

November 2025

Honoring Service: The Difference Between Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and Armed Forces Day

Every November, we celebrate Veterans Day — a time for parades, ceremonies, and heartfelt gratitude. It's a day that means a lot to me personally. I'm married to a veteran, my father-in-law is a veteran, and my brother even counts... though if you ask him, he'll admit his service was about as short as a Netflix free trial.

That personal connection makes me especially aware of how often these important holidays get mixed up. People sometimes use the words interchangeably, but the truth is, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and Armed Forces Day each honor service in very different ways. Knowing which is which not

only helps us show the right kind of respect, it also saves us from some awkward moments — like wishing someone a “Happy Memorial Day,” which doesn't quite land the way “Happy Veterans Day” does.

Veterans Day (November 11): This is the day we honor all who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces — past and present. Unlike Memorial Day, it's not about remembering the fallen, but about recognizing the living heroes among us. So yes, saying “Happy Veterans Day, and thank you for your service” is spot on.

Memorial Day (Last Monday in May): This day is set aside to remember those who died in

service to our country. It's a solemn holiday, one of reflection and remembrance. Instead of “Happy Memorial Day,” it's more fitting to say things like “We remember” or “Honoring those who gave all.” Think of it less as a cookout kickoff (though there are plenty of those) and more as a chance to pause and appreciate the ultimate sacrifice.

Armed Forces Day (Third Saturday in May): This one gets overlooked the most, but it's just as important. Armed Forces Day honors those currently serving in the military. First celebrated in 1950, it's a day to thank the men and women in uniform right now. It doesn't usually come with the same level

of fanfare as the other two, but for those still actively serving, the recognition matters.

In short, here's the cheat sheet: in May, Memorial Day honors the fallen. Also in May, Armed Forces Day thanks the currently serving. And in November, Veterans Day celebrates all who have served. Three different days, three different ways to show gratitude.

When November 11 rolls around this year, go ahead and shake a veteran's hand, look them in the eye, and say, “Happy Veterans Day — thank you for your service.” Trust me, it will mean more than you think.

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From the Director

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for the warm welcome to my new role as Executive Director with Friends in Action. During my time as Director of Volunteer Services, I've had the privilege of getting to know so many of you and witnessing firsthand the incredible spirit of this community.

There's truly nowhere else I'd rather be. We have such an amazing group of volunteers, staff, and community members who make Friends in Action what it is — a place built on compassion, connection, and service.

I look forward to meeting even more of you in the days ahead, learning what matters most to you, and continuing to be a part of the great work we do together.

Introducing “Friends With Pens” — A New FIA Program!

I'm so pleased to announce the launch of a new program through Friends in Action called **Friends With Pens**. This initiative is designed to open the lines of com-

munication among our members, volunteers, and others in the community who are interested in building friendships through letter writing.

The simple act of sending and receiving a letter gives us all something to look forward to — a meaningful connection with a new friend, a way to keep our minds and hands active, and an opportunity to learn more about one another and our community.

In today's world of instant messages and emails, the tradition of letter writing has nearly disappeared. Through Friends With Pens, I hope to help reintroduce this timeless form of communication and bring a little joy to mailboxes across our community.

I can't wait to see this program develop and grow! If you'd like to participate, please contact me at **207-664-6016**, and I'll be happy to get you started. Supplies will be available for those who need them, and we'll do our best to thoughtfully match each pen pal.



Let's put pen to paper and make some new friends!

A Few Winter Reminders from Friends in Action

As the winter weather approaches, we want to share a few important reminders to help everyone stay safe and prepared.

With recent funding cuts affecting many assistance programs, we encourage you to **check in with any agencies or organizations that have provided heating**

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assistance or related services in the past to make sure those resources are still available to you this year. It’s always a good idea to stay informed and up to date on the services you rely on.

This is also the perfect time to schedule maintenance or safety checks for your heating equipment and systems to ensure they’re operating safely and efficiently before the cold sets in.

