

A VISIT FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOAN WELSH



Joan Welsh represents the towns of Camden and Rockport in the Maine State Legislature. During a brief break in May, between special sessions to pass the Maine budget for the next fiscal year that started July 1, 2012, she graciously agreed to talk with

Executive Director Joe Curll and me about the impact of budget cuts on programs benefiting those who are developmentally disabled, the population served by Coastal Opportunities.

Since 2004, Coastal Opportunities has been affected by numerous budget cuts to programs serving our clients, necessitating compromises and cessation of services that offered improved comfort and quality of life for the participants and relief for families.

Most of us recall that for many years Coastal Opportunities contracted for workroom jobs where clients performed work such as packaging toothpicks and preparing mailings for businesses and organizations. These programs provided healthy interaction with the community and meaningful work for the clients. At this point, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is not providing funding for any onsite contract work, and outside placements at work sites within the service area (Knox County) are very limited.

As we mourn the loss of the work programs that were such an integral part of Coastal Opportunities, we also face cuts in the number of hours per day that clients may attend day programs at the Thomas Corcoran Center and the Olive Coates Center. Such restrictions cause cutbacks in the day staff hours, and thus the incomes of those workers. Fortunately, the bottle redemption center program is still in operation.

Although Joan has been in support of sustained state funding for programs for the devel-

opmentally disabled populace, she had not previously visited the Coastal Opportunities programs. At her first stop, the Olive Coates Center, Michelle McAvoy, director of the day programs, welcomed her and introduced the clients who were present that day. Joan and Michelle discussed the many ways that participants benefit by attending the Coates Center for specialized client-centered activities.

From there, Joan and Michelle went over to the Corcoran Center, where they were enthusiastically welcomed by the clients in the Options and Arts programs. This provided an opportunity to experience the joy and pride the clients feel for their weaving, beadwork, painting, and woodworking. Many of their projects are ongoing and can take weeks to complete, increasing the significance of the finished products. Joan had the opportunity to engage with several of the participants in these programs, seeing firsthand how the men and women interact with others and realizing that some of them are capable of working in the community when opportunities are available.

On the residential side of funding, prospects for all residential funding may be subject to change, with some speculation that Maine could reinstate institutional housing in order to save money.

The final stop of the day for Joan was the office of Joe Curll, where she praised the facilities and programs she had visited and noted that sometime she would also like

to tour the residences. Joe and Joan discussed the potential of further cuts in the July 1, 2012, fiscal-year budget. Joan was clearly pessimistic that lost program funds would be restored, but she was hopeful that no further cuts would be made this year. Costs are being shifted in the budget for the entire state, and all departments will be receiving less than in previous years. Combining elder care and developmentally disabled services is a real possibility.

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ity under the current administration, reflecting a focus more on business matters than people matters. Through astute planning and management, Coastal Opportunities is just about breaking even.

Sadly, because of a lack of funding, the number of developmentally disabled persons in Maine awaiting services is now in the range of 1,000! While they wait, many of them are idling in their homes with limited social interaction or purposeful activities.

Joan acknowledged how discouraging the funding losses are and expressed sadness about the situation. She also suggested that we start thinking “outside the envelope” and explore other funding sources for maintaining programs to meet our mission, informing the public of the impact of the budget cuts, and possibly establishing a supporting foundation that could tap into regional resources to maintain services.

Shortly after Joan’s visit, the state budget was passed with no unexpected changes and no *further* impact on the PNMI program that funds housing for the residents at the Vera Brandes Home in Thomaston.

A big debt of gratitude goes to Joan for taking the time to observe the numerous ways Coastal Opportunities is working to improve the lives of the developmentally disabled in Knox County, and for pledging her support for the program.

— JEAN BOOBAR

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN . . .

In the first quarter of 2012, Coastal Opportunities lost a valued staff member and two faithful supporters of our organization.

May they rest in peace.

**GRACIA BERROCAL
MARY M. HOLT
WALTER YATTAW**

A SALUTE TO STAFF!

