



Friends
in Action

Connections



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Friends in Action News & Programs

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Tel 207-664-6016 • Email: info@friendsinactionellsworth.org

March 2025

March: A Month to Celebrate Nourishment and Community

March is a month brimming with significance, not just for the arrival of spring, but also for its role in highlighting the critical importance of senior nutrition. Nationally, March is recognized as “March for Meals,” a campaign spearheaded by Meals on Wheels America that underscores the vital role nutritious meals play in the health and well-being of older adults. This annual initiative serves as a powerful reminder of the need to advocate for policies and programs that support this essential service.

Here in Hancock County, Friends in Action is a long-standing and active participant in the

March for Meals movement, recognizing that access to healthy and affordable nutrition is paramount to the independence and quality of life for our seniors. Our commitment to this cause is ongoing and multifaceted:

Firstly, our Senior Center in Ellsworth provides a welcoming space where older adults can gather, socialize, and enjoy affordable, nutritious lunches twice a week. This provides a vital opportunity for social connection and a readily available, healthy meal, mitigating the challenges many seniors face in preparing nutritious food.

Secondly, our dedicated volunteers are instrumental in

extending this commitment to nutritional support beyond our center walls. Twice a week, we partner with two incredible community churches – St. Dunstan’s and the First Congregational Church of Ellsworth – to deliver hot, nutritious meals prepared with care and expertise. These meals reach homebound seniors, ensuring that even those who cannot easily access our Senior Center receive the vital nourishment they need to thrive. In addition to these hot meals, our volunteers also deliver non-perishable food boxes monthly, provided by the Eastern Area Agency on Aging, supplementing these with twice-monthly deliv-

eries of fresh produce, fruits, and vegetables generously donated by Loaves & Fishes. These supplemental deliveries further enhance food security for our community’s most vulnerable members.

This comprehensive strategy, combining our Senior Center programs and various community meal delivery services, highlights our shared responsibility in ensuring the well-being of our senior population. Through March for Meals, and indeed throughout the year, Friends in Action reaffirms our ongoing commitment to providing accessible, nutritious food, promoting both physical health

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From the Director

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March is Nutrition Month!

To mark the occasion, I’ve included a separate article highlighting various options for prepared meals—whether eaten in our cafeteria or delivered—as well as grocery and commodity box delivery. If you’re interested in groceries or sharing a meal with your peers, give us a call at 207-664-6016.

Consider Joining a Book Club

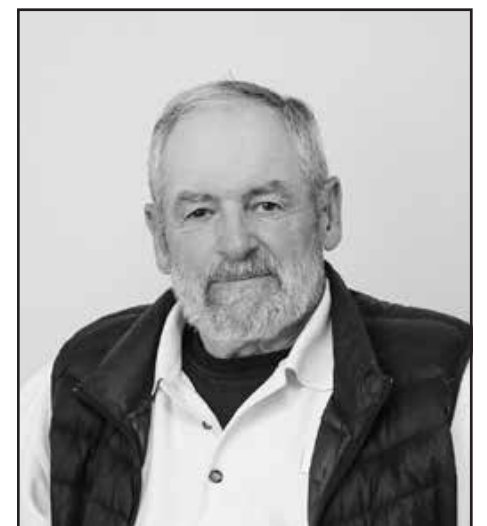
Continuing the theme of connection and conversation, Annette Jones—one of our constituents and a member of the FIA writing group—has expressed interest in starting a **Book Club** at the Senior Center! This could be a great reason to get out of the house, enjoy some social time, and perhaps share a meal in our café.

Reading and discussing books not only keeps the mind engaged but also offers new perspectives and meaningful conversation. If you can’t make it to the center, we may be able to provide transportation or even offer a **Zoom option**. If you’re interested, let me or Nicole know by stopping in or calling 207-664-6016.

Expanding Our Reach in Rural Hancock County

We’re working on three key initiatives to better serve residents in rural areas:

1. **Satellite Coordination Centers** – These centers will help publicize our services, recruit volunteers, and coordinate transportation and other assistance for those in need. The FIA main office will handle administrative tasks like background checks, client registrations, and volunteer training. So far, we have two fully operational partnerships—with **Healthy Island Project** and **Bucksport Bay Healthy Community Coalition**—as well as a **Bridging Neighbors** collaboration with **Healthy Peninsula**. These efforts have already led to seven new volunteers, two of whom are regularly providing critical transportation for medical appointments in Bangor.
2. **Ellsworth High School Partnership** – We’re partnering with **Ellsworth High School** to connect students with service opportunities such as



shoveling snow, raking leaves, stacking wood, and making friendly calls. This initiative will help community members while giving students the chance to fulfill their community service graduation requirement.

