

M.A.I.N. Update

In Solidarity for Peace, Bread & Justice!

A Joint Project of Maine Equal Justice & the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods.

Judy Guay

**Tireless advocate,
wise women and
great friend!**



Founding member, M.A.I.N. president, and our beloved friend Judy Guay died peacefully on February 28, 2006 at Eastern Maine Medical Center. Her best friend and husband Ron was at her side, and she was surrounded by her children, other relatives, and a few friends. Although Judy's illness prevented her from regular participation in M.A.I.N. activities over the past year, we continued to depend on her wisdom and experience. We were especially happy that she took part in the November conference. A memorial to celebrate Judy's life is being planned for the spring. We'll let you know when. The insert at the center of this newsletter is a tribute to Judy's tremendous spirit, and contributions to this world.

M.A.I.N. is grateful to several people who have helped out in Judy's absence: Russell Anderson, MAIN's new president, Shannon Collins treasurer, and Steve Hoad meeting minutes taker. We plan to have formal elections at our fall conference. If you are interested in volunteering, contact us.

M.A.I.N.'s new contact information:

M.A.I.N., P.O. Box 69, Hallowell, ME 04347
Russell Anderson, 832-4754, info@midcoastmain.org
Steve Hoad, 445-2141, mainefun40@hotmail.com

Mary Moves On...

With great sadness and deep appreciation MEJP's Board of Directors accepted the resignation of Mary Henderson, who served Maine Equal Justice with extraordinary stewardship and dedication as its executive director for ten years. Mary began her career in legal services work in 1984 as a staff attorney for Pine Tree Legal Assistance. When changes in federal law prohibited Pine Tree from representing low-income people through class actions, and administrative and legislative advocacy, Mary and Chris Hastedt left PTLA to form Maine Equal Justice in 1996. From that moment on, Mary put her heart and soul in MEJP, and in advocacy for low-income Mainers – to make sure they have access to health care, welfare benefits, food assistance, housing, transportation, and other basic services and supports.

Mary T. Henderson Scholarship Fund

In honor of Mary's tremendous contributions to social and economic justice in Maine, MEJP's staff and Board are pleased to announce the creation of the Mary T. Henderson Scholarship Fund.

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Want to be on our mailing list or e-mail network? Call or e-mail us, or see page 19

Maine Equal Justice Partners
126 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME 04330
(207) 626-7058
www.mejp.org info@mejp.org



Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods
P.O. Box 69
Hallowell, ME 04347
Russell Anderson 832-4754 info@midcoastmain.org

Please feel free to copy and share this newsletter. Also on www.mejp.org

Overview

Current Legislative Work

January and February were busy months for MEJP and MAIN. Even though this is a short legislative session, we have a number of updates to share about legislation and policy changes affecting low-income Mainers. The following list provides an overview of the areas covered in this newsletter:

- When the legislature met in January, its first action was to unanimously pass legislation appropriating \$5 million to the low-income **heating assistance** program (LIHEAP). (See **page 14** for more details about new funding for LIHEAP)
- The transition to the new **Medicare Part D** prescription drug plan, which started on January 1st, has been extremely challenging for the state and for the thousands of low-income Medicare recipients, whose prescription drugs were previously covered by Medicaid or the Drugs for the Elderly program. (See **page 5** for more details on the transition to Medicare Part D.)
- On February 1st, Congress passed a final **Federal Budget Reconciliation Bill** (also known as the Deficit Reduction Act) which includes a number of significant changes and cuts to programs for low-income families and individuals. (See **page 3** for more information about the final budget reconciliation bill.
- In Maine, the Health and Human Services Committee unanimously passed a bill to allow families not on TANF but living below 130% of the federal poverty level to apply for **Alternative Aid** once per year instead of once in a lifetime. (See **page 8** for more information about this legislation.)
- Enrollment in the **MaineCare program for non-disabled childless adults** between the ages of 21 and 64, often referred to as non-categoricals, has dropped dramatically since

the freeze was put in place a year ago. The Department of Health and Human Services is expected to re-open enrollment over the next month on a very limited basis. (See **page 4 & 7** for a more detailed update on the MaineCare non-categorical program.)

- A much needed increase in the **minimum wage** has passed the Maine House and Senate! We are hopeful that both bodies will again vote in favor on their 2nd vote, and that the Governor will sign it. The legislation increases minimum wage from \$6.50 to \$7.00 an hour, giving many families living below the federal poverty level \$1000 more in income per year. Watch the news carefully for any actions needed on this bill.

MaineCare co-payments for prescription drugs or services

Have co-payments
made it difficult for you or
someone you know
to get health care?

We need to know!

Recent cuts at the federal and state level may lead to increases in co-payments for MaineCare members for services and prescription drugs. Many people don't realize the negative impact that an increase in co-payments – even what may seem like a small increase – can have on MaineCare recipients' access to healthcare. But we know that even an increase of one or two dollars can force people to go without services. There's a lot of research to back this up.

If MaineCare co-payments for prescription drugs or services have made it difficult for you or someone you know to access health care,

**please call Crystal Bond
at 1-866-626-7059 x205**

Federal Budget – Cuts & Rule Changes

Not Good News for People with Low Incomes

Thank you to everyone who made phone calls and sent e-mails urging our Senators to vote against the federal reconciliation budget bill. Even though the bill passed through Congress, Maine's entire congressional delegation voted against the budget reconciliation bill. The final votes were extremely close in both the Senate and the House. In the Senate, the bill passed 51-50 with Vice President Cheney flying in from a trip abroad to break the tie. The bill passed in the House by just two votes.

The final Budget Reconciliation Bill, which was signed by the President on February 6, includes a number of substantial changes and cuts to programs for low-income families and individuals. The bill includes significant policy changes and cuts to the Medicaid program, major changes in the TANF program, and cuts to federal funding for child support and foster care.

MEDICAID

Changes to the Medicaid program target low-income people who benefit from the program. These changes remove many of the federal protections that prevented states from imposing unreasonable levels of cost sharing in the program and that assured that Medicaid recipients, particularly children, receive medically necessary services.

The federal budget reconciliation **allows states to impose significant increases in cost sharing and changes to benefits** for Medicaid recipients. While these new provisions are extremely worrisome, it is important to note that these changes are *optional* for states. States do not have to implement these new changes. However, if a state decides to make these changes, low-income people living below and just above the poverty level, could face substantial increases in co-pays. Recipients with incomes just above the poverty level including children could be forced to pay premiums for the first time ever. All recipients

could also face harmful increases in costs for prescription drugs which are not on the state's preferred drug list.

