



Maine Women's Giving Tree Quarterly Review

Volume 2, Issue 3 November 2017

Maine Women's Giving Tree, PO Box 1065, Brunswick, ME 04011 mainewomensgivingtree.org

Annual Membership Meeting – September 20, 2017

Lynn Shipway, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Susan Mikesell with 19 members introducing themselves. Nominations for the coming year were presented by Nominating Committee chair Judy Collette: Vice President: Lynn Shipway; Secretary: Karen Tcheyan; and Treasurer: Diane Field. Hearing no nominations from the floor, the nominations were closed and approved unanimously. Bianca Chambers recognized and commended outgoing Co-President Susan Mikesell for her leadership, grace and confidence over the past two years. She further recognized and commended Treasurer Cyndy Bush for her careful attention to MWGT funds and her generous hosting of the summer cocktail party and Vice President Lynn Lockwood for her leadership of the Grants Committee.

Two Bylaws amendments were approved as follows:

- To add the Treasurer to the list of those with access to member giving through the Maine Community Foundation (MCF).
- To make the Communication Committee a standing committee with a friendly amendment to include the Events Committee.

The following were elected officers for 2017-2018:

- *Co-Presidents:* Bianca Chambers 2017, Lynn Lockwood 2017-2019
- *Vice President:* Lynn Shipway, 2017-2018
- *Treasurer:* Diane Field, 2017-2019
- *Secretary:* Karen Tcheyan, 2018-2018

The following were named to Standing Committees:

- *Nominating Committee:* Immediate Past Three Presidents: Susan Mikesell, Nancy Hallett, Jane Cabot*,
- *Membership Committee:* Lisa Burke*, Lili Ott*, Abbie Mott, Sandy Neiman, Lili Ott, Jane Covey
- *Grants Committee:* Peggy Harris*, Jane Cabot, Donna Bar-more, Nancy Hallett, Lynn Shipway, Judy Collette, Karen Tcheyan, Freda Bernotavicz, Susan Mikesell
- *Education Committee:* Winnie Chan*, Ann Taft, Peggy Harris, Sue Loeb, Beth Chiquoine, Sally Haggett
- *Communications Committee:* Anne Barnes*, Lisa Burke, Lisa Burke, Beth Chiquoine, Connie Conyers
- *Events Committee:* Cyndy Bush*, Kitty Paiste, Judy Collette, Lili Ott, Brenda Darcy, Diane Field, Sally Haggett, Susan Gillies

*Coordinator (s)

Susan Mikesell will be designing and distributing a membership survey in an effort to gather member preferences and opinions on a variety of issues. Results will be used by an ad hoc strategic planning committee to consider future goals and priorities for the MWGT.

Sandy Neiman and Judy Woodman (co-founders of MWGT) will serve as co-chairs of a steering committee to discuss and design an appropriate 10th year celebration of our organization for 2019.

Member News

Bianca Chambers, Co-President

It is with much sadness that two of our very early members, Pat Galbreath and Margi Sumner, passed within days of each other this August. Both will be fondly remembered for their many contributions to the Maine Women's Giving Tree—Pat for her superb editing skills whenever called upon and Margi for her incisive grant reviews. They will be missed. Please note that Pat's family asked that contributions in memory of Pat be sent in lieu of flowers to the Maine Community Foundation on behalf of the Maine Women's Giving Tree. I am pleased to report that a substantial number of contributions have already been made.

Education Meeting, October 4, 2017

Karen Tcheyan, Secretary

Education Committee member Beth Chiquoine introduced guest speakers Mary Robinson and Sunny Jo Stubbs from Home to Home and Mary Hanley from New Hope for Women to discuss their organizations' missions, programs and impact.

Home to Home (HTH)

HTH is a volunteer driven organization, founded in 1996, in response to the increase in domestic violence cases in the courts. The program's main goal is to create safe exchanges and supervised visits between joint-custody parents and their children. HTH operates out of Mid-Coast Hospital, which has the space, parking and security to deter altercations between parents when "exchanging" their children.

HTH primarily receives its referrals from the court system, but families can self refer as well. The West Bath District Court refers many of HTH's clients, but clients also come from Wiscasset, Lewiston and Portland. Many have substance abuse problems and some enter the program with Protection from Abuse Orders. HTH follows best practices to adhere to these orders and to ensure a safe environment for parents and children to meet.

