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MAINELY GIRLS

The Source of Information For and About Maine Girls!

MISSION

Mainely Girls, a state-wide, non-profit organization, was founded in 1996 with a two-part mission: to work with rural communities to assist them in focusing on girls' needs in a preventative, proactive and positive manner and to work on the state level to bring about positive change for girls.

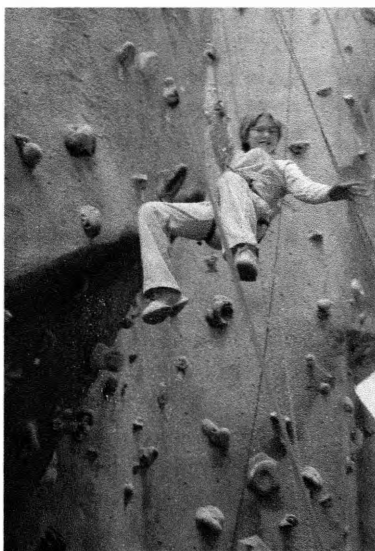
THE CAMDEN GIRLS' FESTIVAL

ANOTHER INCREDIBLE DAY AT THE PENOBSCOT BAY YMCA

FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 2005

Mark your calendars for the 12th annual Camden Girls' Festival which reaches out to middle and high school girls to address issues of importance to them. We haven't settled on a catchy title yet, but we do have the theme: positive self-esteem and how it impacts every area of a girl's life in a positive way.

Workshops will present a myriad of tools girls can use to develop and maintain their own positive self-esteem. As always, the theme was chosen by the Mainely Girls Student Executive Board, and it's a particularly important one for girls who are bombarded these days with unrealistic and destructive messages that they aren't good, or pretty, or smart, or popular enough. The negative feelings that result from such messages are often



at the root of self-destructive behaviors such as cutting, disordered eating, drug and alcohol abuse, and involvement in unhealthy relationships.

We will be teaching girls to recognize these negative messages and resist internalizing them, and we will also be giving girls the



tools they need to replace negative messages with more realistic, healthy and encouraging beliefs about themselves.

One written statement by a girl who attended our conference years ago said, "I haven't felt this good about myself in a long time." We

want the girls to leave the day feeling good about themselves, and having tools they can use, now and in the future, to further the development of their own self-worth.

There will be the usuals: delicious bagels from The Bagel Cafe when you arrive, great lunches from the Brown Bag, plenty of opportunities to get physical using Y equipment, facilities and the pool, in addition to great self-esteem building how-to workshops. There may even be a Famous Person showing up! Due to the generosity of United Mid-Coast Charities, MBNA, The Bagel Cafe, and numerous private donors, the cost will remain at \$10 per girl.

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ART AUCTION

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ONE INCREDIBLE DAY FOR ADULTS, TOO!

Years ago we organized separate workshops for the adults who attended the Festival. This fell by the wayside in more recent times, but at 2005's event, we are presenting a special, off site, full day training for those accompanying the girls to the conference and others who may want to attend.

Eating disorders have been a major concern in the midcoast area, as well as in other areas of Maine, for at least the past ten years. As you know, treating these complex illnesses is costly, time-consuming, and not always effective. The real key is prevention, and finally a proven prevention program is available.

Full of Ourselves: Advancing Girl Power, Health and Leadership is a dynamic educational program, created by Catherine Steiner-Adair, Ed.D., formerly head of Educational Outreach at the Harvard Eating Disorders Center, and Lisa Sjostrom, Ed.M. The program aims to sustain girls in their health and decrease their vulnerability to the development of body preoccupation and eating disorders. This model prevention program emphasizes girls' personal power and overall mental and physical well being. It has been piloted with more than 1,000 girls in five states and proven feasible and effective.

This is a primary prevention program aimed at a general (i.e., healthy) population of girls; no one need be at risk for an eating disorder to participate. Two distinct program phases are geared toward girls of different ages. During phase 1, a group of 6th, 7th or 8th graders completes the eight-unit *Full of Ourselves* curriculum under the guidance of one or two women leaders. During phase 2, these same girls become peer leaders and lead several sessions with 4th or 5th graders. Any interested school or youth organization can adopt the program. All that's needed is a supportive community and two committed adults—often teachers, guidance counselors or school nurses—to facilitate the weekly group sessions.

