

Taking Care

WINTER/SPRING 2005

A newsletter for donors, funders and friends of Families First

First-Ever 'Drama in Tap' to Benefit Families First

The genesis of the upcoming *"Seal with a Kiss"* fundraiser was a little bit like the birth of Families First itself: It all began at a kitchen table. **Ruth Mott** was one of six women who gathered around a kitchen table in 1985 to explore how the Portsmouth Prenatal Clinic, Families First's predecessor organization, could become a viable independent agency. Soon, she was chair of the agency's first Board of Directors.

Still friends after 20 years, some of the Families First Founders were once again sitting around a kitchen table when Ruth, the mother of acclaimed tap dancer **Mark Goodman**, shared her son's dream "to come here and dance at home"—and her own dream to have Mark's 15-member Los Angeles-based company do a benefit for her favorite charitable organization, Families First.

As timing would have it, also at that table was **Donna Ryan**, who had recently attended a gathering to introduce people to Families First and been inspired by what she had heard. Her winning bid at a charity auction entitled Donna to use The Music Hall for an evening, and she told Ruth, "If you're going to do it for Families First, I will definitely give it to you."

And so a fundraiser—nicknamed "The Founders' Event"—was born.

Along with Ruth and Donna, the event committee includes Families First Founders **Lindsay Josephs**, **Nancy Chase**, **Linda Rodier** and **Trisha Kish**.

"Seal with a Kiss" is the world's first "drama in tap," according to Ruth. It is set to the music of Seal and directed by Joe Malone, choreographer of the new Broadway-bound musical *Lennon*.

Don't miss it!



The Mark Goodman Dance Company

presents

"Seal With a Kiss"

a benefit for Families First Health and Support Center

Friday, June 24, 2005

The Music Hall, Portsmouth

VIP tickets (\$100)* Sandra Acox, 422-8208 ext. 144 or sacox@FamiliesFirstSeacoast.org

Regular tickets (\$18 to \$33) 436-2400 or www.TheMusicHall.org

Sponsorship Opportunities Sandra Acox, 422-8208 ext. 144 or sacox@FamiliesFirstSeacoast.org

The Mark Goodman Tap Company www.MarkGoodmanTapCo.com

* Includes premium seats and admission to an after-party with the dancers at a restaurant

www.FamiliesFirstSeacoast.org



Families First

Health and Support Center

Welcome

Dear Friends and Supporters,

We at Families First have had much cause for celebration recently: The 20th anniversary of our founding as the Portsmouth Prenatal Clinic, and passing the \$1 million milestone in our *"Campaign for a Healthy Future"* endowment fund drive.

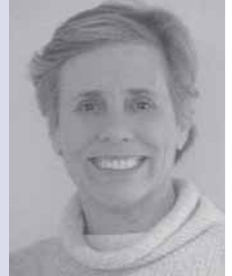
These two events are not unrelated. It is our 20-year track record of meeting community needs in a cost-effective way that gives our donor/investors confidence that Families First will be here for years to come, putting the income from the endowment fund to good use to serve the neediest residents of the Seacoast.

We celebrated our anniversary and thanked the people who made it possible with a special edition of our annual report, and a wonderful party at the oceanfront home of **Dr. Chappy Thayer** in New Castle. (The photo below shows some of our Board members making a toast at that party.) Special recognition was given to the two Seacoast organizations that have been Families First's largest benefactors: The Foundation for Seacoast Health, and Portsmouth Regional Hospital.

Families First literally could not be here doing what we are doing without support from the Foundation, the Hospital, and so many others. Many, many thanks.

Helen B. Taft

Helen B. Taft, Executive Director



Members of Families First Board of Directors raised a glass to thank the agency's supporters at a 20th Anniversary party in October. From left to right: Board Chair **Jody Hoffer Gittel**, **Sharyn Potter**, **Doug Roberts**, **Faith Harrington** and **Kathleen MacLeod**.

Fund Raising and Friends

With much gratitude, we recognize the generous individuals, businesses and foundations that...

ANNUAL FUND DONATIONS, JULY-DECEMBER 2004

This list includes donations of \$100 or more. We are grateful for contributions of any amount and regret that space doesn't permit us to list every donor here. All donors will be listed in the annual report this fall.

