

Discovery

2023 Theme

Guided by the spirit of this place, and our history, we have been listening for our next summer themes. We reached out to our summer conference coordinators as well as conference goers, staff, and board. Something about “coming home” beckoned us, and when we began to talk about the idea of awakening, we felt we were on to something.

This summer, we hope that we can come home to Ferry Beach and to a renewal of our commitment to our mission statement: Ferry Beach awakens hearts to explore, grow and renew the spirit of universal love. Conversations, small group discussions, talks and workshops all focusing on what it means to awaken to universal love in these changing and challenging times seems life giving and important.

We hope that in these times of vitriolic rhetoric and polarization, we can awaken kindness, awaken understanding, love, listening. Having been locked down for months, we also want to awaken our own inner strength to do the next right thing.

We hope you will join us for our summer of 2023 theme, AWAKEN!

IN THIS DISCOVERY

- ① 2023 Theme
- ② Campus Safety
- ③ Pricing; New Family Retreat
- ④ BOARDwalk;
Thank You for your Support
- ⑤ Lessons in Resilience

AND MORE!



Catch us on TV?

This fall we were featured on Maine Life, which aired on WCSH-6, state-wide. Of course our friends outside of Maine would have missed it.

We were chosen as an organization to be highlighted by the Maine Department of Labor for our work in recent years working with and hiring individuals with disabilities.

For those who missed it, the episode can be viewed at fbch.me/mainelife



Campus Safety

Another day of waking up to the news about another shooting at a gay bar, another hate crime committed against members of the LGBTQ community. The hateful drumbeat of vitriol that lives just underneath the surface of everyday life, is impossible to wipe away with marriage rights or in some states, employment rights.

To stand in public holding hands with your partner, to linger a little longer during a goodbye, to wear a wedding band, go to a gay bar, are all acts of resistance in a world that is not safe.

Ferry Beach has a recent history of defending our LGBTQ flags on Quillen, starting with our tenant, the school wanting us to remove them to a recent neighbor who thought out loud to me at our annual meeting: "one flag is ok, but you don't need all of them." Letting the world know that Ferry Beach is a safe place, is to let the world know that we could be a target.

Last spring and summer a white pick-up truck with a large flag flapping in the wind that said F* Biden drove up and down Seaside Avenue, basically through our campus. Ironically (because we have a large contingent of men who attend GAYLA from Ohio), the truck with the words WHT RBT had Ohio plates. Throughout the spring and into the summer it paraded up and down from Old Orchard to Camp Ellis. I felt the intrusion it brought, but our staff was buried in the intrusion of COVID for the last 3 years.

Now, because of more recent events, particularly the shooting of the electric transfer stations in North Carolina over a drag show, coming just on the heels of the shooting in Colorado, I have reached out to our local law enforcement. We all want to believe this is a safe place, but when you look at our campus, we are a welcoming place with open borders, just as we want to be, but dangerous non-the-less.

Ferry Beach has several public streets, up until a few years ago we never locked a door here. Now, in the interests of safety, we have a no gun policy passed a few years ago by the board (not even in a locked car). We have talked with the police in previous years about active shooter drills and we now look for ways to harden our campus against the threat of violence.

Our staff will be training once again in actions for emergencies. We started these procedures for lost children and a big storm, pre-COVID when we were not dealing directly with such an ongoing public health threat. We will split the campus up in quadrants and assign staff to them to have in place for leadership in case of an emergency.

We will keep you posted as to ways we are taking care of our campus, our conferees and each other in these challenging times. In the meantime, let's keep defending our right to exist, our right to live peacefully with others in a world that could be much more loving. It starts when we begin to love one another and work through our differences. It starts with us.



2023 Pricing

The pandemic and its subsequent disruptions have interfered with our operations and presented challenges to our normal systems. When COVID-19 first hit, we lowered costs to help people be able to still come to Ferry Beach during uncertain times.

We have been taking the approach of gradually bringing our prices back to our 2019 levels. This year we brought our meal plans back up as the prices of food required us to. In 2023 we will begin increasing our program fee until we meet the 2019 fee of \$39/day (adult with lodging rate). We will not jump straight back up to 2019 rates but assess our financial need.

In 2023 we are restructuring our costs to become more all-inclusive. A single price to attend your conference. The only variables would be your age and lodging selection (and any additional fee your conference leadership may have for programming).

