

Discovery

Unexpected Grief, Surprising Joy

By: Cathy Stackpole, Executive Director

There is a Yiddish proverb: "We plan, God laughs." As a child, this idea was lost on me, but I remember my nana saying it with amusement. Irish Catholic, salt of the earth, born and raised in NYC, my grandmother rolled with the challenging lessons life handed to her while raising 7 children in a NYC tenement building during the Great Depression. Her strong faith, sprinkled throughout her tough cigarette smoking exterior, and NYC accent, came through loud and clear. When detours popped up in her life, God pointed another way.

She was a tither, and her savings plan was that. As the collection basket came around in church she would always whisper, part prayer, part admonishment: "Gawd, this is my last dollah." She was never let down (that I knew about, anyway), and she taught me about circulation when I knew she didn't have money herself. When we visited, she would grab my fist and shove a twenty-dollar bill into it and say "give this to your mother."

Our savings plan at Ferry Beach was a bit more strategic and less faith filled than my nana's when we were thinking about the transition set to occur when our long-term tenant left in 2019. We saved \$180,000 to help us through the changing business model. We knew this money would be useful to us during our anticipated growing phase. The funds did help us tremendously, just not exactly the way we had planned for them to.

Though we had a path set for Ferry Beach in 2019, the world had different ideas. The money we had saved was put to good use – ensuring our organization could stay afloat during uncertain times in a global pandemic. A core part of our income that we rely on in the spring and fall have always been church groups. The pandemic forced some churches to close and many to shrink. We have lost a substantial number of individuals who came to Ferry Beach with their churches and those funds were not as sustainable. The detour we took during the pandemic required us to learn and grow in ways we hadn't anticipated or prepared for.

We are just now starting to feel like some recovery from that detour. Our off-season groups are starting to **(Continue Pg. 3)**

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AND MORE!



Two Work Weeks!

We will host a small Work Week on March 21-25 to help clean the campus grounds.

Our regular Work Week will take place June 19-24. Some projects already planned include: Painting and cosmetic upgrades to Underwood (painting doors and walls, installing flooring), installing new signage, sewing (theme banner), and more!

If you are interested in signing up for one or both of these weeks, call our registration office at 207-282-4489. Standard dorm lodging is free and meals are \$45 per day.

You're a Mean One, Mister Grinch!

Regionally, what we were referring to as the "Grinch" storm that came through on Christmas Eve, ended up causing a massive number of major power outages and damage across the state on Maine. After the storm departed the area temperatures plummeted. Many in Maine celebrated Christmas in the dark and without heat. Saco was not immune from the damages from this storm.

During a routine check of the campus on Christmas Day, it was discovered that we had pipes burst in DeWolfe Dining room because the power outage resulted in the loss of heat. Water poured from a pipe outside of the bathrooms and a sprinkler head in the attic also burst, which flooded the kitchen.

In all, we suffered damage to the whole of the north wall in the dining room (beverage bar, long bank of cabinets where toasters sit) and then a good portion of the wall on the west side of the kitchen. We also suffered damage to the walls and ceiling in the vestibule area. Ferry Beach did not lose much in the way of food or dry goods, but most light fixtures in the women's bathroom as well as the kitchen will need to be replaced along with sprinkler heads and some electrical boxes.

Going forward, we need to insulate the areas above the vestibule and bathrooms as well as the attic. These are outside of the purview of our insurance claim for repairing the damage.

Additionally, we need to purchase a generator to prevent the loss of heat in a future outage. Estimates to purchase and install a generator that would power the heaters would be around \$25,000. It would be set up to automatically turn on when the power goes out.

To be better prepared in the future with insulation and a generator we will need to raise \$60,000. We appreciate the all the help you provided to us that assisted us through the pandemic. We want to put the building back together in a way that prevents this from happening again and we hope for your support in doing that!

Visit fbch.me/generator to make a donation or send a check and note that it is for the DeWolfe Generator Project.



(From Pg. 1) return, and we are building up a core staff team to help us operate year-round. We are excited that more groups have found us and are so delighted in being able to share our organization with more people.

Some new groups we have seen recently are the Maine Initiatives funding program, a prison ministry group, and the Altrusa Club of Saco which has found a home here. Importantly, Save our Shoreline Saco Bay which holds their monthly meetings at Ferry Beach and hosted the 1st Annual Conference on Climate Change and Erosion has already booked their 2nd annual conference for this Fall! We have begun to hear from additional new groups like Maine Development Foundation that will be sharing our campus with many alumni of their leadership program and we have been working with so many small entrepreneurs who are hosting their own retreats and workshops through the spring or in the fall. All of this work and activity in line with our mission to awaken hearts to explore, grow and renew the spirit of universal love by working in the areas of arts & culture, education, spirituality, sustainability, personal growth and justice & action.

Ferry Beach is a magical place that welcomes all who support our mission and values. Perhaps the pandemic, with as much heartache, pain, and misery as it caused us as an organization and as humans, has provided us with gift: The ability to grow into our 365 day per year model. With new spaces created over the pandemic allowing us to host bigger groups year-round (Rowland Hall) and a growing professional staff team that we were unable to have during the pandemic, we are in a great position for the future.