The following staff members were recognized in May for their dedication and their ten years of service to Coastal Opportunities:

VALERIE CURTIS

PAT DUSTON

KELLY MOORE

LINDA TURCOTTE

STAFF PROFILE GAIL VARGA



PHOTO BY JANET VISSER

Program Coordinator Overseeing Residential Programs and Supervising the Person-Centered Planning Coordinator and Community Case Managers. How’s that for a job title? It might sound confusing and dull—but far from it! The work Gail Varga performs in the Coastal Opportunities residential program under this job description is a lively dance of sharp thinking and measured decisions. Just picture a quickstep of ever-changing challenges and time-sensitive responses. Gail has a desk at the Corcoran Center, but even when she’s there, she is still on the dance floor—keeping track of how clients are faring in their placements, of adequate staffing and staff needs and schedules, of who needs a substitute when and in which residence. No matter what the situation, she’s always focused on supporting the needs of residents and staff.

How does Gail do this? Let’s first note that she has been employed at Coastal Opportunities since the fall of 1988, so she has been part of the remarkable growth of the residential component of the program. Prior to moving to Maine, she worked in the horticulture program with the developmentally disabled at the Bancroft School in New Jersey, coming with the clients to Bancroft’s summer location in Owls Head each year. Eventually she moved to Maine and was hired by the then-Coastal Workshop to supervise the aging life and life skills program housed at the “Bilbo Baggins” site, now the Julia Spear Payne Apartments, close to the Corcoran Center on Limerock Street in Camden. At the time, that program served only six clients.

In her present position, Gail provides oversight and support to the residential home staffs, who in turn are the direct-care providers in each of the eight residences: Katherine Brown in Hope, Shirley Drinkwater in Rockport, Vera Brandes in Thomaston,

Annette Overlock in Owls Head, the Jenkins and Robishaw Homes in Rockland, and the Elm Street and Julia Spear Payne Apartments in Camden. The skills and dedication of the homes' supervisors are key to the success of the residential programs. Each of these facilities, except for the sites in Camden, requires that staff be on duty overnight and at all times when residents are at home. When an employee is unable to work a shift, and the supervisor is unavailable, Gail turns to her list of resources to find a replacement, making sure that no one exceeds the strictly limited working hours dictated by MaineCare, the funding source for residential care. Coastal Opportunities tried to develop a per-diem position as a backup for such situations, but recruitment was difficult because there was no way to guarantee the employee a specific number of weekly hours.

All the residences are licensed by the State of Maine and are assessed every two years for compliance with services and safety as well as skills programs, plus a review of case plans and recordkeeping. Gail attends staff meetings (as does Executive Director Joe Curll), and she is always aware of staff dynamics and the well-being of residents. Each house staff is responsible for implementing set menus, rotating them every six weeks or so, and preparing bag lunches for clients to carry to day programs. Gail is a strong advocate of the efforts to provide healthier meals on a limited budget.

Day programs are not in session when public schools are closed in the winter, which means that daytime staff members have to be recruited. No matter what the weather, staff must report to work, so that can mean that Gail is busily making calls to supervisors to make sure that happens.

Gail foresees the need for further belt-tightening due to diminishing funding that may reduce allowable staff and possibly even alter the types of housing that will be supported. As new guidelines are instituted, she is determined to work hard with the staff to ensure that the clients continue to receive beneficial programming.

Gail's wonderfully calm demeanor camouflages the stressful work she performs, day in and day out. She firmly believes that part of her mission is to project and protect a positive image for Coastal Opportunities—and this she does very naturally and most effectively.

—JEAN BOOBAR

COASTAL OPPORTUNITIES ARTISTS IN AUGUSTA

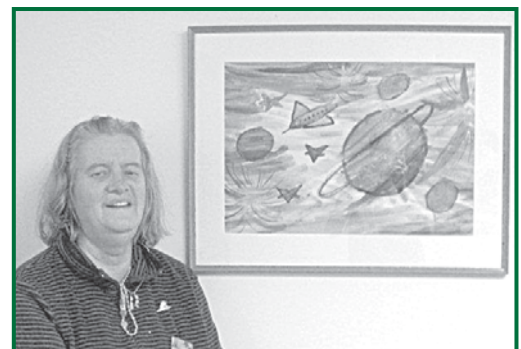


For the second year in a row, Coastal Opportunities has been represented in Augusta at the now-annual "Lest We Forget" exhibition—marking the anniversary of the closing of the Pineland Center in Pownal, Maine, and the integration of its residents into Maine communities. Established in 1907 by the Maine Legislature for those who were shamefully labeled "idiotic and feeble-minded," Pineland once housed as many as 1,700 children and adults with developmental disabilities. The last resident left in 1996.