For anyone experiencing or concerned about food insecurity, please remember that Friends in Action partners with two wonderful local churches that provide hot meals each week. If you’d like to receive meals or learn more, please call us — we’re happy to check availability and help get you on the list.

We’re deeply grateful to our amazing volunteers who dedicate their time to preparing and delivering these meals. Their kindness and commitment make a world of difference in our community.

Stay warm, stay safe, and remember — we’re here for you.

It Truly Takes a Village

At Friends in Action, it’s more evident than ever that it takes a village — and it certainly takes this community — investing in each other and in itself to make our mission thrive.

We are deeply grateful for our incredible volunteers who give selflessly of their time and talents, as well as for all who participate in and support our organization in so many ways. We appreciate each and every one of you and are truly thankful to have you as part of our Friends in Action family.

If you’re interested in becoming a volunteer or would like to learn more about the services we offer, please don’t hesitate to reach out to our office. We would be happy to connect with you and help in any way we can.

With heartfelt thanks,

McKayla

Executive Director, Friends in Action

Hibernation Fair

Healthy Peninsula, the Blue Hill Downeast Family YMCA, and Island Connection Center will be hosting its third annual Healthy Hibernation Fair at the Blue Hill YMCA on Saturday, November 1st from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. This event hosts organizations and businesses serving the Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/Stonington who will share information about what they provide to benefit mental, emotional and physical health throughout the winter months and beyond.

Once again, flu vaccines will be offered to adults by Northern Light Homecare & Hospice (bring your health insurance card with you, if insured). The Turn Style will offer a fashion show of clothing curated from their store and shelf stable food will be collected to benefit the Tree of Life and Loaves & Fishes food pantries. To assist those eligible for Medicare benefits- and to sort out some confusion with recent changes in local plans- Maine

Medicare Choices will be providing a presentation & information as open enrollment is underway. This year, both Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon will be sharing information about their respective support groups. Variable Movement Physical Therapy will be offering ways to stay active and safe when there has been a diagnosis of osteoporosis/osteopenia. Local schools will be selling homemade baked goods and lunch items to give you energy as you gather information from various organizations. And this is just a sampling of the 30 plus vendors who will be on-site! Again this year, door prizes donated by our generous vendors will be given away. So please join us for fun, helpful information and connection with local organizations who genuinely care about your overall health. Please call 374-3257 or email Lori Johnson at ljohnson@healthypeninsula.org with any questions or to register as a vendor as we still have room.

Our number: 207-664-6016





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JOIN US FOR A COMMUNITY FAIR

Healthy Hibernation

Fun for All Ages!

SATURDAY NOV. 1ST
10AM-1PM BLUE HILL YMCA

Flu Shots Available

DEMOS - SCREENINGS -
RESOURCES - GIVEAWAYS

Come learn about local organizations and opportunities for staying healthy through the colder months including:

- Health & wellness
- Physical & community activities
- Volunteer opportunities, and more!

For more information please contact: Healthy Peninsula at ljohnson@healthypeninsula.org (207) 374-3257



Healthy Peninsula

Volunteer of the Month

Participant of the Month

Friends in Action proudly recognizes **Deb Leavett** as our November Volunteer of the Month. Deb has served on the **Board of Directors** for eight years, offering her leadership, creativity, and dedication to our mission.

A member of the **Finance Committee**, Deb has been instrumental in organizing successful fundraising events. She co-chairs the annual **Walk/Run-A-Thon**, an event she initiated four years ago, and also leads the committee for the **annual Golf Tournament**. Both events have become important community traditions that raise awareness and support for Friends in Action's programs for older adults.

Born in Augusta, Deb spent much of her life in Maine, though her family moved to New York

when she was ten. Summers at their camp on Donnell Pond kept her close to her Maine roots, and she eventually returned for good. Before retiring, Deb enjoyed a long **career in nursing**, working in pediatrics and emergency care in Boston, Bar Harbor, and Ellsworth.