It will come as no surprise to M.A.I.N. members that research clearly shows that increases in cost sharing are likely to cause Medicaid recipients to go without health care services and medications, or not to enroll in Medicaid at all. In fact, most of the savings that Congress expects from the increases in cost sharing will not come from collecting increased co-payments and/or premiums. They expect the saving to come from people simply not using the services they need.

In addition, the budget bill allows states to design new Medicaid benefit packages that look more like commercial health insurance plans than the comprehensive coverage they have been providing. The people hardest hit by these changes will be children (except for children in foster care and adoption assistance) and working parents and pregnant women with incomes over 133% of the poverty level. State's are still required to provide Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) as "wrap-around" coverage. However, the way in which it is provided will be more cumbersome and complex, causing many children to go without needed care.

TANF

The federal reconciliation bill reauthorized the TANF program for an additional five years. The federal authority for spending on this program ran out over four years ago and has been operating on a series of temporary reauthorizations since then. The TANF provisions in the bill will make it much harder for the state to meet its work participation rates. In Maine this means that nearly twice as many families will be expected to meet a 30 hour per week **work requirement**. Fifty-percent of all TANF families will be expected to meet the federal work requirements while two parent families will face a 90% work participation rate requirement.

(Continued on page 6)

Update!

MaineCare Non-categorical Program

The MaineCare program for “non-categoricals” has some good news following the cutbacks and shut down in 2005. In March 2005, enrollment in the MaineCare program for childless adults—the so-called “non-categoricals”—between the ages of 21 and 64 was shut down. On December 5, 2005, services for this group were severely cut back. Non-categorical MaineCare recipients continue to receive many of the major MaineCare services such as hospital, doctor’s visits, and prescription drugs. However mental health outpatient visits have been limited and other important services such as podiatry, occupational therapy, durable medical equipment, and targeted case management have been cut completely.

Since the time that the program was frozen, enrollment has dropped from a high of 24,925 in February 2005 to 12,850 in January 2006. Participants are moving off the program at an average rate of over 1,000 individuals per month. While some of those leaving this group have moved into other MaineCare coverage categories such as disability, 75% or 8,429 of these individuals have completely lost their MaineCare coverage. Currently there are over 7,700 people in this group on a waiting list for MaineCare benefits.

Enrollment Re-opens

In response to MAIN’s requests, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has recently agreed to re-open enrollment for this group of adults on a limited basis. The plan is to let as many people into the program each month who leave it—for example, if 1,000 people leave the program in February, then there will be room for 1,000 new members in March.

The Department will soon send a letter to the first group of people on the waiting list inviting them to apply for coverage on a first-come, first-serve basis. Some people have gotten discouraged

by the size of the waiting list and have not signed up. This new development makes it important for anyone who wants coverage under this group to be sure to **get onto the waiting list**. If you are on the list, be sure to **respond right away to any letter about enrollment** that you get from DHHS.

Enrollment will stay at the January level (12,850 members) until at least June when the Department has agreed to assess whether additional people can be added. This program is under a spending cap set by the federal government. The Department must determine if there are enough funds to add new members without going over the federal spending limit. MEJP and MAIN will continue to monitor the Department’s actions. We will advocate to raise enrollment above current levels as quickly as possible.

Broaden Mental Health Services

Meanwhile, legislation that would make outpatient mental health services more accessible to this group has been introduced by Rep. Joe Brannigan (D. Portland). This bill, LD 1701, would allow members to exceed the 16-visit limit on outpatient mental health services when medically necessary. MAIN strongly supports this effort. Recently, staff from Maine Equal Justice met with two groups of people eligible for MaineCare non-categorical coverage in Bangor and Portland. We asked them for advice about what we should be advocating for in this program. Most felt strongly that reopening the program was most important, but that restoring certain services was critical as well. Eliminating the limit on outpatient mental health services was a priority for both groups.

[**NOTE:** Appointments to manage medication are not counted in the 16-visit limit.]

We expect more changes in this program in the next months. We will keep *MAIN Update* readers posted as they develop.

IMPORTANT information on MaineCare Non-categorical services—Page 7

Medicare and Part D Drug Coverage: Information for People Enrolled in MaineCare or the Low Cost Drug Program (DEL)

Please note:

[If you are enrolled in MaineCare or DEL, and you don't have Medicare, your benefits won't change.]

After months of planning – and worry - Medicare Part D started on January 1st. Medicare Part D, a federal program designed by Congress, provides prescription drug coverage through a prescription drug plan (PDP) run by private insurance companies. Maine's low income seniors and people with disabilities got their prescription drugs through MaineCare or the Low Cost Drug Program (known as DEL) until the end of 2005. Now participants enrolled in MaineCare and Medicare ("duals") and those enrolled in DEL and Medicare ("DELS") get most of their prescription drugs through a Part D plan.

State Takes Action

The shift to Part D has difficult and confusing all over the country. In Maine, participants, advocates, providers, and people in the Governor's office and DHHS worked together to try to make sure people wouldn't fall between the cracks. Here are some of the actions that were taken:

- **Enrollment assistance to improve plan coverage:** Duals (MaineCare members who were also enrolled in Medicare) were randomly assigned to a PDP by the federal government in the fall. The state checked each plan assignment and, if it wasn't a good match, the state reassigned people to another plan that covered more of the member's drugs. The state also found a good match for most DEL members enrolled in Medicare.

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Many people are still having problems getting the drugs they need.

Here's who you can call for help!

DHHS Pharmacy Help Desk
1-866-796-2463 or
TTY 207-287-1828

Call the help desk if you are a MaineCare or DEL member, and:

- You have questions about which prescription drug plan (PDP) you are in, or
- You have questions about your co-payments, or
- You want to change to another plan.

Legal Services for the Elderly
Hotline
1-877-774-7772

Have you been told that one or more of your drugs aren't covered by your plan?

- First, have your doctor ask your plan (PDP) for an "exception."
- If your plan says **no**, then call **Legal Services for the Elderly** for help with an appeal.

If you have questions about what is covered by your PDP, you can talk with your **doctor** or call **the customer service number at your PDP**. If you don't know the number, you can get it from your pharmacist or the Pharmacy Help Desk.

(Continued from page 3—Federal Budget)

Most states admit that it will be impossible for the state to meet this requirement. This is not because TANF families don't want to work, but instead because many parents and children in these families face significant barriers to work. Many have health conditions that severely limit their ability to work. Others have no transportation, while many others are struggling to escape domestic violence.