A painting by Linda Bjelland was selected for the first exhibit, in 2011; one by Shane Roberts was selected in 2012. Both artists, participants at Coastal Opportunities, are enthusiastic painters. Each of the exhibits—installed in the Maine State Capitol's Hall of Flags—showcased the work of more than thirty artists.

The Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP), an association of some seventy organizations statewide that provide community-based services for those who are developmentally disabled, organizes the art exhibits. As MACSP Managing Director Mary Lou Dyer puts it, "The remarkable diversity and creativity of the pieces underscore the value of supporting community integration and self-expression for everyone, including individuals with disabilities."

Congratulations to Shane and Linda—splendid representatives of this creative spirit and proud ambassadors from Coastal Opportunities.



ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

OVERVIEW

In fiscal year 2010-2011, Maine experienced an increase in the number of adults with intellectual disabilities who are waiting for day and residential services. Currently, the number of people waiting for services is close to 1,000 statewide. Many of those on the “waiting list” are living at home with parents who are struggling to provide the care and oversight that individuals require when remaining at home. When parents can no longer provide the care needed, the son or daughter enters the “crisis” system. (A crisis is defined as any situation in which someone has nowhere to live.) Individuals will stay in crisis homes until they can gain funding and move into a more permanent situation. The folks in “crisis” will be the first on the waiting list to be funded, leaving those who remain at home among the last to receive services.

We have also seen a reduction in the amount of time a person is allowed to spend in day services in 2010-2011. The amount of time dropped from 27 hours a week per person to 22 hours per week. After meeting with staff, and with input from parents and home providers, we offered either a 4-day week with 5.5 hours per day or a 5-day week with 4.25 hours per day. Eighty percent chose the longer day/shorter week. This allowed us to retain many of the volunteer positions we had established over the years. These positions are meaningful to our participants and to the businesses and programs in which they work, including Meals on Wheels, local churches, animal shelters, United Mid-Coast Charities, Owls Head Transportation Museum, and Tanglewood—just to name a few.

In 2010-2011, we moved to a statewide staff-training system—the Direct Service Professional Training. This training requires staff to successfully complete 12 online modules as well as the tests that follow each module. At the end of the online training, there are two live sessions in which each staff person discusses the knowledge he or she gained through the online training. This is a web-based national training that teaches staff the basic skills they need to work with persons with intellectual disabilities.

With the erosion of day-services hours and a bottleneck for any new people entering the system, the State is struggling to maintain the services that we have. Despite these reductions, we at Coastal Opportunities have been able to maintain a participant satisfaction level of 85 percent very satisfied and 15 percent somewhat satisfied. Nonetheless, we will continue to strive for 100 percent very satisfied.

For the foreseeable future, there will be continuing cuts and a continuation (and perhaps expansion) of the waiting list for services. We will all need to work together as a community to ensure that program participants continue to receive high-quality services as we move forward.

* * *

Coastal Opportunities provided Residential Services, Community Services, Home Supports, and Work Supports to adults with Developmental Disabilities from July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011, to further our mission. The mission of Coastal Opportunities is: **To assist adults with Developmental Disabilities to become participating members in the social and economic community.**

In fiscal year 2010-2011, we provided services to **120** adults with Developmental Disabilities. We provided Community and Work Services to **68** participants and Residential and Home supports to **52** residents, including services to **20** adults in our Crisis Program. We

employed **82** full- and part-time staff, at a cost of **\$2,727,303**, to further the mission of Coastal Opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Work Services

Coastal Opportunities provided meaningful work at our Bottle Redemption Center to **5** participants. One of these participants also worked with supports at the Y for two days per week. We provided **703** hours of work supports to the participants in this program.

ORGANIZATIONAL EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES FOR 2010-2011

1. To maintain Vocational Rehabilitation certification for agency-operated vocational services.

We were able to extend our certification to the fall of 2011.