Currently HTH serves between 12-15 clients in its Supervised Visitation Program and 5-6 families in its Exchange Program. Parents are charged between \$10 and \$35 per visit, depending on their ability to pay. HTH is the most affordable program of its kind in Maine. It struggles to achieve the fine balance between covering its costs and making its services accessible and affordable to low-income families. HTH had offered parenting classes

in the past, but now refers parents to other programs, such as Kids First, which provide these services. This allows HTH to focus more resources on its Supervised Visitation and Exchange programs.

HTH is working to make its services better known within its targeted communities by “remeeting” with judges, meeting with attorneys with the Courthouse Assistance Project (CHAP), holding public tabling events and maintaining a Facebook page.

The costs of running its programs include salaries of three staff, phones, marketing materials and liability insurance. These expenses are primarily funded from an endowment, plus HTH receives some funding from the First Parish Church, United Way, the state of Maine, and the court system. MWGT granted HTH \$3,000 three years ago.

New Hope for Women (NHFW)

NHFW was founded in 1981 to confront domestic violence, date violence, and stalking. It offers safe havens, support and educational resources to victims of these abuses and their communities in Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox and Waldo counties. Despite its name, NHFW also serves men and the LGBTQ community. NHFW was the recipient of a MWGT grant last year to fund “The Yellow Dress,” a play about date rape performed in area high schools. NHFW collaborates closely with PineTree Legal, Home to Home, doctor offices and other community organizations to support its clients. Its services include a 24-hour Hotline, emergency shelter, transitional housing, court advocacy, island outreach program, therapist referrals, children services, community response program and a batterer intervention program.

Mary Hanley, NHFW Advocate and Community Educator, described the many tactics used by abusers including “gas-lighting”, intimidation, financial and custody threats, isolation, physical harm, among others, to control their victims. She also explained why it is often difficult for victims to leave abusive relationships, and how NHFW supports and assists its clients through the process of leaving. “Leaving is a Process, Not an Event.” It is not unusual for victims to leave 7-8 times before they are “done”!

In 2012, NHFW began highlighting October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, by honoring victims in our communities through a memorial project called An Empty Place at the Table. The memorial is a powerful reminder of the lives taken by domestic violence. NHFW welcomes hosts to sponsor more An Empty Place at the Table memorials in our region.

Mary fielded questions about the causes of abuse, responding that there is no one, simple reason. It’s complicated and deeply rooted in our patriarchal society and ongoing exploitation and degradation of women, as well as in a deficit of positive role models for boys. During a discussion of Protection from Abuse (PFA) orders, Mary shared that one can obtain PFA orders for pets as well. Maine was the first state to create PFA orders for pets. It also created the first animal shelter in the US in 1863.

Our members had many questions for all three of our guest speakers from HTH and NHFW. Those present gained a sense for the tremendous need for the services and care of these organizations in our communities.

Calendar of Events

Please save these important dates!

Wednesday, **December 6, 2017**, 11:30 am – 2 pm, *Second Annual Holiday Luncheon/ Education Presentation Meeting*. Holden Frost House, The Highlands, Topsham, ME.

Wednesday, **January 17, 2018**, Noon – 2 pm, *Fourth Annual Winter Luncheon*, Host: Abigail Manny Paterson, Harpswell, ME.

Wednesday, **March 7, 2018**, 11:30 – 2 pm, *Education Meeting*, Thornton Oaks, Merrymeeting Room, Brunswick, ME.

Wednesday, **April 4, 2018**, 11:30 am – 2 pm, *Education Meeting*, Thornton Oask, Merrymeeting Room, Brunswick, ME.

Wednesday, **May 16, 2018**, 11:30 am - 2 pm, *Members Business Meeting*, Holden Frost House. The Highlands, Topsham, ME.

Wednesday, **June 13, 2018**, 4 pm – 6 pm, *Seventh Annual Awards Reception*, Morrell Room, Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick, ME

Please make your donation today - we are so close to our goal!

Please send your annual contributions made payable to:

The Maine Community Foundation, c/o Laura Young, Vice President, Maine Community Foundation 245 Main Street, Ellsworth, ME 04605.

Please put “membership/MWGT” on the notation line on your check.

2017 MWGT Grant Fund Goal: \$55,000