Though we hit a huge speed bump, we learned about our organization's strength, determination and ability to overcome the toughest of challenges. We are feeling brave, confident and stable as we work to share Ferry Beach with those who support our mission. Thank you to all of those who believed in us and supported us along the way.

Rowland Upgrades

Though the damages in the Dining Hall have been taking up a lot of our time, that has not stopped us from making other small improvements around campus over the winter. Dave has been hard at work brightening the hallway connecting Ziegler to the Murray Room and Gayla theater. What a difference a light color makes in this traditionally dark hallway!



Supporting our Local Community

We were proud to once again partner with Age Friendly Saco to offer 350 free meals to members of the Biddeford - Saco - OOB communities. Meals were reserved in advance and delivered by members of the Rotary Club of Saco Bay on February 13th. Special thanks to all those who helped make this happen! It was quite a sight to see our dining hall full of volunteers packing and sorting all these meals!



Longevity of Ferry Beach

Give the gift of Ferry Beach to future generations. It is easy to include us in your will. If you believe strongly in our mission and work and you want to talk more, contact us at 207-282-4489



New Heat Pumps Installed in Morris Cottage!

Morris Cottage and the Administrative Offices below had heat pumps installed this month. We are looking forward to more efficient source of heating and cooling while saving money on our energy bills!



Join us for Dinner!

If you live nearby and are looking for a couple hours of connection, a delicious meal and to hear about an interesting topic from a guest speaker, then consider checking out our community dinners! Learn more and sign up at ferrybeach.org/dinner

UPCOMING DATES:

MARCH 14, 2023 - Organic Gardening with Native Plants
Meal: Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

APRIL 11, 2023 - Topic TBD
Meal: Southern Style Cooking

MAY 9, 2023 - Topic TBD
Meal: Tex-Mex Style



Come to Ferry Beach for the Summer Holidays!

We are excited to host family fun retreats at family friendly pricing on July 4th and Labor Day weekends. Join us July 1-5 for our brand new family fun weekend. Activities will include: fun intergen activities, cookouts, concert by Onward, sing-alongs, arts & crafts activities, T'ai Chi and more. If you already have plans for the 4th, then plan on coming to our end of season celebration during Labor Day weekend. Highlights include the last outdoor chapel service of the season, and of course our famous outdoor cookout and concert! Both are sure to be fun for the whole family and at prices that dont break the budget. Learn more at ferrybeach.org/holidays

Summer is Right Around the Corner!

Registration is OPEN for our summer programs! You can book your room and conference directly from our website by selecting your program from our schedule at ferrybeach.org/schedule and clicking on the "Register Now" button from your conference landing page. Alternatively, if you already know the dates of your program, you can register directly at ferrybeach.org/register

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

Attention Conference Coordinators!

Please be sure to send any program updates and news to include on your conference webpage to Brian Johnson bjohnson@ferrybeach.org.

Additionally, please provide your complete supply lists to Brian when ready. These are due 3 weeks prior to your conference, however it would be helpful to get any ordering taken care of early if possible if your supply list is ready.



We are Hiring

Ferry Beach is actively looking for staff to fill our summer season shifts. This year we have ten J1 students slated to arrive (we hope they all get their visas) and many other returning crew. We are looking for all positions this summer however our boarding availability is currently full. If you are interested in working at Ferry Beach this summer, and can secure your own boarding, visit ferrybeach.org/jobs and fill out an application.

BOARDwalk: Awaken!

By: Doug Edwards, Board Secretary

The theme for 2023 is "Awaken." Many tend to view the word as an inspirational endeavor. Particularly as we have just experienced the last two years of a worldwide pandemic and coming off our last year's them of Resilience, we awaken to returning opportunities to experience 2023 with less restrictions and new adventures.

For me, I am awakened out of my sleep spiritually. I must admit that many of the realities of what people were facing daily were not on my radar prior to the pandemic. Of course, I was aware of civil injustices and unfair economic statuses; I just had been able to "sleep" through my days to live and get by. I'm an African American male and just wanted to exist. But I needed to wake up.

My wife and I visited Ferry Beach for a Valentine's Day community dinner after having moved to Saco four or five years ago. We both enjoyed the evening, feeling welcomed and aligned with the mission. I feel that this is where my awaking truly started. I wonder if this was the same for people who may be reading this as well. Since we are local, we have not taken advantage of a conference stay. But we have been on campus many times and have volunteered. I had awakened to the possibility of Universal Love with community.

On the other side of awakening, I am very aware of recent storm damage to the DeWolfe dining hall and the beachfront. The realities of living at this present time going through climate change and extreme weather is challenging enough without being awake to the possibilities of how that might affect this wonderful place. I am so thankful we have a great, caring staff and Executive Director that manages the campus.

I look forward to this year's theme and will incorporate it in my life as well. I will strive to "awaken" from my comfortable "sleep" and lean in to the challenge and joy of this reality. Ferry Beach Retreat and Conference Center definitely will help anchor me!



FERRY BEACH

Discovery

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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.



Annual Meeting June 24, 2023

The Annual Meeting is on Saturday, June 24, 2023.

We will be hosting a town hall meeting at 11:00 am, and holding the annual meeting at 1:15 pm. We will offer an optional lunch at noon for \$20 per person.

To vote in the meeting you must have been a member of Ferry Beach in 2022. Please register on our website at ferrybeach.org/annual-meeting or by calling 207-282-4489.