Each of the eight *Full of Ourselves* units takes 45-60 minutes to complete. Through dozens of activities—discussions, art activities, role plays, guided meditations and a host of others—girls explore a range of topics, including self and body acceptance; weightism as a social justice issue; media literacy; nutrition basics; how to nourish emo-

tional hungers; and the power of healthy relationships. Each unit ends with a "Call to Action" directing girls to translate new-found knowledge into positive action at school, at home and in the wider world.

The second program phase is where some of the most profound learning takes place. The 7th and 8th graders, now mentors, design and lead 3-5 sessions for 4th or 5th grade girls. They draw upon suggested activities in a second curriculum titled *Throw Your Weight Around: A Guide for Girl Leaders*.

The program has been extensively evaluated. Participating and control group girls answered a research questionnaire pre-program, post-program and six months later. Research reveals that *Full of Ourselves* is feasible, that it causes no harm, and that it effects positive changes in several key areas. This is the first prevention program of its kind to effect sustained positive changes in girls' body image, body satisfaction and body esteem, important risk factors in the development of eating disorders. The program also resulted in sustained positive changes in girls' knowledge about health, nutrition, weightism and puberty.

Mainely Girls will offer an adult training for the *Full of Ourselves* program in Camden on March 18th, the same day as the Camden Girls' Conference. Women who bring girls to the conference will attend the Training rather than the Festival. (This will free up more space, thus allowing more girls to attend the Festival.) Thanks to a generous grant from MBNA, the cost for the training, including lunch, is \$25, and CEU's will be offered.

We are very excited about offering this opportunity to women who are already working with and supporting girls and who then will be qualified to return home and offer the *Full of Ourselves* program in their communities!

More information about the Festival and the Training will be made available on the Mainely Girls' website by mid-February, and packets of registration brochures will be sent to schools the week of February 14th. We look forward to seeing many of you in March!

GIRLS' DAY AT THE STATEHOUSE

Join the Maine Women's Lobby as it commemorates Women's History Month with the 9th annual Girls' Day at the State House on Thursday, March 24th. More than 80 7th and 8th grade girls from across Maine will participate in a day of hands on activities designed to help them learn how they can have a voice in the issues they care about. For more information contact the Maine Women's Lobby at 207-622-0851 or email info@maine.women.org. Adult mentors are also needed if you would like to volunteer to help on this day.

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 5, 2005

The National Eating Disorders Association's website (www.NationalEatingDisorders.org) offers ideas you can use to educate people about these illnesses.

The NEDA is again partnering with the National Eating Disorders Screening Program offered by the nonprofit organization Screening for Mental Health, Inc. to provide outreach to hundreds of college campuses by supplying materials and resources for educational events and in-person and anonymous online screening programs. Screening is a highly effective way to identify sufferers, educate them and their loved ones, and provide resources for treatment. To find out about the screening program see their website: www.mentalhealthscreening.org/college/eating.htm.

EATING DISORDERS IN MAINE CURRENT EFFORTS

Mainely Girls continues to work on this issue from a number of different angles:

At the state level, Mainely Girls helped establish and is the co-chair for The Eating Disorders Work Group whose mission is to reduce the number of cases of eating disorders in Maine, and to provide more effective treatment for people with these potentially fatal illnesses, most often developed in adolescence. This will be done by increasing the public's awareness about the nature of these diseases, by providing better prevention education to children and adolescents, as well as increasing the availability of earlier intervention, and more effective and long-term treatment of these extremely serious, complex, and under-addressed illnesses. The Group has arranged a meeting for late January to prioritize issues and start moving forward. If you'd like to be part of this work group, please contact Mainely Girls.