2. To develop a transition plan with local school systems for students with developmental disabilities by June 30, 2010.

We worked with local school systems in the spring of 2011 to try to identify any services we might offer to outgoing graduates.

3. To develop a curriculum for work services that will assist individuals to make employment choices by June 30, 2011.

We were delayed again by changes in personnel. We plan to have two additional staff certified for Job Placement by June 2012. In addition, we will develop a job club that will help individuals in identifying and choosing employment.

ORGANIZATIONAL EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES FOR 2011-2012

1. To maintain Vocational Rehabilitation certification.

2. To maintain contact with high schools in Knox County regarding students transitioning to vocational services.

3. To maintain a curriculum for vocational services that will assist individuals to make employment choices.

Community Integration

Community integration activities are designed to provide participants with the skills they need to access the community. This program provided services to **68** participants in the following areas:

Volunteer Activities

Program participants had the opportunity to volunteer at the following **17** sites: Nativity Lutheran Church, Windward Gardens, the Food Pantry, Camden First Aid, Owls Head Transportation Museum, The Humane Society of Knox County, Camden-Rockport Animal Rescue League, Tanglewood 4-H Camp, First Congregational Church of Camden, Knox Center, Goodwill, Merryspring, Meals on Wheels, South Thomaston United Methodist Church, John Street United Methodist Church senior meal site, UMCC mailings, and the Salvation Army. **Seven** percent of the total participant time was spent in volunteer activities. Of the **7 percent**, **44 percent** of the time was spent at Meals on Wheels and the Owls Head Transportation Museum.

Community Activities

Participants spent scheduled time at the following sites: Camden and Rockport Public Libraries, Hannaford Supermarket, Walmart, Penobscot Bay YMCA, local banks, the bowling alley, and local restaurants. All of these activities had the purpose of assisting participants to access the community.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION OBJECTIVES (AND RESULTS) FOR 2010-2011

1. Program participants will maintain or increase progress toward their individual goals.

Target: 90 percent.

Seventy-two percent of participants maintained or made progress on individual objectives.

2. Program participants will maintain or increase the amount of time spent in integrated community settings.
Target: 10 percent.

Twenty percent of participants' time was spent in integrated community settings.

3. Program participants will maintain or increase the amount of time spent participating in volunteer activities.
Target: 10 percent.

Seven percent of participants' time was spent in volunteer activities.

4. Coastal Opportunities will maintain enough staff to ensure that community integration is accomplished in small groups with a 1:3 maximum staff-to-client ratio.
Target: 60 percent.

Twenty-four percent of integrated community activities were in small groups.

5. Coastal Opportunities will continue to strive for customer satisfaction.
Target: 100 percent.

Ninety-eight percent of Program Participants were satisfied; ninety-six percent of Family/Other were satisfied.

GOALS FOR 2011-2012

1. Program participants will maintain or increase progress toward their individual goals.
Target: 90 percent.

2. Program participants will maintain or increase the amount of time spent in integrated community settings.
Target: 22 percent.

3. Program participants will maintain or increase the amount of time spent participating in volunteer activities.
Target: 10 percent.

4. Coastal Opportunities will maintain enough staff to ensure that community integration is accomplished in small groups with a 1:3 maximum staff-to-client ratio.
Target: 60 percent.

5. Coastal Opportunities will continue to strive for customer satisfaction.
Target: 100 percent.

Strategic Plan

Several goals remain in effect for Coastal Opportunities in accordance with our most current Strategic Plan. The Board of Directors reviews the plan in the fall of each year.

1. Maintain a fundraising plan

We decided to continue to work on developing a planned-giving brochure and develop a process for planned giving. The committee also is working on clarifying the relationship between Cash for Clothes, our largest fundraiser, and Coastal Opportunities.

2. Maintain public awareness

We are continuing to contact local schools in the spring to see if anyone leaving school might be interested in our services. We are also seeking to inform legislators about the serious threats we are facing as an organization.

