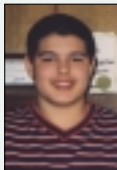


# Getting to Know Us

Our "Getting to Know Me" section has traditionally allowed us to spotlight one boy and let readers learn about his life. As this is the first issue since Welch House (our girls' home) opened, we thought this would be a wonderful opportunity to give readers a special treat and introduce both a boy and a girl. Interestingly enough, both of these children have a family connection to Opportunity Farm as well as being residents themselves.

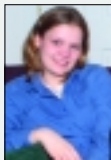


**Chris, 14**, an eighth grader at Gray/New Gloucester Middle School, has been with us for about a year and is the grandson of an alum. After living for his first nine months at the Lodge with the younger boys, Chris recently moved to Anthony House, and he's very pleased to be there because, as he puts it, "Jason, the House Manager, is an awesome cook!"

Chris is doing well with the Farm's motivational teaching program and has clear goals in sight. As he says, "The Farm helps you grow up and be mature, and I know being here is going to help me graduate from high school."

**Gina, 16**, a sophomore at Gray/New Gloucester High School, carries the distinction of being the very first resident of Welch House. Gina was already familiar with the program at the Farm since her brother lived here several years ago. While balancing the demands of school and the Farm, Gina also holds a part-time job and serves as the manager for the high school track teams.

Busy as she is, she still finds time to get the most out of being at the Farm. As she says, "The best thing about being here is having the chance to build relationships with people I'd never have met at home. Sometimes it really feels like we're sisters here at the house. We all support each other and, if somebody's having a hard day, we try to cheer them up."



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For comments or questions regarding our newsletter,  
please contact Julie Poulin or Faith York  
at 207-926-4532



# News from Gloucester Hill

*Shaping Lives For The Future • Spring 2003*

SINCE 1910  
**OPPORTUNITY FARM**  
FOR BOYS & GIRLS

## Opportunity Farm receives a \$325,000 Grant from The Kresge Foundation.



At the end of December, Opportunity Farm opened its first home for at-risk girls, and received a \$325,000 Challenge Grant from the Kresge Foundation. "We're thrilled that these events happened simultaneously – and with the help of dedicated volunteers, we are ready to raise the additional funds needed to meet the Kresge Challenge", says Ron Scott, President of the Farm.

Funding for the project has come from the generosity of foundations, individuals, trustees, corporations, staff and friends of the Farm. The Kresge Foundation awarded 158 grants in 2002 for a total of \$109,251,000. John E. Marshall, III, President and CEO of The Kresge Foundation indicated, "In this cycle of grantmaking our Trustees were pleased to support a range of organizations, including Opportunity Farm for Boys & Girls. This organization is responding to the new challenges presented by their community."

With help from honorary campaign co-chairs, Senator Olympia Snowe, former Governor John McKernan, Olympic skier Julie Parisien and former trustee, John Staples, along with a dedicated group of trustees and volunteers - Opportunity Farm has raised \$2.7 million of the \$3.6 million goal.

Before The Kresge Foundation awards a challenge grant to organizations, they must have raised a certain percentage of their goal (for Opportunity Farm that was \$2.5 million of the \$3.6 million goal)...grants are made on a challenge basis, requiring the raising of the remaining funds (\$500,000), prior to receiving any funds from Kresge. This process assures the completion of projects.

The Kresge Foundation is an independent, private foundation created by the personal gifts of Sebastian S. Kresge. It is not affiliated with any corporation or organization.

**Julie Parisien,**  
Former Olympic  
Skier and Honorary  
Co-Chair,  
Campaign for the  
Girls Campus



*"I am thankful to have had the great fortune to realize my childhood dreams of competing in the Olympics. My family and friends supported me every step of the way, and I realize that without support - dreams are just that - dreams. But if supported, a child can do anything!! Opportunity Farm offers the kind of support to boys and girls in Maine that allows for dreams to come true. I want to see every child in Maine given half the chance that I had - an opportunity to set goals, strive for those goals and achieve as much as possible! Opportunity Farm for Boys & Girls gives children hope for a better life. The caring and dedicated staff helps each child realize their potential. I support Opportunity Farm because it is an organization that cares enough to provide a chance to dream, and helps every child achieve success!"*

## Welch House girls spend the day decorating...



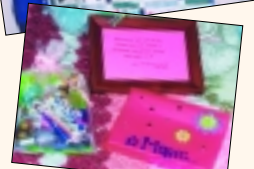
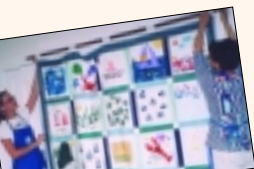
More  
inside...