Next summer we are hoping for the return of some of our program staff that have been missing for a few years. We hope to have a creative lead in the art room, an environmental lead who can do outdoor afternoon programming and if we are very lucky, a life guard. Of course our goal is to also have a full staff so operations will run smoothly – which is what we aimed for this year but the staffing crisis did not allow for.



New Family Getaway Coming in 2023!

We are planning a new family getaway in 2023 over the July 4th holiday. Join us with your entire family for 4 days and 5 nights of fun, activities, relaxation and of course the beach.

Come for fun intergen activities, cookouts, concert by Onward, Sing-Alongs in the Grove, Arts & Crafts Activities, T'ai Chi and more.

We are offering special pricing for this retreat, 33% off our standard summer prices. A family of 4 (2 Adults and 2 Children) in a standard dorm room July 1-5 for just \$1360. That includes programming, meals and lodging.

We are currently seeking volunteers to help coordinate and plan the intergen activities along side the Ferry Beach staff.

Keep up-to-date with the activities being planned at ferrybeach.org/4th. To register, call our registration team at 207-282-4489.

Community Dinners

Join us at Ferry Beach for a delicious meal, interesting topics and an opportunity to connect with your friends and neighbors.

Our community dinners are just \$20 per person. Meals are served cafeteria style and include two mains, several sides, salads, beverages and dessert.

JANUARY 18, 2023

What is going on in the world? Join Peggy Schick from Soulful Wellness to discuss the astrological explanations for why things in the world are currently chaotic and overwhelming.

FEBRUARY 21, 2023

In our culture, there is hesitation to face the reality that none of us gets out of here alive. How do we live accepting this reality in a life affirming, spiritual and loving way?

MARCH 14, 2023

Organic gardening with native plants with master gardener Kathleen Dziadzio.

BOARDwalk

by Doug Edwards

Hello! I hope everyone had a pleasant 2022. It is always fascinating to me how the season change seems quicker as I get older. Time keeps marching on through the seasons providing constant opportunities for renewal and introspection.

Did you visit Ferry Beach this year? Chances are you may have noticed that we were still experiencing the pandemic (even though many people like myself would have liked to pretend it's over). Things like testing, masking and quarantines are not what you come to Ferry Beach for. In an effort to show love and caring for each other – visitors and staff – the decision was made to make safety a number one priority this year.

This was difficult to do with the limited number of staff we were able to hire this season. We can hope for COVID and other communicable sicknesses to be less of a factor in 2023. My guess we will still need to care for each other and consider our health before coming to camp and being honest with how we're feeling while at Ferry Beach.

Hiring additional kitchen staff was especially challenging this year. This made it even tougher on our incredibly resilient staff (resilience was more than just a theme for this year.) Across Maine, there were a number of restaurants that closed or reduced hours this summer citing staffing as the number one issue. Hiring in the hospitality industry was (and continues to be) very competitive. This can be especially challenging for a non-profit organization – even with competitive pay. Our staff and board will be working on ways to address this issue for next year, but great strides have already been made in the growth of the year-round team which should help in 2023!



As 2022 winds down we wanted to give special thanks to each person who donated their time, talent and treasure to Ferry Beach this year. The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges for us, but our members stepped up in ways we couldn't imagine.

Though we are no longer locked down, COVID is still a real factor in many areas of our lives. Not only is the virus still around and popping up in variants and clusters, but the pandemic has caused disruptions in so many other ways to our daily lives... Supply chain issues, staffing crisis, the worst inflation in 40 years... 2022 was tough!

We hope these issues will calm in the year ahead, but in the meantime, we are tackling the challenges we face to the best of our abilities with the tools we have. One of our most valued and appreciated tools we have is our members. More than ever, our members have stepped up to help us with their time, talent, and treasure. We thank you so very much!

As the year closes, we are asking you to consider a gift to Ferry Beach. Whether this would be your first gift to us this year, or an additional one on top of many others you've already provided, any gift you are able to provide has an impact and is greatly appreciated. A sustaining donation that provides us stable revenue year long, or a one-time gift that helps us along in our recovery, your donation helps! To provide your year-end gift to Ferry Beach, visit www.ferrybeach.org/giving. Thank you so much and see you in 2023!