3. Successfully transition each interested program participant into an integrated work setting
We have worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and

Coastal Opportunities Statement of Activities Years Ended June 30, 2011 and 2010

	2011	2010*
Operating revenue		
Net patient service revenue	\$ 3,734,559	\$ 3,876,572
Department of Health and Human Services grant	212,398	199,620
Redemption center and client sales	237,134	264,379
Other revenues	53,161	30,304
Total operating revenue	4,237,252	4,370,875
Operating expenses		
Program services	3,381,636	3,391,476
General and administrative	435,565	513,646
Total operating expenses	3,817,201	3,905,122
Operating income	\$ 420,051	\$ 465,753

* Certain amounts in the 2010 column have been reclassified to conform to the 2011 presentation.

have been able to place some people in the Redemption Center successfully. We also place and support a participant at the YMCA whose role has been expanding there from two days of work to three. Currently we are supporting two individuals through this service.

4. Maintain our current service base and current services
Coastal Opportunities continues to provide high-quality staff development. Currently, 100 percent of our full- and part-time staff is DSP (Direct Support Professional) certified.

Our second objective in this area is to maintain or increase the number of participants and participant hours in Community Integration, Residential, Home Support, and Work Services. We will be encouraging interested people to put their names on a waiting list. People cannot access the service now because the state is placing them on a waiting list for services. We will also be tracking participant numbers and hours of service provided to see whether our service numbers are up or down.

5. Determine current and future needs for housing
We have been working on maintaining services at our crisis home, the George Robishaw Home, as the State moves toward a statewide crisis system. The long-term goal is to have two crisis residents and two permanent residents in the home.

We have also been working on a plan to replace the current housing units at 59 Elm Street in Camden that are owned by the First Congregational Church. We would like to replace these units on another part of the Church property on Elm Street.

6. Maintain Coastal Opportunities properties
We have been meeting with an engineer each spring to review our maintenance needs for the upcoming year.

7. Establish an Emergency Succession Plan
We will begin the process of developing a succession plan for the Executive Director, financial staff, and two program directors. To be completed by June 30, 2012.

Joseph Curlee
Executive Director

WELCOME TO THE LOOM ROOM

Clack, clack, clickety clack . . . Those are the sounds of serious work going on in The Loom Room, located in the Corcoran Center on Limerock Street in Camden. From the seven good-size floor looms—each one labeled with a weaver's name—come inches, then feet, then yards of fabric that eventually are transformed into all kinds of giftables. Purses, picnic bags, tote bags, pillows, sachets, scarves, daypacks, jewelry bags, table runners, wine bags, hotpads, even duffel bags. All proudly carry the label: "Created at Coastal Opportunities" (and all are available for purchase at very reasonable prices at the Corcoran Center).

Artistic endeavors have been encouraged for many years at Coastal Opportunities—ever since Executive Director Joe Curll recognized the



COASTAL OPPORTUNITIES CREATIONS ON DISPLAY

need for a way to stimulate the artistic talents of clients in the organization's community support programs. Over the years, many staffers and volunteers have been involved. Early on, Lois Anne and Jean Wakem got things moving. Mary Jane Gautesen took a course at Halcyon Yarn in Bath, learned the many tricks of the trade, and has been fully involved with the program ever since! Now a regular volunteer, she mans a sewing machine and helps assemble the woven strips into lovely objects. Happy O'Neil lives up to her name, cheerfully supervising the Arts program, which includes weaving and so much more. Staffer Chasity Gomm enthusiastically has taken the lead with the weaving program. Ned Cunningham, a professional seamstress

and a wizard on the sewing machine, spends a couple of days a week turning the clients' lovely woven pieces into imaginative purses, bags, and more.



STAFFER CHASITY GOMM



DENISE RAYNES



MELVIN ACHORN



LINDA YATTAW



SUPERVISOR
HAPPY O'NEIL

COME SHOP AT COASTAL OPPORTUNITIES, WHERE TREASURES ARE CREATED EVERY DAY!

THE SCHOONER SOCIETY

Established in 2009, The Schooner Society encourages friends of Coastal Opportunities to make planned gifts to ensure the future care of citizens with special needs in our communities. Coastal Opportunities, founded in 1971 and celebrating its forty-first anniversary this year, has been nurtured and sustained by planned gifts and bequests from a prior generation. Now it is our generation's turn to "gift" the future.

Friends who would like to assist Coastal Opportunities have a range of options—a bequest, a life insurance policy, an annuity, a charitable remainder gift, or another form of deferred giving. All such benefactors will be enrolled and recognized as lifetime members of The Schooner Society.