## Junior League Project Brightens Welch House

*A recent visit by the 2002/2003 Provisional Class of the Portland Junior League has helped turn a section of the Welch House (our first girls' home) into a room as spirited and cheerful as the girls themselves. With plants, paints, pillows and a spectacular quilt, the area at the top of the stairs has gone from an empty "walk through" to a comfortable, cozy lounge.*

*Portland Junior League President, Susan Scanlon, explained why Welch House was selected to receive the group's yearly project. "One of the tenets of our mission is to develop the potential of women," said Scanlon, "and these girls have untapped potential beyond our wildest imagination."*

*Fundraising for the event was so successful that the group was able to purchase a beautiful granite bench for the garden. Engraved with a quote from the philosopher, Goethe, reading "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it" - the bench will serve as a constant reminder that anything is possible.*



## Trustees in the News...

**James M. "Jim" Giffune** was recently appointed by the courts to lead the management team as the chief executive officer in the sale of the Great Northern Paper Company. Giffune, a retired paper industry executive, has not spent much time at his New Gloucester home lately, instead many of his waking hours have been consumed in the negotiations with GNP and Toronto based Brascan Corporation. During a televised address on February 5th, Governor Baldacci recognized Jim for his hard work. "We were successful because we had someone trusted by all sides... Jim has done an extraordinary job assessing the condition of the mill so that it is attractive to a long-term buyer," says Baldacci. Jim began serving on the Board last fall, and his expertise in building projects has proven incredibly helpful in the construction of the first girls' home.



**Margaret "Meg" LePage** has been honored as one of the recipients of this year's YWCA Women of Achievement Award. Women of Achievement is a national program dedicated to the empowerment and advancement of women. Locally, the awards were established to recognize women in Cumberland County who have demonstrated leadership and achievement in their professional and/or community lives. "Meg's leadership at the Farm as board chair - during the strategic planning process - led to the expansion to include a girls' campus," says Michael Healy, current Chair of the Opportunity Farm Board. Meg and the other honorees, Madeleine G. Corson, Jill C. Duxon, Betsanne Holmes and Peggy L. McGehee were recognized at the Achievement Awards Banquet on April 10, 2003 at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland.



**Elisabeth "Betsy" Kelly** has recently been named to the Board of Trustees for Opportunity Farm. After more than 10 years as an executive for L.L. Kids, Betsy recently became General Merchandise Manager of the Retail Division for L.L.Bean. She has served on the board for Portland Stage Company, is currently a trustee for Outward Bound, and is on the marketing committee for the Gulf of Maine Aquarium. Betsy has three grown children and resides in Yarmouth with her husband, John.



**Lincoln F. Ladd** and his wife, Gloria, have been honored at the 2003 Watring Can Awards as Outstanding Philanthropists. The awards, sponsored by Maine Initiatives, celebrates grassroots activists and donors working for social, economic and environmental justice in Maine. Lincoln and Gloria are leaders and teachers by example. Lincoln is an active volunteer who has served as a trustee for Bates College and the Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation in addition to serving as recent past chairman of the Filene Foundation. This month he will receive an honorary degree from the University of Maine, Farmington. Through the Helen & George Ladd Charitable Corporation, their philanthropy focuses on how to make life better for Maine people. Lincoln has been a trustee at the Farm for several years, serving as an officer since 2000.

## Summer's Coming

With the arrival of spring, summer can't be far behind. Activities Director **Mike Dehetre** is already hard at work planning a season of fun in the sun - as well as volunteering, work-study programs and special projects.

The summer program at Opportunity Farm is financed, in part, by a generous group of donors we call the Summer Club. Invitations to join our Summer Club are mailed in February to donors who made a gift to the Annual Fund before the first of the year, offering them the opportunity to send a separate gift specifically dedicated to the summer program. In exchange for their extra support, they receive mention in our newsletter as well as the chance to join us for our annual Summer's End picnic - in other words, Summer Club members get more than the knowledge that they're supporting a great program, they also get to come to a great party!