The **Parents as Scholars** program is also at risk. Since 1996 federal law has not counted educational activities as "work" once a person has been in school for more than 12 months. However, since Maine used our own "maintenance of effort" dollars to fund the PaS Program these students could continue with their education without hurting the State's federal participation rate. But under this new law starting October 1, 2006, families in "separate state programs" like PaS will need to meet the federal work requirements. This means that education won't count as work after 12 months. MAIN and our allies are working closely with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that the PaS Program will be able to continue to the greatest extent possible.

CHILD CARE

The federal reconciliation bill provides an additional \$1 billion over the next five years in additional child care funding. However, the increased demand that is likely to result from the stricter work requirements far outpaces new funds.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that an additional appropriation of \$8.4 billion—eight times more than was appropriated—is the amount that would really be needed to meet child care and other work-related costs of the new TANF requirements. In fact, the CBO estimates that more than \$11 billion is needed to both meet the new work requirements *and* ensure that their current child care funding keeps pace with inflation.

CHILD SUPPORT

The federal reconciliation bill cuts federal matching funds for "state performance incentive payments." States currently receive these incentive payments for meeting performance standards. If the state chooses to reinvest that money into child support activities, it is permitted to draw down federal matching funds. In Maine, this money is used specifically for child support enforcement. The state will no longer be able to receive a federal match for these dollars starting October 1, 2007.

The budget reconciliation bill made dramatic changes and cuts to programs for low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities. But, as mentioned above, the State does not have to make many of the most harmful changes to the Medicaid program. In addition, MEJP and MAIN will begin working with allies to ensure that the new TANF provisions do not harm Maine's low-income families with children. This includes participants in the Parents as Scholars program and families who need help to overcome multiple barriers to work. Please help us! ▼ ▼ ▼

Will TANF changes hurt your family? SHARE YOUR STORY

We are looking for people willing to share how the federal TANF changes for mandatory work activities will affect your family. (See pages 3 & 6—Federal Budget: *TANF*)

- How will these changes affect your family?
- Are you currently enrolled in the Parents as Scholars Program?
- Are you currently under an exemption from ASPIRE participation because you or your child have disabilities that make it impossible for you to "participate" for 30 hours per week?
- Are you a two-parent family receiving TANF that is unable to participate in a work activity for a combined 55 hours per week?

We would like to share your stories with lawmakers and policy makers in order to help them understand the needs of your family and others like yours. Please contact Crystal Bond at MEJP to share your story. cbond@mej.org, or call toll-free: 1-866-626-7059 x 205.



Important Notices

MaineCare Non-Categoricals

How You Can Get Needed Services

Some services for people receiving MaineCare through the non-categorical program were cut back in December, 2005.

The following services were cut, but will be covered in certain circumstances:

1. **Lab work, X-Rays and other imaging services:** Non-Categoricals can still get these services, but only if the service is provided at a hospital in-patient or out-patient facility. (If the hospital contracts with an outside business for these services, then they may not be covered!)
2. **Diabetic Supplies:** Insulin, lancets, lancet devices, alcohol swabs, testing strips (blood and urine), glucometers and syringes are all covered with a prescription.
3. **Hospice Services:** If a Non-Categorical needs hospice services, they can call their eligibility worker to apply for MaineCare based upon disability. They should be immediately put on full MaineCare so they can get hospice and other needed services.

[**SPECIAL NOTE:** **Mental health appointments** to manage medication are not counted in the 16-visit limit on outpatient mental health services.]

How to prevent being dropped from MaineCare

If you are in the MaineCare program as a non-categorical, your eligibility needs to be recertified once a year. When you receive the recertification form in the mail, please fill it out and return it by the required date. If you miss the deadline, MaineCare will send you a letter saying that your benefits will end by a certain date. When you get this letter, call your eligibility worker, whose number is listed on the letter and tell her/him that you want to continue your MaineCare coverage and that you will send in your recertification form. Send in your recertification form IMMEDIATELY. If you do not respond to this letter, you will be dropped from MaineCare. To get MaineCare coverage again, you must call to be placed on the non-categorical waiting list. There are currently 7700 people on the waiting list.

You May Get More Food Stamps If You Apply for Fuel Assistance

Should I apply for Fuel Assistance?

Yes. People who apply for and receive fuel assistance (the HEAP or LIHEAP program) may get more Food Stamps. This happens because getting HEAP – even a small amount – shows that you pay for part of your heating costs. People who pay part of their heating costs get more Food Stamps, than those who don't pay for heating.

Should I apply for Fuel Assistance Even If I Live in Subsidized Housing?

Yes. If you live in Public Housing or use a Section 8 voucher for your housing, you should still apply for HEAP. It doesn't matter whether you pay for heat separately or if it's included in your rent.

Getting even just \$5.00 in HEAP may increase your Food Stamps. So, it is worth applying for HEAP!

To apply, contact your local Community Action Program.

Maine's Alternative Aid Program

Getting behind in the rent, automobile breakdowns, and child-care crises are all too familiar problems for low-income working families.

But, in Maine there's help when crises like these threaten a family's ability to get or keep a job. And it looks like that help will soon improve.

Maine's Alternative Aid Program gives low-income families with children just over the TANF eligibility limits the short-term help they need to get or keep a job. It helps with things like car repairs, child care, uniforms and even housing-related emergencies.

For example, a family of three with income under 133% of the poverty level (\$1,840 a month for this family) may qualify for help to fix the crisis in the form of a voucher equaling up to \$1,455.

But, there's a hitch—right now families can only get this help once in a lifetime. We all know that there's no such limit on the emergencies that these families face.

For many years MAIN has been advocating to make this program more available to the families who need it. Late last summer representatives of MAIN, the Maine Women's Lobby and the TANF Advisory Council met with the Commissioner and staff from the Department of Health and

Human Services. We argued that the Alternative Aid Program should be available to families at least once a year and the Commissioner agreed.

This January the Department submitted LD 1854, sponsored by Representative David Webster (D. Freeport) and Senator Richard Rosen (R. Hancock). **LD 1854 eliminates the lifetime limit on Alternative Aid and replaces it with the more reasonable limit of once every 12 months.** After a public hearing with favorable testimony from both advocates and the Department, the Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee gave its unanimous support to the bill, making final enactment all but certain.