3. **Hancock County Technical College Internships** – In collaboration with **Hancock County Technical College**, we’re developing an internship program where students can gain hands-on experience while providing much-needed services to our clients. Though

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Director’s Letter Cont.

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still in the early stages, we anticipate launching this program in May.
Yoga Returns in March
Patricia, our yoga instructor, has been off around the world visiting family but will be back in March at which time yoga classes will again be offered. If you are a regular we hope to see you soon and if not, come give it a try.

Thank You for Your Generous Support!
We are incredibly grateful for your generosity. Our year-end appeal came **within a few hundred dollars of our goal**, and when looking at the full year, we **surpassed our overall fundraising target significantly**. Your support makes all of these initiatives possible—thank you!
-John

Nourishment and Community Cont.

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and social wellbeing among the older adults we serve. We urge everyone to reflect on the importance of nutrition for our seniors and consider how they can con-

tribute to this essential effort, either through volunteering their time or supporting organizations like Friends in Action. Let’s make this March a month to celebrate nourishment and strengthen the bonds of our community!

A Brief History of Friends in Action

Friends in Action was founded in 2003 as "Faith in Action Community Connection" with a start-up grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The organization aimed to assist elderly and disabled individuals through one-on-one volunteer support, primarily offering free transportation. Josephine (Jo) Cooper served as the first Director.

In 2004, Friends in Action attained 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status and built strong community partnerships, initially operating in local housing for the elderly. Area organizations and churches contributed meeting space and volunteer recruitment support. Today, Friends in Action serves over 1,300 residents in Hancock County with more than 70 volunteers, providing services such as transportation, assistance with shopping and errands, simple home repairs, friendly visits, and telephone reassurance—all free of charge.



In 2009, the organization opened a Senior Center in the Bryant E. Moore School in Ellsworth, partnering with the City of Ellsworth and the Downeast Family YMCA, which operates a preschool on-site, creating an intergenerational atmosphere. The Senior Center offers various programs, including exercise classes, art workshops, bridge games, and social events.

In 2011, the organization rebranded as "Friends in Action" to better reflect its mission. After an 18-month renovation, the center returned to the updated Bryant E. Moore School in 2014, which features accessibility improvements such as an elevator and automatic doors.

During the COVID-19 pandemic from 2019 to 2021, most activities were suspended, but essential transportation services continued. The organization is now gradually restoring its programs and aims to increase activities as community needs evolve.

On April 30, 2022, Jo Cooper retired as the Executive Director, and John Lindquist took over the role. Friends in Action remains committed to its mission, providing valuable resources and support to seniors and their families.

What’s Happening?

The Moore Community Center has been full of snowflakes, 60 to be exact. They have been inside the building since December, and they are not melting! More can be found in the Friends in Action Cafe and upstairs in the theatre. These flakes appear to be falling from the ceiling but never reach the floor. All 60 are bright white, have six points, and are 3-dimensional with intricate patterns - like the real snowflakes we’ve seen plenty of this winter! Are you wondering what is happening? Well, I’ve not mentioned these greatly oversized flakes are made of paper. Guaranteed when you first enter the building, you will be awed.

The idea for scattering the snowflakes around was started by Jess Montgomery 7 years ago. Kelly Allen now helps while Shauna Esposito, director of operations, is the one who attaches them to the ceilings. At the end of each season the flakes are folded and stored away to be reused the next year.

Community members check yearly to see when the magical display will appear. They are glad to know the beautiful snowflakes will be there in to March this year. Come by yourself and be ready to spend some time looking skyward!

A testimonial from a Friends in Action patron

I’m writing to share my excitement and joy of going to today’s luncheon at Friends in Action. We had a full house - and we had a different group at our table. We had an excellent luncheon and dessert too!!! We clapped for the Top Chef and the Friends in Action volunteers who graciously bring each wonderful course to our table!!! Please share with your board - who knew when I retired, I’d meet a whole new group of wonderful new friends to share and connect with – with sincere appreciation, Nancy

Simple Ways to Avoid Scams and Phishing

1.