Lessons in Resilience

Since we temporarily closed in March of 2020, the core staff at Ferry Beach have done their very best to keep this organization afloat. When the pandemic hit, our vision was clear and our intentions were set: Ferry Beach will survive well beyond COVID-19. We replaced some revenue with federal funding and when people left positions we did not replace them. We had a bare bones staff in the summer of 2021. To date, we've lost \$2,000,000 in revenue, all of which can be attributed to the pandemic.

Our core staff, averaging 8 years at Ferry Beach, feel so proud of our accomplishments knowing that many not for profit organizations around us were closing their doors. We made our affirmation of resilience the theme for 2022.

We learned at a recent Hospitality Maine conference that many inns, restaurants, hotels and retreat centers throughout the state struggled with finding staff this year, especially in their kitchens. Many innkeepers, restaurant owners and other administrative staff, helped in the kitchen just as we did. Local culinary arts programs have cropped up throughout the state in the last few years to address this industry wide challenge.

Though people were saying that the pandemic was waning, we ended up with at least a few cases almost every week from most every conference. Even two members of our core staff team were infected at the end of the summer. But we affirmed our resilience and pushed forward.

In this topsy turvy world right now, we are taking stock of ways we can continue to address the key challenges facing us. We are acknowledging the present, seeing the limitations that COVID has created along with the war in Ukraine: rising food and fuel prices, the lack of available employees and supply chain issues that affect our food service.

We are taking advantage of the resources we have available to us and we continue to look for ways to gain more resources: local vendors, farms, community leaders, organizations, workshop leaders and teachers. Our shift to a 365 day a year model as a retreat and conference center has brought us new groups, and many new people who love Ferry Beach. We are hoping to grow back the revenue we lost in the last 3 years and provide a place where new organizations, individuals and families can awaken hearts to explore, grow and renew the spirit of universal love.

Ferry Beach has a strong commitment to community. Growing our community between September through May helps Ferry Beach sustain itself while also widening our mission's reach. We are grateful for the sustaining donors and people who came to volunteer throughout the summer, spring and fall of 2022. You helped us get through some really difficult times and we appreciate your kindness and generosity so much.

We don't yet know what lies ahead for 2023, but our vision and intentions remain clear. Ferry Beach will make it through COVID-19 (and everything in its wake.) It is our job, as a community, to acknowledge our present and see our vision through to the very end.

Help us Upcycle

The Creative Cabin is a place where many go to express themselves through art! We would like to ask you assist us in Ferry Beach's mission of Sustainability through stocking the shelves in the cabin with recycled materials. These items will be used for creative recycling into art pieces. Below is a list of things we are looking for that you may have already in your home and / or ready to be recycled all ready. Please do not purchase these items for us, we are only looking for items you have and no longer need.

Before sending anything, please email our Program Coordinator Susan Sinnott on what and when you would like to drop off to donate (ssinnott@ferrybeach.org).

- Colorful magazines and calendars
- Newspaper
- Paper towel, toilet paper and wrapping paper tubes
- Cardboard egg cartons
- Buttons
- Pipe cleaners
- A strong blender
- Wooden Deckle sets to make paper from recycled materials
- Screen mesh
- Old towels to use for rags (preferably white)
- White flat sheets
- Fine food strainer
- Free standing clothes racks
- Clothes pins
- Yarn
- Paper plates

FERRY BEACH

Discovery

DECEMBER 2022



Ferry Beach Retreat & Conference Center
5 Boardwalk Drive • Saco, ME 04072
(207) 282-4489 • ferrybeach.org

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1011
SACO, ME 04072

Ferry Beach Retreat & Conference Center is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization with a mission to awaken hearts to explore, grow and renew the spirit of universal love.

Still a Year Left to Enjoy

We still have 2022-2023 Calendars if you haven't picked one up yet! Only a few months have gone by, so the calendar has a lot of good life still left in it. Calendars run from July 2022 through January 2024. Calendars are a fundraiser for Ferry Beach and are a minimum donation of \$34.99. Get yours at fbch.me/calendar



... Some More About Calendars

We will once again be creating a calendar for 2024! This time, we want YOUR pictures and quotes. Please submit your favorite Ferry Beach photograph (People should not be the focus of the image. If there are persons in the image they must be indistinguishable, in the distance, out of focus, etc) along with a quote you like that goes with it. Please send submissions to Brian at bjohnson@ferrybeach.org. We will have all qualifying submissions available for members to vote on the Ferry Beach App next summer and the calendar will go on sale in Fall 2023!