Shannon's story helped the Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee understand the need to make this change. Shannon works hard and long hours as a waitress. When she had to take two weeks off from her job due to illness, she didn't get paid. After her sickness, she fell behind in her bills. Soon, her family faced being evicted from their apartment and Shannon feared that the family would end up living in her car. With the help of her family advocate at the Head Start program in Gardiner, Shannon applied for Alternative Aid. She got a \$1400 voucher that prevented her family from being evicted and kept her electricity on. The voucher also paid for a couple

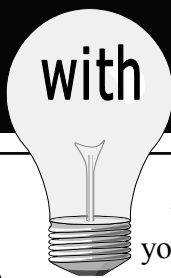
months of rent, allowing Shannon to get more caught up on all of her bills.

But recently Shannon had to stay home from work again, this time to care for her ill children. At the same time, her car, which she needs to get to her job, broke down and needed \$1200 worth of repairs. Once again she has fallen behind and her family faces eviction. But this time, unfortunately, Shannon could not turn to the Alternative Aid Program for help because she had already received her once-in-a-lifetime assistance through the program.

Low-income families, like Shannon's, making less than 133% of the poverty level are living on the edge, struggling to make ends meet. It is unfair and unrealistic to expect crises to occur only once in their lifetimes. Shannon's story helped to persuade lawmakers about the need to make this program more responsive to the needs of low-income families—to help them keep their lives more stable, to help them get a job, or prevent them from losing the one they have.

If the full legislature agrees with the Health and Human Services Committee's favorable report on this bill, this new law will go into effect sometime this summer.

MAIN will keep *MAIN Update* readers posted on the progress of this important piece of legislation.



It's hard to keep up with electrical bills, especially in the winter. We hope this information will help answer questions you may have about your rights - if you need help with your electric bill, if you get behind in your payments, or if the electric company says it is going to disconnect your service.

Can I get help paying my electric bills?

When you apply for HEAP (fuel assistance) at your local Community Action Agency, they will tell you if you are also eligible for a break on your electric bill. People who get a housing subsidy are not eligible for this program. For more information, contact your local Community Action Agency.

You may also be eligible for help through your town or city's General Assistance Program. General assistance is often only available to people whose income is under a certain limit. However, the income limits can be waived in an emergency - for example if it is necessary to avoid electricity disconnection. To apply, contact your Town Office or City Hall.

During the winter months, my electric bills go way up and I can't afford to pay them. What can I do?

Contact your electric company. They should work with you to set up a special payment plan to spread out high winter bills (covering mid-November to mid-April) over a longer period of time. This means you will pay less during the winter months, when your bills are highest, then pay off the money still owed over the following summer. The entire back bill usually must be paid off by the following November 1st.

What if there's a month when I can't afford to pay my whole bill?

If you can't pay all of your bill, call the electric company and ask for a payment plan. In deciding

the plan, they will look at your ability to pay and your past payment history and may suggest you pay more in the summer so that you can pay less in the winter when monthly bills are often high. If you don't pay according to the plan you agree to, the utility can send you a 3-day disconnect notice (except in the winter - see page 13). If you get a 3-day disconnection notice, it means you'll have to pay the whole bill right away, unless you are able to get the company to agree to change the payment plan.

What can I do if the electric company sends me a disconnect notice?

In most cases, the company will send a 14-day disconnect notice (in some cases, it's as little as 3 days). In general, you will need to pay any back money owed by the disconnect date to keep the company from shutting off your power. Your power can generally not be shut off after 3:00 p.m., or on a Friday, during the weekend, on a legal holiday or the day before a legal holiday, or any day the office is closed.

If I have an illness or disability, can I stop the disconnection?

If you or a member of your family is seriously ill, the company won't disconnect your power for at least 30 days. The 30 days can be renewed. Have the doctor call the company (or call yourself if you can't get the doctor right away). You may need to get a letter from the doctor. Even though you will be given this 'grace period', you will still need to eventually pay the bill.

What if my landlord gets my power shut-off?

If you are a tenant, and the electric bill is in the landlord's name, your power can't be disconnected without your being offered the chance to put the service in your name. Let the electric company know you are the tenant. You must also get at least 10-days notice before any disconnection. You don't have to pay the landlord's back bill.

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M.A.I.N. 2005 Conference: *Inspiring Leadership to End Poverty*



(MAIN was fortunate to have Judy at this conference particularly since it turned out to be her last. Thanks to Ted and Laura Moore for making it happen.)

It was exciting to have so many people attend our November 15th Leadership conference in Lewiston, and to be able to attend myself. I hope that the conference inspired participants to share the information and skills learned with people in their own communities. MAIN hopes to offer some workshops around the state in the near future.

PTO, Girl Scouts/Cub Scouts, and Sunday school are the roots of my leadership. My passion came from wanting the best for my children, for all children. Eventually my involvement led me to a position on the Bangor School Committee. After that, I was part of creating M.A.I.N. because we knew that poor people needed to take the lead in ending poverty. I never intended to be a leader but once I got started, I realized that working together, we can make a difference.

I hope you will be inspired by all the leaders we heard from on the 15th to find what brings out your passion to speak up and step outside of your comfort zone. We must encourage and support each other as we “learn as we lead.” Our work to recognize the dignity of every individual and meet the economic human rights of all must be led by us, the poor. Justice and goodness will win out if we all work together.

Judy Guay



Poverty is wrong and it ain't gonna change unless you and I make it! We must stand up, come out and let our voices be heard. Don't wait for others to do it. You have a responsibility as a human being to do it, and it makes you feel good!

James Varner, President of Greater Bangor NAACP

Thanks to the members of our planning committee for all their hard work over the summer and fall, to other volunteers who did set-up, clean-up, took photos and all the things that made this conference a big success. And a final thanks to all of you who attended, donated money, provided childcare and helped to get people to the conference by giving rides and getting the word out all over the state. YOU made it all possible!

Thank you!



I got started by watching things around me. My compassion and conscience wouldn't allow me to just sit by and not get involved. Nobody can make changes by themselves. We have to work together. Keep talking and talking and sooner or later someone will listen. Every little change adds up to make things better. My passion keeps me going.

Nikki McLean, Portland Housing Authority; POWER

A little over a year ago I got involved through the Preble Street Consumer Advocacy voter project. I learned that we as individuals in Maine have a very unique situation in that we can actually go to Augusta and speak with our elected representatives. It makes me feel good about myself that even though I am homeless, I too have a voice-- I too can and must be heard.



Charles Veit, Preble Street Resource Consumer Advocate; Region 1 Homeless Council



I knew that I lived in the richest nation in the world but it never occurred to me that I had any rights let alone that I should stand up for them. Then I heard a speaker from POWER who said that poverty in the U.S. is caused by our governments violating our economic human rights. That's what made me get off my butt and get involved. POWER is part of the Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign (<http://www.economichumanrights.org/>) My activism in these organizations gives me a reason to get out of bed every morning...to build a movement that includes EVERYONE but is led by poor people working to eliminate poverty by meeting everyone's basic economic human rights 100% guaranteed...no means test or eligibility requirement to measure our entitlement to justice.