BUSINESSES, CHURCHES AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

AccuTech Marine Propeller, Inc.
American Culinary Federation
Apple Painting & Restoration
ASCA, Inc.
Atlantic Cardiology Associates
Centrix Bank & Trust
Cooperative Middle School
Essential Planning
Foss Manufacturing
Marple & James
National Passport Center
Portsmouth Regional Hospital
Seacoast Science Center
Temple Israel of Portsmouth
Timberland Company
Wal-Mart Foundation



Portsmouth residents **Jeanne Zucker**, left, and **Rebecca Blaine** threw a fabulous "Families First Fall Celebration," catered by **Julie DeStefano**. Local artists and vendors donated items for a silent auction.

INDIVIDUALS

Bruce & Sandra Acox
Don & Judy Wilbur-Albertson
Philip Alexakos
Rhett & Carol Austell
Bruce & Libby Bartolini
John & Susan Battye
Lawrence Berlin
Jeb & Barbara Bradley
Robert & Gail Brown
Dan & Blythe Brown
Dave & Jeri Brownell
Sean & Suzanne Caughran
Nancy Cauvet
Thomas & Patience Chamberlin
Laurie & Clarke Chandler
Hildreth & Peg Clark
Harlan & Pat Cutshall
Thomas Hannelore Eldredge
Judith Farrell
Darel & Barbara Fletcher
Patrick & Ruth Ford
John & Sally Freear
Jameson & Priscilla French
Marshall & Anne Gaffney
Katie Gannon
Michael & Jill Gibbons
Susan & Eugene Glick
Steven & Gail Goldberg
John & Patricia Haresch
Faith Harrington
Ed & Maija Hibbard
Ross & Jody Hoffer Gittell
Peter & Holly Horne
Holly Hunter
Frank & Judy Jellinek
Steven & Kathy Jencso

Maureen Keating
Thomas Kelleher
Gary & Trisha Kish
Dara Klein
David & Mary Krempels
Grace Lessner
Dana & Shaula Levenson
David & Sally Mulhern
Cynthia Muse
Donald & Sandy Osborne
James & Janis Reams
Timothy & Kimberly Reed
Jeffrey & Elisabeth Robinson
Olive Rugg
Mitchell Sevigny
Muriel Shaw
Michael & Monique Shevlin
Steven & Pam Shulman
William & Barbara Smucker
Laurie Spigener
Helen Taft & Peter Kearns
Charles Thayer
Joyce Troy
Daniel & Patricia Valenza



Families First will receive \$10,000 worth of free advertising on WSHK in 2005, courtesy of Citadel Communications and Energy North Propane.

If you donated \$100 or more between July and December 2004 and your name has been omitted or misspelled, please accept our apology and contact Sandra Acox at sacox@FamiliesFirstSeacoast.org or 422-2808 ext. 144 so we can correct the error in our records.



Apple Painting and Restoration owner Mark Syracuse donated a portion of each job he did during 2004 to Families First, raising \$750.

2005 CALENDAR SPONSORS

Bruce Acox
Allergy Associates of New Hampshire
Bottomline Technologies
Boynton Waldron Doleac Woodman & Scott, P.A.
Louis F. Clarizio Oral Surgery & Dental Implant Center
Discovery Child Enrichment Center
Exeter Health Resources
GreenPages
Harbour Women's Health
Jumpin' Jay's Fish Café
Liberty Mutual
McLane, Graf, Raulerson & Middleton, P.A.
Ocean National
Paddy's
Portsmouth Regional Hospital
Sheraton Harborside Portsmouth
Tilton Equipment Company
Wilson & Gould



Employees of **Sprague Energy** and **Portsmouth Regional Hospital** made the holidays brighter for 18 families participating in Families First's individualized support programs for families facing special challenges by donating more than \$7,300 worth of gifts. Sprague employees (above) also donated food for Thanksgiving baskets.

and Raising

at donated to Families First between July and December 2004.

CAMPAIGN FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

These donors have added more than \$1 million to Families First's endowment fund.

Donors are grouped by total amount pledged.

VISIONARY (\$75,000 +)

Foundation for Seacoast Health

CHAMPION (\$50,000 - \$74,999)

Dr. Geoffrey Clark & Martha Fuller Clark
Exeter Hospital
Frank & Judy Jellinek
Joanne Lamprey

LEADER (\$25,000 - \$49,999)

Anonymous (1)
Phoebe Haas Fund (GPCF)
James & Ellen Labrie
Portsmouth Regional Hospital
Winthrop, Inc.