One Eating Disorders Work Group member, Sharon Leahy-Lind, is the Maine representative to both

the regional and national womens' health groups. We applaud her success in getting eating disorders placed as one of three agenda items at both the regional and national levels! And we hope that the regional and national groups can help move the Impact Act, which would provide some federal money for eating disorders, out of the House committee where it has been sitting for nearly a year, and on to the floor for a vote.

We are pleased to learn that the Maine Legislature's Committee on Health and Human Services has before it LD 239 titled: "Resolve, To Create a Hospital Program for Young Women with Eating Disorders." If passed, it will direct the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, the Maine Hospital Association, and the Superintendent of Insurance, in consultation with several hospitals throughout the State, to develop a plan to create a partnership to identify and treat eating disorders in young women. The report would be submitted by November 2, 2005.

The Legislative Youth Advisory Committee has contacted Mainely Girls to follow-up on our presentation before them last May. We will meet with them to discuss other possible eating disorders legislation.

As we did last year, the Mainely Girls Executive Board spent Veterans' Day at the Yes! To Youth studio, working with Dudley Davis to videotape eating disorders programs to be shown on Fox 3 television statewide. Allyson Ettinger and Jessica McMahon were returning stars, and Suzanna Valentine and Ally Gabrielle were fast learners, taking to the camera and finding their voices with ease.

The two day team treatment of eating disorders clinical training that had originally been scheduled for this past September will be offered instead in October of 2005. More information will be made available closer to that time, both through our newsletters and on our website, but please contact us now if you'd like to receive a brochure later in the year.

In January, the Mainely Girls' Student Executive Board and Frannie Wheeler Berta began offering a nine week after school program to 5th and 6th grade girls at Camden Middle School. We took the published curriculum, *Healthy Body Image—Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies, Too*, and jazzed it up with a new name: "Step Up to the Plate!" Units, too, were renamed: "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall," "The Barbie Effect," etc. The younger girls are so open and eager to discuss positive and negative body images, and the impact of media on their feelings about themselves. They listen closely to the high school girls who, in turn, say they are learning a lot from the younger girls. Mainely Girls is grateful to Vice-Principal Maria Libby and Guidance Counselor Margaret Page at Camden Middle School for helping make this program possible. At this time the school's 5th and 6th grade health teacher, Mary Wells, is reviewing the curriculum with the hope that she might be able to offer it to all her students next year.

LONG CREEK UPDATE

Members of The Girls Action Group (GAG) have continued to meet with Long Creek Youth Development Center administrators, staff, and girls at the facility in South Portland. Since our last newsletter, full spectrum lights have been installed in the girls' unit, helping to alleviate the negative impact of housing the girls in a unit with very little natural light. GAG is still concerned that the girls are housed in a unit that was never intended to house anyone for more than thirty days because it has little natural light. We will continue to work with administrators to find an acceptable place to house the girls.

Thanks to a two year grant from the Maine Women's Fund, the very successful Long Creek girls' Multi-Media Program, designed by Lauren Webster, has been reinstated. Multi-Media provides some of the gender specific programming important for girls' rehabilitation. Though Lauren was able to facilitate the program this autumn, her graduate work has become more demanding, so the torch has been passed to Emily Van Strien, MA. Both young women have brought knowledge, understanding, creativity, skill, commitment, sensitivity, and humor into their work with the girls, and the Girls' Action Group is very grateful to them for all they are doing for the girls.

For fourteen months Mainely Girls has been trying to arrange funding for a trauma release pilot program for girls at Long Creek. Several requests to the Bureau of Health and the Department of Corrections have gone unanswered. Considering the degree of severe trauma most girls at Long Creek have experienced in their lives, and the fact that Rod Boufard, Long Creek director, has fully supported this program, one would think that the less than \$2,000 required would have been made available immediately.

GAG members believe that this program and others that have been privately funded in the past should be made part of the Long Creek budget in future years. To that end, GAG members are hosting a meeting of program directors, Long Creek administrators, private funders, and members of the new Board of Visitors to consider the gender specific programs, why they are necessary to meet girls' programming needs, and why they should be included in the regular Long Creek budget.