Jesse Leah Vear, Portland Organizing to Win Economic Rights (POWER) and the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign POWER@riseup.net 650--5092

To be a leader, you have to start from a place where you can't do anything else. Poverty makes you invisible because it makes others uncomfortable. Systems that are supposed to help us often trap us.



Instead we need to empower people by working together to break out of the traps and the fear. We must be willing to change our beliefs about ourselves and other things. Say the truth that is your life experience and stand proud for speaking out.

Melinda Davis, Advocacy Initiative Network of Maine, 1-888-375-5969

Getting involved in MAIN helped me understand how we are governed, controlled and conditioned by government policies and other outside forces, and maybe this situation that I find myself in isn't all my fault. Together we can make sure that the individual—their uniqueness and their needs – are not lost in the system.

Russell Anderson, MAIN's president and coordinator of Midcoast MAIN



I didn't intend on being a leader but because I wanted to be a better father than what I had, I got involved when asked. I took advantage of every opportunity to learn, step out of my comfort zone and use these experiences to better my role as a father and to help other men.

Dan Roy, Southern Kennebec Child Development Center Policy Council, Board of Directors, and the Increasing Men's Involvement Project.

Part of leadership is friendships that are made. Our groups and spaces should be warm and welcoming to everyone. Fear of the unknown often keeps people apart. We need to lead through learning. Learn about our allies; be open to change; be open to learning all the time. Let your passions and interests, move you to get involved.

Steve Hoad, Leader on disability rights and ending poverty. mainefun40@hotmail.com



Maine Equal Justice Proclamation Recognizing the Work of Mary T. Henderson

Whereas, Mary T. Henderson has spent the last quarter century working to bring justice, equality and economic security to low-income Maine people; and

Whereas, throughout that time she has had the courage, heart and intellect to imagine a better world, and the spirit and skill to move us toward that world; and

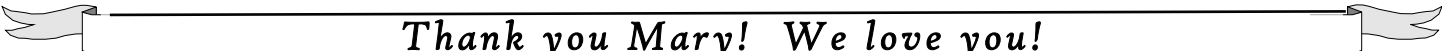
Whereas, her bold vision and endless perseverance have resulted in thousands of Maine people gaining access to health care, higher education, basic income and better lives; and

Whereas, with her gentle manner, but strong commitment she has turned complex laws and regulations into tangible solutions that bring food, shelter, and health care to people throughout Maine every day; and

Whereas, the influence and inspiration of her work has traveled far beyond Maine's borders resulting in model programs serving many thousands throughout the nation; and

Whereas, the light of compassion and justice that she has brought into the lives of many is no ordinary light, but one that will continue to shine for many years and lead the way toward our critical next steps;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT there is created a Mary T. Henderson Scholarship Fund that will give low-income people in Maine the opportunity to strengthen their advocacy skills for themselves, their families and their neighbors, and that this is a fitting tribute to a person who has contributed so much of her own life to that important goal.



Thank you Mary! We love you!

(Continued from page 1— Mary Moves On)

The Fund will provide opportunities for low-income people to strengthen their advocacy skills and learn more about how to participate in effecting social change. It will be used to pay the fees and related costs of participating in workshops, trainings, and other educational events for low-income participants. We envision this Fund to be a lasting recognition of a woman who has given so much of herself so that others could have a voice on the issues that affect their lives.

Mary has taken a position in the Maine Office of Substance Abuse. We wish her all the best!

If you wish to contribute to the Mary Henderson Scholarship Fund, you may send a check, payable to:
Maine Equal Justice
with a notation
"MH Scholarship Fund".

Send contributions to:
Maine Equal Justice
126 Sewall Street
Augusta, ME 04330

(Continued from page 5—Medicare Part D)

➤ **Assistance with Plan costs:** Part D made drug costs higher for many people so:

- For DEL members, the state decided to pay:
 - ✓ The cost of Part D premiums;
 - ✓ Half the cost of the deductible;
 - ✓ 50% of the cost of brand name drugs up to \$10 per drug; and
 - ✓ When people reach the ‘donut hole’ (when the member needs to pay the full cost of drugs), the state will pay the same amount that was paid under the DEL program.
- For MaineCare members (who don’t need to pay the premium or deductible and who don’t have a ‘donut hole’), the state will pay:
 - ✓ 50% of the cost of the co-payment for brand name drugs, reducing the cost for brand name drugs from \$3 to \$1.50 for most MaineCare members.

➤ **Making more people eligible for extra help.** DEL participants who are also enrolled in the Medicare Savings Program (also known as QMB, SLMB and QI) are able to get a better subsidy so their drugs don’t cost as much.

The Medicare Savings Programs pay the cost of the Medicare Part **B** premium (currently \$88.50 per month). Some also have their Medicare deductibles and co-insurance covered. The Medicare Savings Program used to have an asset test that kept many

people from being eligible, but the state eliminated the asset test on January 1st. Now more people are eligible. For more information or to enroll in the Medicare Savings Program, call your local DHHS office or your local area agency on aging at 1-877-353-3771.

Maine 1st with Help

When Part D started January 1, big problems needed to be worked out. The federal government didn’t have records of which plan some people were enrolled in. For others, they had no record of their enrollment in MaineCare – so seniors were being told they had to pay \$75 or \$100 for a drug which had just a \$2.50 co-payment in MaineCare. By the morning of January 3, the state had seen enough. They told pharmacists that they should go back to billing MaineCare or DEL, if they couldn’t bill the PDP, until the problem was worked out. About 30 other states also took emergency action, but Maine was first in the country to try and fix the problem for low income seniors and people with disabilities.

Legislature Proposes More Help

The legislature is currently considering two bills, one sponsored by Rep. Hannah Pingree (L.D. 1848) (D. North Haven) and the other by Sen. Michael Brennan (L.D. 1959) (D. Cumberland), to offer further protections to Maine’s seniors and people with disabilities. With proposed amendments, the bills would help ensure that people are able to get necessary drugs when they are not included in the prescription drug plan and also provide assistance with mandatory co-payments for those enrolled in both MaineCare and Medicare. We will let you know what happens with this legislation in our next newsletter and on the MEJP website (www.mejp.org).