GUARDIAN (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Anonymous (4)
Dan & Blythe Brown
Terry & Susie Connor
Elizabeth B. Carter Fund (GPCF)
Cynthia Taft-Egdahl & Richard Egdahl
Martin & Pauline Elkin Charitable Trust
Stephen & Patricia Foss
Jameson & Priscilla French
Thomas & Mary Jane Keane
Helen Taft & Peter Kearns
Robert & Kathleen MacLeod
Cynthia Muse
Tom & Barbara Sedoric
Barbara K. & Cyrus B. Sweet, III
Seatrade International
Tyco, International
Grenville & Nancy Winthrop

ADVOCATE (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Harlan & Pat Cutshall
George & Mary Donovan
Scott & Kim Gardiner
Jody Hoffer Gittel & Ross Gittel
Simeon Jarvis
Keryn Kriegel & June Bernard
Effie Malley & Gerald Duffy
Kate & David Murray
Toby Stowe

SPONSOR (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

Anonymous (2)
Bruce & Sandra Acox
Richard & Barbara Adams
Nicholas & Lea Aeschliman
John Ahlgren
Banknorth Wealth Management Group
Laurie & Clarke Chandler
Harry & Barbara Cheverie
Rob & Bobbi Cimini
Marion Cohen Trust
Christopher & Roddy Cole
William & Jane Cummings
Phyllis Eldridge
Federal Savings Bank
Hilda Fleisher
John & Sally Freear
Wendy Frosh
Marshall & Anne Gaffney
Joseph Galli
Susan & Eugene Glick
Mary Griffin
Griffin Family Corporation
John & Patricia Haresch
Faith Harrington
Stuart & Lisa Hemming
Edmund & Maija Hibbard
David & Catherine Hills
Skip & Kathy Homicz
Darcy Horgan
Mark & Lindsay Josephs

Anonymous (1)
John & Susan Battye
Ferris Bavicchi
David & Nancy Borden
Donald & Nancy Casko
Deborah Clark
Suzanne Coombs
Howard & Phyllis Crosby
Linda Dahl
Charles DeGrandpre
Bernie & Gene Doherty
Cristina Dolcino & Michael Gass
Kim Durkee
John & Sue Durkin
Stephen Frolking
Peter & Suzie Hamblett
Darci Knowles

FRIEND (UP TO \$999)

Grace Lessner
Glenn & Pat McKenzie
Ruth Mott
Mary Oplinger & Charles Simpson
Stanley & Yvette Plodzick
David & Ashley Prend
Jeffrey & Elisabeth Robinson
Mark & Mary Seefeld
Georgette Shapiro
Sanford Sherman
Robert & Janet Stevens
Kim Truesdale
Tricia Valencia
Randy & Ronny Werner
Brooks & Carol Whitehouse
Joanna Wicklein
John Wicklein

LEGACY GIVING: Wendy Frosh; Mark & Lindsay Josephs; Cynthia Muse



As these Cooperative Middle School students in Stratham recently discovered, "you don't need to be rich to donate money." They held an hour-long jump roping contest, a talent show and a sing-along to raise money for Families First and other charities.

Sarah & Cliff Knowlton
Sheldon & Elaine Krasker
Wanda McDonough & Michael Lee
Mark & Diana McNabb
Maxine Morse
Sharyn Potter & Michael Schwartz
Doug Roberts
Timothy Russell & Sheryl Milne
Jean Sawtelle
Diane Schaefer & Mitch Shuldman
Daniel & Lisa Schwarz
William & Naomi Scott
John Seavey
Richard & Pamela Senger
Jim & Marie Shanley
Toby Stowe
Nate & Rachel Swanson
Mabel Healy Tillinghast Memorial Fund (GPCF)
Joseph & Ginny Szymanowski
John Tillinghast
Margie Wachtel & Morey Stettner
Gregory & Kathy Wurtz



Triathlete John Shaw, of Hampton Falls, raised \$6,000 to help Families First bring parent education programs to the Hampton region. Families First's Margie Wachtel and U.S. Rep. Jeb Bradley, R-NH, cheered him on at a pit stop during his 110.5-mile journey

GRANTS, JULY-DECEMBER 2004

Abraham Burtman Charitable Trust
Citizens Bank Foundation
Endowment for Health
Forest Foundation
Foundation for Seacoast Health
Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation

Hesed Foundation
NH Children's Trust Fund
Partnership for Effective Nonprofits
Pierre Fauchard Academy Foundation
Piscataqua Savings Bank
Rotary Club of Hampton
United Way of the Greater Seacoast

Families First in the News

The one-stop shop

Families First Health and Support Center offers much for very little

By **HOLLY FINIGAN**

In the woods of Portsmouth's Community Campus, just off Lafayette Road, lies Families First Health and Support Center. Its services help Seacoast residents in many shapes and forms. Celebrating more than 20 years of service to the Seacoast community, the nonprofit has much to offer all sorts of people in the area.

