artsworth in Ellsworth hosted a meaningful conversation with Matthew Fluharty, Executive Director of Art of the Rural, pictured here with Arts and Events Coordinator, Jackie Perkins and Executive Director, Rosalani Moore. Matthew's organization supports artists and cultural workers across the country to foster connection, shift narratives, and strengthen the arts field — work that resonated deeply with our Maine-based arts community.

Hosted by the Onion Foundation, the evening introduced Matthew's initiatives and sparked a rich dialogue about how arts can sustain and transform rural places.

The discussion explored practical strategies for sustaining creative practice in small towns, the importance of local storytelling, and ways arts organizations can partner to amplify rural voices.



Attendees from across the region brought thoughtful questions and local perspectives. Participants reflected on challenges like resource access and audience development, and opportunities such as cross-community collaboration, artist-led initiatives, and regional networks to increase visibility and impact.

The conversation highlighted that supporting rural arts means investing in relationships, infrastructure, and narratives that honor the complexity and creativity of rural life.

As the evening wrapped up, it was clear that sustaining rural arts requires ongoing investment, collaboration, and open dialogue. The insights shared by Matthew Fluharty and local leaders provided a strong foundation for future partnerships aimed at elevating rural voices and expanding creative opportunities throughout our region.

Community Proves that H.O.M.E. Matters

By Julie Ream

H.O.M.E. Inc. is incredibly grateful for the community partners who help us with our work. Bangor Savings Bank (BSB) has been a community partner of sorts for quite a while now. From purchasing wreaths for display at the local branch in Bucksport, to running a peanut butter and jelly drive in which the Goodness Sake Food Pantry is a recipient of yearly, we couldn't ask for a better partner.

Their support goes beyond the local branch. The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation provides grant opportunities to non-profits to aid their missions. H.O.M.E. received one such grant almost 10 years ago to help create a computer lab in the Learning Center for guests of our shelters and community members.

The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation believes in giving back to their communities and that by focusing on the needs that matter most to neighbors and friends, we matter more in the daily lives of our fellow community members. Their Community Matters More program gives community members a chance to vote for non-profits in their areas to receive a \$5000 grant award. In 2025, H.O.M.E.

was one of the recipients of the grant thanks to the votes of people in our community.

H.O.M.E. had previously been awarded a \$2,500 grant from the program as a write-in candidate. This time around, the folks of our local branch nominated H.O.M.E. to be listed as a candidate which qualified us for the \$5000 award.

The BSB Bucksport branch managers, Alan and Fiona, were able to come to H.O.M.E. and present Executive Director, Rosalani Moore, with the check back in May of 2025. As much as the support from BSB is appreciated by H.O.M.E., the fact that the grant was awarded due to so many community members voting for us is amazing. We believe that it shows the good work H.O.M.E. is doing for Orland, Hancock County, and the State of Maine is being noticed and recognized.

The best part is that since H.O.M.E. was awarded the grant in 2025, we will once again be listed on the website for voting in 2026. If you live in the State of Maine, watch our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HOMEINC1970 in April for when voting opens up. Everyone can vote for up to three non-profits every year.

We thank the Bangor Savings Bank Community Matters More program and all the community members who voted for H.O.M.E. We couldn't do this work without your support.



Bangor Savings Bank representatives, Alan and Fiona present the CMM award check to E.D., Rosalani Moore.

Supporting Those Who Support Us: H.O.M.E. Volunteers Aid MDI Marathon

By Julie Ream

On October 19th, H.O.M.E. Finance Director, Shannon Carpenter, and Shelter Navigator, Shawna Lovely, volunteered to assist at the Mount Desert Island Marathon and Half-Marathon. The marathon, through its Beyond the Finish Line charitable fund, has made significant contributions to the community by donating \$75,000 to 38 local groups and organizations of which H.O.M.E. was one. The fund receives 100% of the proceeds from the charity bib program and gifted H.O.M.E. \$5000.

Shannon and Shawna brought the H.O.M.E. van to help check bags for both the marathon and half-marathon. The Marathon and Team Relay started in Bar Harbor, while the Half-Marathon started in Northeast Harbor. Our dedicated staff members turned volunteers, checked all bags for the participants in and drove them to Southwest Harbor where all the races finished.

The event is known for its scenic route, passing through tranquil lakes, soaring mountains, sleepy Maine villages, and stunning seaside vistas,



Shawna and Shannon did a great job keeping everyone's belongings safe and sound at the end of the race

including Somes Sound, the only fjord on the Eastern Seaboard. The course runs alongside parts of Acadia National Park and highlights fall scenery common to the region. The finish line festival in Southwest Harbor featured vendor's wares, face painting, a book sale, and more, making it a family-friendly event.

The marathon's efforts have included funding scholarships for MDIHS graduating seniors, supporting health & wellness, fitness, animal welfare, children, arts & culture, and the environment. These contributions have helped to support various local organizations and initiatives, demonstrating the marathon's commitment to giving back to the community where it runs. These qualities align with H.O.M.E.'s own mission to help others.

Volunteers have done so much for H.O.M.E. and it is nice when H.O.M.E. staff can give back to the community that supports all we do.

Welcoming Brooke: H.O.M.E.'s New Volunteer Coordinator

By Julie Ream

H.O.M.E. Inc. is thrilled to welcome Brooke Dunkel as our new Volunteer Coordinator—a role that seems to be not just a job for her, but a continuation of a family legacy rooted deeply in compassion, service, and community. Brooke shared that her inspiration for joining H.O.M.E. comes from her great aunt, Lucy Poulin, whose life's work helped shape the heart of this organization.

"I wanted to continue the work of my great aunt," she explained. "Supporting our community, providing resources, building relationships, and making an impact on my home town."

It's clear that her connection to H.O.M.E. is considerably deeper than just employment; it's personal, generational, and guided by a purposeful commitment to others. Brooke brings with her a wealth of volunteer management experience. Most recently, she worked with Hancock County Habitat for Humanity, coordinating skilled carpenters and tradespeople on a home build. Her leadership in volunteer settings, especially in hands-on, mission-driven environments, makes her an incredible fit for H.O.M.E.'s bustling programs.

Settling in has been a joyful experience. "I

have felt very welcomed by all at the H.O.M.E. campus," she said. "Staff, volunteers, shelter guests, friends, and family. Sharing meals on Wednesdays is my favorite." That sense of community, of people gathering, supporting one another, and sharing food and conversation, has already made a strong impression on her.

When looking towards the future of the volunteer program, Brooke has no shortage of vision. "Big plans!" she said with a smile. She hopes to strengthen partnerships with local schools and trade programs, fine-tune the systems already in place, and ensure that every volunteer has a meaningful and well-supported experience. Connecting community members to the work that matters most is at the heart of her approach.

She shared that she continues to be amazed by the breadth of H.O.M.E.'s services. "The scale of our organization is not a hurdle, but a pleasant surprise... I'm still in awe of all we do." That awe fuels her drive to expand capacity, including tapping into state-level resources such as Volunteer Maine and building relationships with partner organizations across the region. Right now, Brooke is looking for help with a few specific projects: skilled individuals who can

support a home renovation currently in the works, and a small team interested in tending several perennial gardens around campus.

As she steps into her role, her passion, experience, and long family connection to H.O.M.E. brings fresh energy to the volunteer program. We are grateful to have her on the team—and excited to see the meaningful connections she will help build in the months ahead.



Brooke and volunteers have been helpful with the pantry renovation.

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This Time

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H.O.M.E. Inc.



Friend of H.O.M.E., Ralph Duncan and friends at the 2025 Empty Bowl Fundraiser



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