“Hear Our Stories, Know Our Names.” The Maine Council of Churches is sponsoring a drama that calls attention to the plight of those among us who are homeless— “Hear Our Stories, Know Our Names.” The drama that features activists from Preble Street Advocacy Project in Portland is traveling across the state. For more information or to request a performance at your church, civic group, school, or organization, contact MCC Economic Justice Program Coordinator, Dolores Vail at 772-1918, or email her at: hdtv21@gwi.net. Admission to the performance is free, however, donations to cover expenses are welcome. www.maineCouncilofchurches.org *Amazing writing, set & performance. Inspiring & enlightening!*

\$ \$ \$ More Money for Heating Assistance \$ \$ \$

State jumps in to help fill gap caused by federal flat funding and high heating costs

Last fall Maine's congressional delegation worked hard to try to secure additional funding for the low-income heating assistance program (LIHEAP). This program helps low-income seniors, families and other individuals to purchase heating fuel. Additional funds were needed for LIHEAP to fill the gap created by the winter's high heating costs. Senator Collins took the lead in the Senate and attempted to include funding for LIHEAP in a number of federal bills.

Unfortunately her efforts were continually thwarted. By the time the Maine Legislature returned to Augusta at the beginning of January, Congress had not appropriated the needed funds.

The Governor and members of the legislature quickly acknowledged that the state would have to step in to help those in need. When the legislature met in January, its first action was to unanimously pass legislation appropriating \$5 million to help to fill the gap in LIHEAP funding. It's not enough to fill the entire gap created by the flat funding at the federal level and the increase in the cost of heating fuel, but it was an important step in the right direction that has helped thousands of Mainers purchase needed heating fuel.

In addition, the Governor has been promoting the

Keep ME Warm Fund that collects private donations to help individuals and families purchase heating fuel. The Keep ME Warm fund is designed to help people with incomes just over the eligibility limits for the LIHEAP program.

Following the Legislature's action in January, Representative Arthur Lerman (D. Augusta) presented a bill, (LD 1940), to provide additional state funding to both LIHEAP and the Keep ME Warm Fund. Russell Anderson, President of the Maine Association for Interdependent Neighborhoods, testified at the hearing on that bill held on February 14. Russ explained in his testimony that heating our homes can be a matter of life and death and that "people will suffer in Maine without additional help from the LIHEAP program."

Legislators should be thanked for their early action appropriating state dollars to the LIHEAP program. But they should also know that these dollars are not enough to give people the help that they need—*the funds appropriated don't even provide the same levels of assistance that people received last year*. More funding is needed to help low-income Mainers make it through the rest of the winter. MAIN will keep people updated on the progress of LD 1940.

Property Tax and Rent Refund—Apply by May 31st

The 2005 Tax and Rent Refund program has been expanded. More Maine residents now qualify for a partial refund of property tax and/or rent they paid in 2004. The maximum refund available is now \$2,000. You may qualify for a refund if:

- You do not have a spouse or dependent(s) and your 2004 household income was \$74,500 or less; **or**
- You do have a spouse or dependent(s) and your 2004 household income was \$99,500 or less

AND

- Your 2004 property tax was more than 4% of your 2004 household income; **or**
- The rent you paid in 2004 was more than 20% of your 2004 household income.

NOTE: Seniors do not need to meet this requirement when their household income is below \$12,400 for those living alone or below \$15,300 for those living with a spouse or dependent.

Get an application at your town or city office, library, Area Agency on Aging, Community Action Program, or request an application from Maine Revenue Services by calling 624 -7894; or call Maine Equal Justice 1-866-626-7059.

Speak Out and Be Heard – Your Opinion Counts

Three out of four low-income Mainers do not have a lawyer when they need one.

Policymakers believe this is not fair and are trying to change this. You can help. To fix the problems, they need to know what is wrong and how to make things better. They want to hear from you and others most affected about how best to improve things.

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. You do not need to provide your name. Please add paper if you need more space.

1. Have you ever needed a lawyer and not been able to get one?

- Yes No

2. Please check the reason(s) you believe you were unable to get legal assistance:

- Lacked money for private attorney but couldn't get legal aid
- Financially qualified for legal aid, but told legal aid cannot assist
- Lack of a local legal aid office
- Couldn't go to legal aid because of limited office hours
- Lack of transportation to reach assistance
- Phone lines were busy
- Absence of toll-free number to call
- Lack of physical accessibility or accommodations for the disabled
- Lack of translators or interpreters
- Immigration status posed barriers to accessing assistance
- No agency offers free or low cost assistance with the following legal issues (please list):

Please list others:

3. Why did you need a lawyer?

4. Have you or someone in your family ever had to go to court without a lawyer?

- Yes No

5. If you have gone to court without a lawyer, why did you go to court?

Please continue on back

6. Have you or someone in your family ever had to go to a hearing at an administrative agency, such as DHHS or the Department of Labor, without a lawyer?

Yes

No

7. If you have gone to a hearing at an administrative agency without a lawyer, why did you go to a hearing?

8. If you have gone to court or an administrative hearing without a lawyer, did you have any difficulty and if so what? (check all that apply)

- I did not have any difficulty
- I did not understand the hearing/proceeding
- I could not explain my position well
- I did not feel I was being listened to
- I needed an interpreter and couldn't get one
- The other side had a lawyer and I felt at a disadvantage
- I lost my case
- Other, please explain

9. Do you have any ideas about how these problems could be fixed?

Your town

Please provide your name and email or address if you would like to be informed about the planning process.

Return surveys to:

Sally Sutton, Justice Action Group, P.O. Box 2460, South Portland, ME 04116-2460; or email: to jag@maine.rr.com (put JAG Planning Survey in the subject line); or fax to Maine Bar Foundation: 623-4140.

(Continued from Page 9—My Electric Bill)

What if I can't pay the full bill at one time?

Payment arrangements. The company must offer you a reasonable payment plan rather than disconnect you. If the reason for the disconnection notice is failure to pay under a previous payment arrangement, the company does not have to (but it may) offer you a payment plan. If you have worked out a long-term payment plan (see page 9—*What if there's a month when I can't afford to pay my whole bill?*), and you are making the payments as you agreed, they can't disconnect you.

Can I be disconnected in the winter?

From November 15th until April 15th you may not be disconnected in the winter if you agree to a "special payment arrangement." A special payment arrangement allows you to pay less in the winter months, then, from April until October, to pay what you owe in monthly payments -- plus your current bill. If you fail to pay on a special payment arrangement during the winter months, the company should work out a second payment arrangement with you. If you do not pay on the second payment arrangement, the company can go to the Public Utilities Commission for approval to disconnect your electricity. This rule only applies to people who cannot afford their bills because of low income (for example, income below \$24,144 for a family of 3; \$29,040 for a family of 4 and people receiving SSI or HEAP.)