Thanks to Mainely Girls' Board Members Susan Sanders and Nancy Wanderer, the girls have a computer available for their use right in their unit. Susan and Nancy recently donated a complete computer system to the girls, and the girls are thrilled! Many thanks to you both!

Four Ways YOU Might Help the Girls at Long Creek:

1. Volunteer: You can volunteer either as a mentor to a particular youth or as a program or project volunteer.

The application is very straight forward and the time commitment up to you. For more information about volunteering contact Emmy Brown at 207-822-2603 or by email at emmy.brown@maine.gov. She will conduct a full background check through the State Police, ask for three personal references, and give you a tour of the building, a copy of the rule, an orientation, and a personal interview. Mentors for girls are particularly needed.

2. Put Your Old Books to Good Use: Nonesuch Books has agreed to give Long Creek credit toward books for the girls when you turn in your used books to Nonesuch at the Mill Creek Shopping Center in South Portland or the Saco Valley Shopping Center in Saco. Just ask that your used books be credited to The Girl's Point of View Book Club at Long Creek. It's that simple.

3. Donate some of your "stuff": the girls are in the midst of a great quilting project and in need of cotton fabric. Art supplies, yarn, newer PC computers, school supplies... they are all in high demand for The Girls' Program. Just drop your donation by Long Creek and leave it at the front desk for Wealthy Jordan (Head of the Girls' Program). Or you can mail it to Wealthy Jordan at: 675 Westbrook Street, South Portland, ME 04106.

4) Join the Girls Advocacy Group (GAG): We're all about advocacy and are always open to more members. Interested? Contact Mainely Girls.

BOARD NEWS

This past autumn Mainely Girls' Board of Directors said a fond farewell and best wishes to Tori Ryan and Lindsay Stewart.

Tori Ryan came to the Board from working at the Maine Women's Fund where she acquired vast knowledge regarding non-profit infrastructure issues. Tori was invaluable in pointing out where we needed to get our house in order, and she led us in that process. After two years, Tori leaves us for a new job and, yes, you guessed it, a wedding in the near future! Many thanks for all you've done for us, Tori.

Lindsay Stewart was a whirlwind of positive auction energy last year, motivating everyone with her "can do" example, leading the way in contacting artists, roping in volunteers, and bucking me up with her optimism. All this, by the way, while she was teaching classes, planning her wedding, and applying for graduate school! (Not to mention several tips to Belgium to be fitted for that wedding dress.) Such overachieving can't continue forever, so Lindsay has chosen to focus on work and school and new husband. We wish her well and miss her lots.

WHO ARE THE CURRENT MEMBERS OF MAINELY GIRLS' BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

We're so grateful to the following talented, experienced, and generous group of women who have come together to lead the organization forward!

Lisa Bussey: When a couple of board members from Mainely Girls approached me to ask if I would consider joining the Board as treasurer, I jumped at the chance. It has taken many years for me to get to the place in my life where I feel ready to contribute not just money but time and energy towards important causes. In particular, I look forward to revamping and revitalizing Mainely Girls' website. After twenty years as a psychotherapist, I am about to retire that career and focus solely on helping people learn and understand how to use computers by tutoring them individually on their own computers. I am also a former English teacher as well as Executive Director and Co-founder of an organization that placed foster children into boarding schools.

Elaine Cinciva of Freeport moved to Maine in 1996 from Steamboat Springs, CO where she was a part-time grant-writer and full-time skier. She has been on the board of a number of non-profit organizations including The Colorado Community Mental Health Board, the Steamboat Springs Community Health Center, the Northern Colorado Visiting Nurse and Hospice Association, Maine Initiatives, Maine Women's Lobby/Policy Center, and Mainely Girls. Her career has included property management, federal loan and mortgage insurer, and fundraising for non-profits. She completed her MSW at the University of New England in 2001, and remains active on The Advisory and Steering Committee for the capital campaign at Maine Initiatives. Her vocation in the second half of mid-life (found to coincide with her 50th birthday) is sailing and racing with a Women's Team in the Carribean and the Annual Wooden Boat Race from Camden to Brooklin, Maine. Her 2005 goal is to build a small business selling sailing gear at regattas so she can spend the winter months in warmer climates from Florida to the Virgin Islands. In the summer she lives with her husband, Colin, and dog, Michaela, in Castine, learning to navigate in the fog and spending as many nights on the islands of Penobscot Bay as the winds will allow.