These days, Deb keeps active playing **golf and pickleball**, gardening, and traveling with family and friends. She's also a great ambassador for Friends in Action, often sharing information about our programs and encouraging others to get involved.

Friends in Action is deeply grateful for Deb's time, energy, and commitment. Volunteers like Deb make our work possible and our community stronger.

When **Barbara Michalsky** moved to Maine just nine months ago, it was quite a change of pace. After spending more than 35 years living and working in Manhattan and Queens, Barbara describes herself as "citified", someone who thrived on the energy and bustle of New York City life.

Now happily settled in a condo in Blue Hill, Barbara is enjoying a new rhythm of life close to her niece and nephew. She still drives short distances and makes a daily trip to the Blue Hill YMCA, where she walks regularly—with the steady support of her walker. There, she also meets with a knitting group, indulging her favorite hobby and connecting with fellow yarn enthusiasts. When she's not knitting, Barbara enjoys reading and playing a lively game of Scrabble.

Barbara was nominated as **Participant of the Month** for her enthusiastic involvement with **Friends in Action's transportation services**. She frequently travels to Ellsworth with the help of FIA's volunteer drivers whom she describes as friendly, kind, and patient. Through many conversations on these rides, she's gotten to know the drivers well and now considers them friends.

At the Ellsworth Senior Center, Barbara participates in weekly coffee hours and lunchtime meals, where she enjoys chatting with other participants, sharing stories, and joining in the sing-alongs that brighten the room.

Friends in Action's transportation program has made it possible for Barbara to stay active, social, and connected. Her rides from Blue Hill to Ellsworth have opened doors to new friendships and community involvement. Anyone lucky enough to sit near Barbara in the FIA Café will quickly discover an engaging conversationalist and a warm presence who makes our community a little brighter.

Pets: A Key To Happiness And Connection In Later Life

Imagine this: you're walking your dog through a local park, and suddenly you find yourself in a friendly conversation with another dog owner. Or perhaps you're at home, sharing a peaceful moment with your cat, feeling a comforting sense of companionship. These simple yet meaningful experiences reveal just how powerful pets can be in enriching our lives, especially as we grow older.

Recent research shows that older adults who own pets report feeling **more socially connected** in the years following their first adoption or survey. This sense of connection translates into **greater happiness, life satisfaction, and a noticeable reduction in loneliness**.

Dog owners, in particular, experienced the most pronounced benefits. The daily walks and social interactions that naturally accompany dog ownership encourage activity and foster relationships within the community. These moments of conversation, shared smiles, and friendly greetings on the sidewalk can have lasting emotional rewards.

What's especially striking is that these findings emerged even during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, a time when social isolation was widespread. Pets served as steady companions and bridges to human connection when it was needed most.

Whether it's the playful wag of a dog's tail or the gentle purr of a cat on your lap, pets have an incredible way of lifting our spirits, easing loneliness, and keeping us connected to the world around us.

So, if you've ever wondered whether that furry friend is doing more than just keeping you company—the answer is yes. They might just be one of the best partners in living a happier, more connected life.

MENU

November 2025

Tuesday, November 4th Beef Taco Salad (Ground Beef, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese and Green Onions) Corn Chips, Cinnamon Applesauce	Tuesday, November 11th Rosemary Roasted Pork Loin, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Dinner Roll, Mandarin Oranges	Tuesday, November 18th Breakfast For Lunch Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Bacon, Tater Tots, English Muffin W/ Jam, Cantaloupe	Tuesday, November 25th Thanksgiving Meal Turkey, Mashed Potatoes W/Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, Stuffing, Green Beans, Dinner Roll
Thursday, November 6th Southwestern Chicken Alfredo, Corn and Black Beans, Tropical Fruit Blend	Thursday, November 13th Cavatini W/Cheese, Cesar Salad W/Croutons, Green Beans, Pears	Thursday, November 20th Salesbury Steak W/Gravy, Salad, Broccoli, Dinner Roll, Peaches	Thursday, November 27th Closed For Thanksgiving



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