To get started with the planning process, contact Coastal Opportunities board member Jim Jenkins at (207) 594-8857 or 594-9001.

WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO COASTAL OPPORTUNITIES DURING 2011

Bill & Alcy Achorn
Anonymous
Mr. & Mrs. Archibald Bailey
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Robert & Carol Bender
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Joe Curll & Hilda Livingstone
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The First
Town of Hope
Town of St. George
Town of Thomaston
Town of Warren
United Mid-Coast Charities
Nancy & Russ Wolfertz
Zern Family Charitable Fund

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE NEXT CASH FOR CLOTHES SALE!!!

October 20-22, 2012, at
the American Legion Hall, Camden

Best Thrift Sale in the Midcoast since 1975

Drop off donated clothes any weekday
between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. at
The Corcoran Center/Coastal Opportunities
35 Limerock Street, Camden

In Memory of Tony Bok &
Arthur D. Rohl
Carol Rohl

In Memory of Vera &
Guenther Brandes
Kathleen Brandes &
Michael Drons

In Memory of Allen &
Ann Cogan
Lew & Jill Pottle

In Memory of
Kathryn Draper
Alice Barlow
Everett & Virginia Crabtree
Rae & Cindy Fales
Annette Overlock
Lew & Jill Pottle

In Memory of Russell Fales
Rae & Cindy Fales

In Memory of
Martha Jenkins
Kathy & Peter Jenkins

In Memory of
Dolores Neville
Victoria Schulz

In Memory of
Averell Robinson
Everett & Virginia Crabtree
Rae & Cindy Fales
Lew & Jill Pottle

In Memory of
Albert Robishaw
George Robishaw
Gary & Ann Seavey

In Memory of Jack Shimkus
Jay & Joyce Moody

In Honor of 40 Years
of Service
Rita Grinnell Elliott

In Honor of Cindy Fales
Patricia Clark

In Honor of Betty Frost
Ross & Mary Holt

In Honor of Katie Metcalf
Walter & Jackie Metcalf

In Honor of Lou,
Melvin, & Scott
Audrey B. Post
Peg & John Way

In Honor of Linda Yattaw
Michael & Kermit Vonnannon

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FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Last November, Coastal Opportunities had an exciting celebration — marking our **40th anniversary** of providing essential services to members of the community who need them. The public was invited to enjoy an indoor picnic, watch a newly created 40th anniversary video, and take tours of our facilities on Limerock Street in Camden. As we enter our next decade, we look forward to more such celebrations. Stay tuned.

We are so proud of our new Special Olympics team, the **Coastal Navigators**. Enthusiastic team members and staff have been holding successful fundraising events to cover the costs of new uniforms and equipment. A highlight was December's spaghetti supper and auction, when many people went home with wonderful bargains donated by generous local businesses and citizens. Among them were lobsters, gift certificates, and works of art. If you missed it, watch for a repeat. Other fundraisers included an action-packed and entertaining basket-



ball game with the Harlem Rockets, who competed against employees, clients, and friends of Coastal Opportunities.

Lately, a subject on everyone's mind has been the State of Maine's budget for fiscal years 2011-12 and 2012-13. Major cuts already made by the Department of Health and Human Services will have serious effects on our programs. Although we expect to be able to manage throughout the remainder of fiscal year 2012, the 2012-13 budget may require very serious curtailment of our services. Unfortunately, there are dozens of developmentally disabled adults statewide and locally on waiting lists for daytime services and residential placement. With

the slashing of Medicaid funds, their needs just cannot be met.

At this crucial juncture, the Coastal Opportunities board remains most grateful for all those who have made financial contributions, including memorial donations, in the last year. Dozens of volunteers have generously worked countless hours each spring and fall to ensure the success of the **Cash for Clothes** sales, which raise much-needed funds for Coastal Opportunities. We extend our thanks for their dedication. Thank you also to everyone who has contributed clothing, time, and money.

On behalf of the other board members, let me say that we all consider it an honor to be associated with Coastal Opportunities. The dedicated staff, led by Executive Director Joe Curll, is committed to serving the varied needs of adults with developmental disabilities. We look forward to continuing to support their admirable efforts.


 President, Board of Directors