The center prides itself on being a one-stop shop for Seacoast locals in need. While some people may just come in for the occasional doctor's visit, others use the facility for almost all it has to offer.

On average, the agency sees more than 80 people a day, not counting visitors to the Family Exchange. Its less-than-5-year-old building, along with its friendly and compassionate staff, make Families First a unique and a helpful part of the Seacoast community. Since it could take weeks to see and report all of what the place covers, here is a glimpse at what goes on every day in the building. University of New

Hampshire intern Holly Finigan spent time exploring the facility.

Putting the "fun" in family night
Monday, Dec. 6, 5:30 p.m.

Each Monday evening, families of different sizes and with different needs fill the cafeteria of Families First to have a sit-down meal. The tables are set with cloths, flowers and silverware. This unique program night, which has been going on for the past two years, gives homeless, single-parent, and low-income families a chance to sit and eat a real home-cooked meal together. After dinner, the children play together in the gym or in the childcare room while the parents converse and enjoy time to themselves. The night ends with a family activity, such as a music or art night.



Jackie Ricciardi

Family Support

"At first, the parents were nervous and the kids were wild," said Joanna Wicklein, the parent group coordinator at Families First. "Some families had never had the experience of eating a sitdown meal together."

"Coming here has allowed me to be around other parents," said Amy, the mother of Madisyn, 6, and Isabella, 8. Amy has used the services of Families First for the past seven years, taking advantage of prenatal care, parenting skill classes, child care and Family Fun Night.

"There are activities for the kids, which allows me to have times with other parents or just gives me some time to myself," she said.

Many of the other parents come for similar reasons. Christy is a single mother with two children, Daniel, 8, and Brenda, 4, and has been coming to Family Fun Night for the past year.

"The kids just love this place. It helps me with food costs and gives us something to do as a family," she said.

On this particular night, more than 20 children sit at various tables, quietly eating and putting their napkins on their

laps. The evening, which lasts around two hours, gives these families, some of whom live at Cross Roads House (a temporary homeless shelter) and others who just use the facility for one night of the week, much more than a sitdown family meal.

"This program really helps parents feel good about themselves," Wicklein said. "We end up having a lot of families come to the program regularly."

It's baby time

Tuesday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m.

Even with the heavy traffic owing to one of the winter's first big snowstorms, the prenatal clinic at Families First was buzzing. The waiting room felt like a typical doctor's office, and it seemed hard to believe that this building could encompass a cafeteria, full-size gym, various meeting rooms and a complete primary care unit. Right outside the waiting room is the "family exchange," where people can look for clothing while they wait for their appointment.



Rich Beauchesne

Prenatal Care

Families First in the News

continued from reverse side

Like many of the clients the doctors see, Nicole is a young, single mother-to-be—20 years old and 7 months pregnant. She has no family around the Seacoast area and the father of her baby is no longer in the picture. She works full time as a cashier. She came to Families First hoping to procure health insurance, as she had none. Agency employees put her on Medicaid and have continued to aid her through her first pregnancy. From her ear-to-ear grin, it would be difficult to recognize the hardships she faces.

"I'm alone," the Rhode Island native said. "But they really know how to take care of you here at Families First."

Nicole sees a doctor, midwife, nutritionist and counselor during her hour-long visit. Her positive attitude has affected much of the staff that has worked with her. The team is writing her a recommendation for new housing.

"They even call me at home," Nicole said. "I've met all the midwives, which is a good thing, because one of them will be delivering my baby!"

Soon she'll be taking the childbirth classes offered by Families First and she said she'll continue to use the doctor for her baby and herself.

"Everyone here is just so wonderful," she said.

Partners in Health

Tuesday afternoon at 2 p.m.

One of the Families First programs with no financial eligibility requirements is Partners in Health, a mentor system that gives support to families whose children have a chronic illness.

Georgie Clark, the Partners in Health



Cheryl Joseph and Rebecca Roberts

Primary Care

As one woman who had just delivered a baby boy at the prenatal clinic said, "I love this place."

program coordinator, has served more than 120 families and enrolled 100 families into the program since she began her position. She visits most families in their home and offers support, advice and resources to families who have children with chronic illnesses.