Be cautious if the email:

- Doesn’t use your full name and has a generic greeting
- Has incorrect logos, design or looks strange
- Contains suspicious website links
- Includes attachments and software.

2.

Be wary of false urgency.

- Scams often create a false sense of urgency. If in doubt, log in to your PayPal account to check for urgent messages or notifications.

3.

Watch out for offers that seems too good to be true.

- Scammers may use false promises like money in exchange for a favor, lottery wins, or unsolicited job offers.

4.

Never provide personal, credit card or account information via email, text or phone.

- Always log in to your account to update your personal information, including your full name, credit and debit card numbers, bank account numbers, your driver’s license number, email, and password.

Our number: 207-664-6016



Grief Support Group

March 12 - April 30
Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00pm
HVHC, 14 McKenzie Ave., Ellsworth

When a loved one dies, life is often difficult in new and unexpected ways. While grief is a complicated, unpredictable, and individual process, human connection can help to foster healing. If you are struggling with grief, consider joining our next grief group. Our trained facilitators provide a safe, accepting space for you and others to share thoughts, feelings, and emotions around your loss. Over the course of eight weekly sessions, our grief group offers the chance for you to be supported and to extend your support to others.



The support of others
can help in your
journey with grief.

**Pre-register by
Friday, March 7**

**Call 207-667-2531 or
visit our website at
hospiceofhancock.org**

Jeanne Abbot: A Life of Dedication and Community

Jeanne Abbot, a regular at Friends in Action, has spent much of her adult life caring for children and giving back to her community. Years ago, she moved to Maine with three of her children to be closer to her parents. While assisting them, she also began babysitting for local families, all while raising her own children.

Her dedication to children’s safety took on an even greater role when she was unexpectedly offered a job as a crossing guard for Ellsworth School—just one day before the school year began! Without hesitation, Jeanne stepped up to the responsibility, ensuring the safety of children at their bus stops for an incredible 35 years.

Balancing multiple roles, Jeanne also worked at Marden’s, where her employer accommodated her school bus schedule. During her lunch break, she would leave the store to fulfill her duties as a crossing guard—a true testament to her commitment.

Now retired, Jeanne remains an active and cherished member of her community. She regularly participates in activities at The Senior Center and is a familiar face at The Friends in Action Café, where she enjoys coffee, conversation, and a warm meal every Tuesday and Thursday. Over the past five years, she has built many friendships and even provided a bit of entertainment—sharing her fascinating collections, which include dolls, dollhouse miniatures, and intricate tea sets. One of her most impressive collections is her assortment of decorative fans, several of which were sent to her by her grandsons while stationed in Malaysia and Germany.

Beyond her social engagements, Jeanne has also lent her creativity to decorating the FIA Café, designing seasonal centerpieces, including festive displays for fall and Valentine’s Day.

A warm and engaging presence, Jeanne Abbot continues to enrich the lives of those around her. Her love for people, storytelling, and community involvement makes her a truly remarkable individual.

Why do Yoga

Flexibility
Strength
Joint Health

Bone Health
Stress Reduction
Cardio Vascular Health

Contact Patricia Jones at Friends in Action



MENU

March 2025

Tuesday, March 4th Chicken Pot Pie, Biscuit Topping, Mashed Potatoes and Peaches	Tuesday, March 11th Turkey Sandwich, Macroni Salad, Green Beans and Grapes	Tuesday, March 18th Spaghetti, Mozzeralla Stuffed Breadstick, Broccoli and Pineapple	Tuesday, March 25th Chicken Parm, Buttered Noodles, Dinner Roll, Cauliflower and Cinnamon Applesauce
Thursday, March 6th Beef Taco Salad, Corn Chips, Spanish Rice and Pears	Thursday, March 13th Pork Green Chili, Flour Tortillas, Refried Beans and Mandarin Oranges	Thursday, March 20th Chicken Tenders, Potato Salad, Cauliflower and Cantaloupe	Thursday, March 27th Beef Stew W/ Potatoes and Veggies, Butter Beans, Dinner Roll and Honey Dew



Desserts To Be Announced Daily! Subject To Change
Please call 664-6016 before 4:30 on Monday & Wednesday to reserve lunch for Tuesday & Thursday.