Ellen Golden, of Woolwich, has been actively involved in issues affecting women and girls, both personally and professionally, since she was a student. She decided to join the Board of Mainely Girls because of the importance and the effectiveness of the organization's work and because of her own interest in getting involved with programs that support young women and girls. Ellen is currently Senior Vice President for Development at Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), where she has spent over twenty years working on the design,

development and implementation of programs targeted to socially and economically disadvantaged populations with a particular interest in women's business ownership. She is the founder of CEI's Women's Business Center. She has served on a number of boards and commissions including the Association of Women's Business Centers, the SBA Advisory Council for Maine, the Entrepreneurship Working Group, the Association for Enterprise Opportunity, MicroNet, the Maine Women's Lobby, Maine Commission for Women and others.

Susan Peabody Love is a Mainer from Cape Elizabeth and a graduate of Boston University. She is also a mother of three grown children, two boys and a girl. She is a Professional Nurse and also serves on the Human Services Committee in Falmouth. Susan recognizes the need for more learning opportunities for girls and the need for self-esteem building. She brings love, contacts and health experience to the Board.

Jennifer McIntosh: It was a real pleasure to participate in Mainely Girls' art auction benefit during 2004—and I am looking forward to my time on the Board to further assist this great organization. Having grown up in Lincolnville, I attended area schools, and wish that there had been programs at that time addressing girls' and women's issues—issues that I had no real vocabulary for until college. I graduated in 1995 from Colby College, with a major in English and minor in Women's Studies. I have worked since then in publishing, and I am currently the Associate Editor at *Maine Boats & Harbors* magazine. Gardening is a passion, as is poetry. I served for two years on the board of The Live Poets' Society.

Susan Sanders: I am delighted to be joining the board of Mainely Girls. As the mother of a twenty-seven-year-old daughter and in my job as guidance counselor, I am keenly aware of the issues that face today's young women. I did my undergraduate work in Nashville at Vanderbilt University's Peabody School of Education. I worked with children who were deaf-blind from the rubella epidemic of 1964 and later as a teacher of blind and visually impaired children. After receiving a Master's degree in counseling from USM, I have worked for fifteen years as a high school guidance counselor, first at Lewiston High School, and currently at Wiscasset High School. I have worked with both high school's Civil Rights Teams, co-facilitated a support group for girls who were raped, and currently have an after-school knitting group for (mostly) girls. I am especially appy to be working with an organization that provides direct service to girls.

Nancy Wanderer: As a former president of the board of the Maine Women's Fund, I am excited about serving on the board of Mainely Girls. When I served on the Allocations Committee of the Maine Women's Fund,

we were always excited about making grants to any project organized by Mary Orear and Mainely Girls. It is an honor to finally work directly with Mary. In addition to serving on the Mainely Girls board, I am an attorney and law professor at the University of Maine School of Law, where I direct the Legal Research and Writing Program. Before attending law school, I was Associate Director of Career Counseling at Colby College. I have also been a junior high school English teacher, high school guidance counselor, and professor at Unity College. I graduated from Wellesley College and an all-girls secondary school. Raising aspirations for girls has long been a passion of mine. I am thrilled to be able to make a contribution to the welfare of girls in Maine by serving on the Mainely Girls board.

Ellen Wells has been the Board chair of Mainely Girls for the past two years, and a member for four. She is a founder of the Maine Women's Fund, and a former editor of a weekly newspaper in Philadelphia. Ellen moved to Maine permanently in 1976. Five granddaughters motivate her work with girls. Other interests: women and girls and boys in prison, the environment, gun safety. Hobby: gardening. "I was first attracted to the work of Mainely Girls when as a board member of the Maine Women's Fund I learned of a grant to Mainely Girls from MWF for the betterment of living and social conditions of girls at the Maine Youth Center, now renamed Long Creek. A committee of Mainely Girls (Girls Advocacy Group) of which I am now a part works specifically with the administration, as well as with the girls themselves and advocates at the legislative level. This is just one piece of the pie of that which comprises Mainely Girls. I find the work of building a board and the fund-raising aspects both challenging and stimulating."