"I love these home visits," Clark said. "I've met such courageous parents."

This specific afternoon, Clark visited with Joan, mother of Jake, 11. One-half of Jake's brain is enlarged, and he has seizures often. The family lives in a

beautiful house in Stratham. Though they do not face the financial difficulties that most of the Families First clients do, they are involved with Partners in Health

to make sure Jake gets the help he needs in school. Clark acts as a mentor to Joan and helps her with Jake's special-education programing in his middle school. . . .

Besides mentoring parents, Clark also offers her services to school nurses and teachers to help them understand the issues of the child and his needs. She has attended doctor's visits with clients, even if just to be there for the family.

Primary care

Tuesday afternoon, 3:30 p.m.

Paul has always hated to go to the doctor's. That is, until he began to go to the Families First primary clinic after a family member recommended it to him.

"This is really the only doctor's office I've ever enjoyed coming to," the 53-year-old Rye native said. "I never dread coming here."

In addition to its prenatal clinic, Families First also offers a complete primary care unit. Though they are consistently busy in the office, Paul praises the staff for their compassion. He has come to see his doctor, Jennifer Stebbing, for one last time before she leaves for a new job. He said he is really going to miss her.

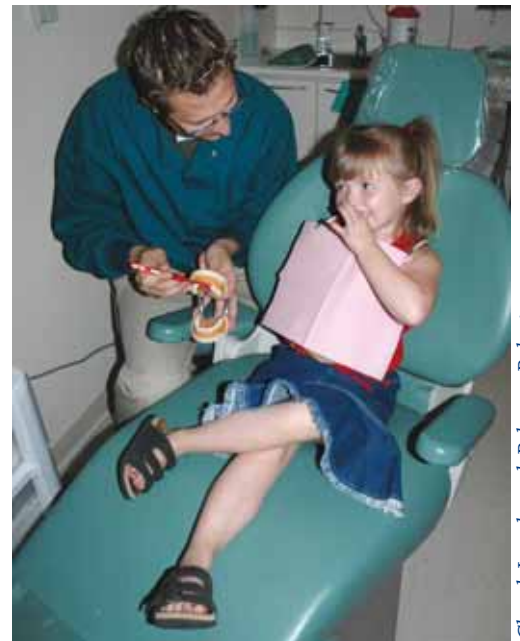
"The doctors sit and talk and listen to you here. They never rush you through the appointments like other doctors do," he said.

Close to the doctor's offices, lies the dental area. Here, Jennifer, 39, of Hampton, is getting her dentures fixed. The mother of six is training to become a medical assistant and thought she would have a better chance at the job if



Cheryl Joseph and Rebecca Roberts

Health Care for the Homeless



Cheryl Joseph and Rebecca Roberts

Dental Care

she got her teeth fixed. Over the past few months, the dentists have extracted 12 of her teeth. She is now waiting for her lower dentures to come in.

With the time and effort the doctors spend with the patients, and the new and clean facility the center has to offer, almost everyone used the same word to describe the place—incredible.

As one woman who had just delivered a baby boy at the prenatal clinic said, "I love this place."

OUR MISSION:

To provide a broad range of health and family support services to individuals and families, regardless of ability to pay.

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third annual
**COMMUNITY
CAMPUS**
celebration

to benefit the nine agencies
of the Community Campus

Saturday, March 12

7:00 p.m. at the Community Campus

Featuring music by Broadnax, live and silent auctions, and sumptuous hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Evening attire. For tickets (\$125 per person), call 603-422-8220. For details and to see auction items, visit www.CommunityCampus.org.

Meet New Staff Members



John Haresch, MD

John Haresch, MD, a physician at Families First since August 2003, has been promoted to Medical Director. He now oversees clinical services in addition to continuing to provide primary care to patients.

Nurse practitioner **Leslie O'Brien, ARNP**, joined the practice in December. O'Brien, who received her master of science degree in nursing from the University of New Hampshire, joins Families First after eight years at Stratham Family Health.

Virginia Szymanowski joined us last fall as the agency's first full-time Finance Director. She is a CPA and brings 15 years of not-for-profit management experience to the agency.

Save Time, Save Trees

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail from now on, please send your e-mail address to: sacox@FamiliesFirstSeacoast.org. We may also use your address to send very occasional, time-sensitive updates, but we will never share it with any other organization!