What if I can't work things out with my electric company?

If you've called the number on the bill or disconnect notice, talked with the manager and you still can't work things out, there are other things you can do. **You can:**

Call:

Consumer Assistance Division of the Maine
PUC
1-800-452-4699 or 287-3831
(TTY: 1-800-437-1220)

These phone lines are often busy, so keep trying and, when you get through, be sure to leave a message with the reason you called, your name, phone number and the date you called.

File a complaint on-line:

if you have access to the internet.
www.maine.gov/mpuc/consumer/complaint/index
Click on "My problem is with a regulated utility"; then "Yes, I want to file a complaint."

Send a letter to:

Consumer Assistance Division
Maine Public Utility Commission
242 State Street
18 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0018

If you contact the PUC before the disconnect date, your power will stay on while the PUC investigates. You will need to keep paying on - or arrange to pay - any parts of the bill you agree you owe, or your service could be disconnected.

For legal advice and assistance, call Pine Tree Legal Assistance.

Presque Isle (764-4349)
Machias (255-8656)
Bangor ((942-8241)
Augusta (622-4731)
Lewiston (784-1558)
Portland (774-8211)

Can you help staff the M.A.I.N. table at the HOPE Festival?

As usual, MAIN will have a table at the HOPE Festival—a good fundraiser for us!. We give out information about our work and sell baked goods and greeting cards—photo cards donated by MEJP's Chris Hastedt. We can always use more help to staff the table so volunteers can take breaks, and enjoy the Festival a little too. Lots of good people, great information and activities & LIVE MUSIC! (see below). If you can help for an hour or so contact Laura 394-3948 TeddsRed@aol.com. Also if you live near Bangor and want to donate some homemade goodies, contact Laura.

12th Annual HOPE Festival

(Help Organize Peace Earthwide)

Saturday, April 22nd
10AM - 4PM

Field House, University of Maine, Orono

Free Admission

Sponsored by
**the Peace & Justice Center
of Eastern Maine**
942-9343 info@peacectr.org



- *Organizational Fair with over 75 groups
- *Variety of Live Music, Speakers, Displays
- *Programs and Activities for Kids of All Ages
- *Food, 5K Run, Special Events, Fun for All

LIVE MUSIC!

NOEL PAUL STOOKEY world famous folk musician from the group *Peter, Paul & Mary*
SUKULIS – Native American Women's Drum Group; **BARAKA OYURU** World music; **"A" TRAIN** – Jazz;
PLANET PAN – Steel band; **DOUG CRATE**—folk/rock

Real Security Hearing

Keynote with Richard and Rita Clement
— Maine Parents of Iraq Veteran —
with Invited Legislators and Candidates for
Governor and Federal House and Senate Seats

Saturday, March 25th
12:00 – 5:00 P.M.

Neville Hall University of Maine, Orono

**Is the war on Iraq making us more secure?
What are the alternatives?**

For more information,
call 942-9343 or email info@peacectr.org.

A gathering to discuss ways to broaden the meaning of "security" (health care, education, living wage jobs, clean environment etc.) and develop policies that will make us more genuinely secure.

Sponsored by Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine; Food AND Medicine; Peace through Interamerican Action (PICA); Maine People's Alliance; Physicians for Social Responsibility; Veterans for Peace, Bangor Chapter; Peace Action Maine; **Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods (MAIN)**; Environmental Health Strategy Center; Spruce Run; Resources for Organizing and Social Change (ROSC); Maine Peace Action Committee (MPAC); Waterville Area Bridges for Peace & Justice; Waldo County Peace & Justice; Orono Peace Group; Department of Peace, Maine Campaign; Pax Christi; WERU Community Radio; Amnesty International; Bangor High School Chapter; and Interfaith Response Eastern Maine.

Regional Contact Info

Northern Regional MAIN

Meets in Orono

Contact for meetings:

Laura 394-3948, Teddsred@aol.com,

Midcoast MAIN

Meets in Waldoboro

Contact for meetings:

Russell Anderson 832-4754

info@midcoastmain.com

Got E-MAIL?

Want to be on M.A.I.N.'s e-mail action network?

Find out about meetings, events,
legislative action alerts,
informational updates,
public hearings.

To protect your privacy,
we hide e-mail addresses &
don't share our list.

To get on the email network,
contact:

crusnov@mejp.org

On the
MEJP and MAIN
web sites you'll find...

Our newsletters, meeting notices,
action alerts, events, comments on
state rules and regulations,
MaineCare workshops, litigation, and
links to related sites.

www.mejp.org

MAIN's website
is easily reached
from the MEJP home page.

Join MAIN

You have the power to make change!

M.A.I.N. Membership Form

- I would like to come to a M.A.I.N. meeting. **Please send me a meeting notice.**
- I am *already* a M.A.I.N. member. Here is \$1.00 for 2006 membership dues. (Extra donation \$____)
- Here is \$1.00 for individual membership dues. I'd like to make an extra donation of \$____
- I can't make a donation at this time, but would like to be a member and receive the newsletter, *M.A.I.N. Update*.
- Here is \$50 for our **organizational membership**. Here's an extra donation of \$____. List our group on the MAIN brochure: YES NO (circle one)
- I am interested in a regional group.
Northern/Orono _____ Midcoast/Waldoboro _____

Please PRINT!

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION (if organizational membership)

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TOWN/ITY _____

ZIP _____

Town in which you live _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Please make checks out to:

M.A.I.N.

For tax-deductible donations, make checks out to:

Maine Equal Justice/MAIN Expenses

Mail form to: M.A.I.N., P.O. Box 69, Hallowell, ME 04347

When you return this form—with or without a donation—you will become a MAIN member, and will receive M.A.I.N.'s newsletter and other informative mailings. **If you want to get meeting notices, be sure to check "meeting notice" above.** Those with e-mail will get meeting notices, action alerts, etc. by e-mail only unless you also ask for them by regular mail.