"IN HER OWN IMAGE"

An Art Auction Benefit Success!

Thanks to a small army of never-say-die volunteers, last August's art auction at MBNA's Ginley Hall was successful in many different ways. The core organizing committee, *Christina DeHoff, Hilary Harwood, Jennifer McIntosh, and Lindsay Stewart*, became a congenial group that capitalized on the strength and talents of each member while working for the good of the whole. Widespread publicity attracted some new members for Mainely Girls, and the auction helped raise some necessary capital to fund the organization, doing so in a manner that was closely tied to our mission.

We were overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response and the generosity of spirit expressed by artists who donated their work, as well as by those individuals who donated art from their private collections. We are grateful to Bill Royall who with Nikki Schumann made available to us Nikki's wonderful collage in the form of both posters and signed, limited edition prints. (A few prints are still available; please con-

tact us if you are interested.) Businesses such as Camden National Bank, Coyote Moon, MBNA, Francine's, Lily Lupine and Fern, Borealis Bread, Christine's Gallery, Tim Seymore Designs, Graves, The Wellness Center, and individuals such as Karen Hansen, Jeff Finkel, Kelly Jackson, Sheila Tasker, Cara Fox and many, many others donated time, money, space, food or drinks to help us actualize our profits. Auctioneer Linda Payson and her husband and son of Brooder House Auction Services donated their expertise, and Mainely Girls Student Executive Board Members Allyson Ettinger and Jessica McMahon worked on the event. Mainely Girls' Board of Directors and Advisors helped solicit the auction art.

Last but not least, we are grateful to those who attended the preview and the event, purchased the wonderful and varied art, and helped us reach our financial goal the very first year!

Please contact us if you'd like to be part of our 2005 auction organizing committee!



Image credit: Nikki Schumann

MANY, MANY THANKS!

When she was updating to a new computer system in November, Joanna Tutone of Cappy's Chowder House donated her former computer system to Mainely Girls, which we were able to pass along to a local girl who was very pleased to receive it! Putting technology in the hands of girls is powerful, and we are grateful to Joanne for her generosity!

A GIRL CAN (AND SHOULD) DREAM.

- 1) A digital camera to take photos for our newsletter.
- 2) Someone we call on for occasional tech. support for our Macs.

CONTRIBUTORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004-2005

Mainely Girls is grateful for the generous financial support of the following groups and individuals which makes our work possible. Many of the names and organizations listed below made donations in response to our December annual fundraising letter. Thanks to all for your support!

Foundations Organizations and Businesses

Maine Community Foundation Spirit Grant
The Lake Fund of the Maine Community Foundation
U.S. Department of Labor
Maine Women's Fund
Coyote Moon
The Elmina B. Sewall Foundation
The Bingham Foundation
United Mid-Coast Charities
Messler Family Foundation
The Dead River Company

Individuals

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Cathy Plourde
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Elaine Crossman
P. Andrews Nixon
Maria Bradeen
Sea Chauvin
Carolyn Murray

Inkind

Camden National Bank
MBNA

Our most sincere apologies for anyone who was inadvertently left off the list.

Membership Form

Yes, I would like to support Maine girls, the women they will become and the families many will raise by becoming a member of Mainely Girls! Members will receive the Mainely Girls newsletter which comes out two or three time a year.

\$10 (girls) \$20 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$5000

Please charge a donation of \$_____ to my credit card.

Name on card: _____ Type of card: _____ Card number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Please make your tax-deductible contribution payable to Mainely Girls and return it with this form to : Please send my friends the Mainely Girls newsletter:

Mainely Girls

69 Elm Street, Suite 204
Camden, Maine 04843

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