If you'd like to join our 2003 Summer Club, we'd love to have you, but remember - membership is reserved for those making second gifts only. Just use the enclosed envelope to send your gift and write "Summer Program" on the outside of the envelope. Thanks, and see you at the Summer's End picnic!

## Academics...the Second Highest Priority



Academics are second only to providing safe and stable homes in the Farm's mission of helping to prepare youth for their future. As Opportunity Farm's Academic Advisor, **Russ Brown's** daily interaction with the children, their teachers, the school administration and other staff members at the Farm has made him the point of contact for all issues surrounding achieving and maintaining academic success for the kids. Russ is also the person most responsible for ensuring that communication flows smoothly between the schools and the Farm.

With 29 Opportunity Farm kids in the public schools, that flow of communication is extremely important. Russ says, "The relationship is vital to the success of our young people. We couldn't do what we do without their support. I feel fortunate knowing that our youth have the privilege of going to school here. Educators in this district care about kids and are tremendous people. That's an unbeatable combination."

When a child comes to the Farm, they have already made a decision that they want things to go differently, so in a large way they are already heading in the right direction. Once here they get a fresh start in a new home and a new school and we support them in establishing good habits. "The kids come to an understanding that the only real failure is lack of effort. After they develop some confidence in their abilities and discover their future possibilities they usually do the rest—with some helpful reminders along the way. My proudest moments are when the young people here start taking pride in what they do. It's a great transformation." Recent report cards continue to show much success and improvement in the kids' academics, with many making their best grades ever.

It's obvious Russ has helped the kids learn some great lessons, but they've had some lessons for him, as well. "I've learned the true meaning of strength and resiliency. I've also learned never to leave food on my desk." Keep up the good work Russ!

## Golf, Golf & more Golf...Two Tournaments Benefit Opportunity Farm for Boys & Girls

**Downeast Energy** has announced that Opportunity Farm for Boys & Girls will be the beneficiary of its 10th Annual Golf Classic in Brunswick, and for the 2nd year Opportunity Farm will benefit from proceeds raised at the **Sea Dog Golf Invitational** in Gray.

The Downeast Energy Classic will be held on June 9th at the Brunswick Golf Club. The SeaDog Golf Invitational will be held on Saturday, June 21st at Spring Meadows Golf Club.

"We're thrilled to have been chosen as this year's beneficiary for both of these events," says Ron Scott, president of Opportunity Farm. "This is an exciting time at the Farm, and it is equally exciting to be partnering with these two organizations."

"Opportunity Farm is a long standing Maine organization. We are proud to be working with them as

this year's beneficiary of our golf tournament," says Betsy Marell, Vice President of Marketing for Downeast.

Fred Forsley, the President of Shipyard Brewing, (parent company of Sea Dog) and a native of Gray, offered to sponsor this golf tournament, starting last year and continuing for future years. Fred has fond memories of attending the Gray/New Gloucester schools and the friends he made there, like Opportunity Farm alumnus, Bill Marshall. "Fred has many close friends who lived at Opportunity Farm. We thought this would be a great way to hold a fun event and at the same time, give back to a terrific organization," says Bruce Forsley, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Shipyard.

Both tournaments sold out to players and teams early. Sponsorships are still available for the Sea Dog Invitational. If you would like to more information on either of these tournaments, please contact Julie Poulin, Director of Development for Opportunity Farm at 926-4532 or jpoulin@opportunityfarm.org

## New Staff



When the Farm's Clinical Social Worker position became available it was important to find the right person. The Farm's Clinical Social Worker is responsible for providing counseling services to the children and their families as well as offering guidance and support to the staff working with the kids.

We're pleased to report that Renee Williams has joined the team. Renee is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over a decade of experience working with kids and their families, most recently as a family therapist in the substance abuse program of Day One. She has also worked at Ingraham, St. Mary's Regional Hospital and The Spurwink School. Renee also has a personal connection to Opportunity Farm - her husbands uncle grew up here fifty years ago.

"I love working with kids," Renee says, "and the Farm is a safe, healthy and nurturing environment."