Inside *M.A.I.N. Update!*

- Page 1: In memory of Judy Guay (plus center insert)
Mary Henderson leaves MEJP
- Page 2: Current Legislative Overview
Are you having problems with MaineCare co-pays?
- Page 3: Federal Budget Cuts: Not Good for Low-income People
- Page 4: Update! MaineCare Non-Categorical Program
- Page 5: Medicare Part D: Information for People Enrolled in MaineCare or DEL
- Page 6: Share Your Story if You will be hurt by TANF changes.
- Page 7: How MaineCare Non-Categoricals Can Get Needed Services
You May Get More Food Stamps If You Apply for Fuel Assistance
- Page 8: Maine's Alternative Aid Program—proposed improvements
- Page 9: What Are My Rights with My Electric Company?
- Page 10/11: Highlights of M.A.I.N.'s Leadership Conference
- Page 12: Mary Henderson Scholarship Fund
- Page 14: More Money for Heating Assistance
Property Tax & Rent Refund—May 31st Deadline
- Page 15/16: Legal Services for low-income people: Your opinion wanted!
- Page 18: MAIN at H.O.P.E. Festival, April 22nd
Real Security Hearing, March 25th
- Page 19: MAIN membership form & contact info

Statewide MAIN Meetings

Get updates on
issues and actions.
Help us make decisions.

April 13th

May 11th

June 8th

9:30 am—12:30

Maine Equal Justice
126 Sewall St. Augusta

Want meeting notices?

Contact: Chris Rusnov
1-866-626-7059 ext 204
crusnov@mej.org

**See page 19 for info on
MAIN regional groups
in Orono and
Waldoboro.**



Maine Equal Justice is a proud member of MaineShare.

MaineShare raises awareness of and resources for MEJP and more than 30 other Maine-based non-profits that are all working for positive social change in Maine. Support MEJP through your annual MaineShare workplace giving campaign or help establish one if none currently exists. To find out more, visit www.mainesshare.org



M.A.I.N.

c/o MEJP

126 Sewall St.

Augusta, ME 04330

In Memory of Judy Guay

Our beloved friend Judy Guay died peacefully on Tuesday, February 28 at Eastern Maine Medical Center. Her best friend and husband Ron was at her side, as were her children, other relatives, and several friends.

Judy was a tireless advocate, wise woman and great friend. She'll be missed by many in so many ways. We trust her spirit will live in each of us as we re-dedicate ourselves to work together for peace, bread and justice for all.

Repaying Our Debt...

Judy Guay Memorial Fund

A special Memorial Fund has been established at Pine Tree Legal Assistance to help with funeral expenses. It's a small way we can give back to Judy and her family for many, many years of volunteer service. Contributions of any amount will be greatly appreciated.

Send check payable to:
Pine Tree Legal Assistance, with a notation "Judy Guay Memorial Fund."

Send to:
PTLA, P.O. Box 547,
Portland, ME 04112



An Angel Among Us

She was an angel among us although she'd say "no, not I., I'm an ordinary person who is trying to get by."

She was an angel among us who listened with her heart, and in her gentle manner her wisdom she would impart.

She was an angel among us so strong, so brave, so true. She has left a wonderful legacy for everyone she knew.

Our tribute to our angel must be to follow her lead, fight the fight, follow the cause, and help all those in need.

She was an angel among us, she loved and touched all she knew. She'll stay alive within our hearts through the good deeds that we do.

By Karene York, Orono

Judy served as president of MAIN since it began in 1981. Along with Bob Philbrook who died in Oct. 2003, Judy led MAIN to become a respected voice for low-income people at the State House, in the press, and in neighborhoods throughout the State. Judy also played a key role in establishing Maine Equal Justice in 1996 when changes in federal law restricted Pine Tree Legal Assistance from representing low-income people on many forms of systemic change. She wanted to be sure that low-income people would continue to have support in advocating for their needs in Augusta.

Share your memories

Please go to the MEJP website to share your thoughts and memories of Judy and all she has done for the people of Maine. Your contribution will be a great comfort to Judy's family and friends.

www.mejp.org

Condolences can also be sent to Judy's husband, Ron, and the family who were so supportive and essential to her activism.

Ron Guay
P.O. Box 2711
Bangor, ME 04402

The following was part of a speech given by Maine Equal Justice's Chris Hastedt in October 2004 when Judy received the "Hands for Peace" award from the Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine.

Each one of us has special people in our lives. People who inspire us; who warm our hearts when they come into a room. People we love and admire for their passion, their spirit, their great heart—and their commitment to building a better world. For me, and for the many, many others whose lives she has touched, Judy Guay is one of those very special people.

Judy has never been shy about challenging elected officials—about speaking the truth about what it's like to be poor; about the need to treat people fairly, with dignity and respect. She has been the conscience of many a politician and policy maker.

Judy will be the first to say that no person, and even no organization, can make these kind of changes alone. With her whole heart she believes that we must work together—that change is up to all of us; in her words “that that life is not a spectator sport”. She's right, but she doesn't just believe that, she makes it happen. Her ability to draw people together from different organizations, different parts of the state and even different points of view is one of her greatest strengths.

Judy helps us to hope, to believe in the possible; she helps us find our own voices; she teaches us that together we can make a difference; she builds community wherever she goes and we are all better for knowing her. ❧



Judy was a wonderful inspiration to me on the AFDC Advisory Council and in the many hearings we attended together. I know Bob Philbrook was waiting to greet her.

Kathy Moore, Waterville

It's hard for most people, lawyers or not, to step forward in public and "speak truth to power," and this is especially true for our low-income clients. We can all be inspired by Judy's example, remembering how she championed justice in meetings with sitting Governors and other elected officials, Chief Justices and lawyers from around the State, and how she helped many wealthy Mainers understand the reality and the needs of those who live day to day.

Nan Heald, Pine Tree Legal Assistance executive director

She was one of the most kindest, enthusiastic, non-judgmental and wise person I have ever known. She will be missed by all who knew her, but not forgotten. Her spirit will continue to live on in all of us.

Vickie McCarty, Milbridge

Elected/ Appointed Positions

Bangor School Committee; Special Education Board of Directors—Region 4; Vocational Education Board of Directors—Region 4; Commission to Study the General Assistance Program; Commission to Study the Problem of Homelessness; Dirigo Commission

Community Service

Women's Church League & other church-related activities; Girl Scout Leader/Cub Scout leader; PTO, Down East School; Founder and member of POWER-Bangor; Edmund S. Muskie Commission to Study the Legal Needs of Maine Citizens

Service on Boards of Directors

Pine Tree Legal Assistance; Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center; Maine Women's Fund; Haymarket People's Fund; State Independent Living Council

Employment

Client Advocate in Maine's welfare to work programs; Vista Volunteer, Community of Pride

Awards

Marianne Hartman Award; Maine Chapter, National Association of Social Workers; Consumers for Affordable Health Care Advocacy Award; Hands of Peace