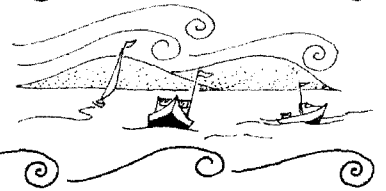


The Brooksville Breeze



The Newsletter of Brooksville Friends & Neighbors

Winter 2008

Cape Racers — Winters Past

JOAN MAC CRACKEN

Just imagine a frigid, moonlit night on Capt. Nat's Hill or Nichol's Field, with bundled body warmed by the sheer thrill of racing your new sled on the firm crust as ice crystals smack your cold face and blur your vision. When the two words "Cape Racer" are spoken here in Brooksville, a twinkle in their eyes and a smile on their faces appear on the knowing. Gayle Clifford's excellent and informative article in the 2007 Annual Town Report (page 95) claims that seventy-five years ago either you proudly owned a Cape Racer or you desperately wanted to. In the January 1962 *DownEast Magazine*, J. Plumb wrote lovingly about the racers. Various versions, colors, and sizes of these unique sleds, which were apparently first invented by Martin Van Buren Gray on Cape Rosier in the mid-1800's though some believe its origin goes back further, can be found in many Brooksville barns, garages, and attics.

So, I decided to search them out and to learn more about these historic gems of Brooksville from some of our residents who actually went sledding, head first over the icy roads or crusted snow. Jerry Andrews, my neighbor, and I carefully took down his two sleds, one small, one big, tucked up in the rafters of his garage. On first inspection, these sleds looked like ladders for some nimble gnomes. He explained that the quality of the looseness gives the flexibility to the runners and thus greater steerage. The dowels or "rounds" connecting the two sides of the sled are not glued and can be spun around within their sockets. Originally, two or three looped cords, using a "Spanish windlass" with two eyebolts, held the sides together. "The looser, the better," said Jerry, demonstrating his point as he wiggled the frame, and this sentiment was repeated again and again by the other former riders.

Many skilled craftsmen, carpenters and boat builders from Brooksville and nearby Castine and Penobscot built the Cape Racers—Hiram Blake, Bakeman Bates, and Emery Black, to name just a few. Sometimes, sleds were traded for groceries at the local store. A detailed written description by Scott Dickerson of the precise carpentry necessary to create the "perfect" racer was, for me, quite awe-inspiring.

Victor Dyer guessed that at today's prices for materials and especially labor, a sled could cost "a thousand dollars." Most Cape Racers were made of oak, but others were white ash with a touch of maple. The runners, built to be parallel but modestly slanted for a good edge, were finished with a steel strip that some obtained from old Charlie Grindle's blacksmith shop in North Brooksville, just opposite our new kiosk on the corner. Later, NH Bragg of Bangor supplied the metal runners. The riders would polish the runners to

(continued on page 2)

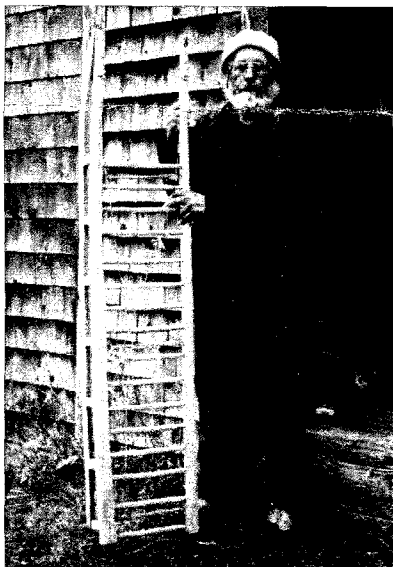


Cape Racers

(continued from

glistening brightness. And according to Robert Bakeman, "Them moved right along," he said with a chuckle. The claims of distance run or speeds attained are legendary. "They'd ride almost from here to South Brooksville," said one Meals-for-me attendant at the Town House.

Back then, the roads weren't plowed, and most folks who had cars stored them for the winter. Later, plowing was slow and sanding was rare. With the steep local hills and sharp curves, folks with the skill of steering could "sail" along the roads. Off road, they took sledding onto the hard crusted snow, flying over fields and stone walls deep beneath the snow. While bobsleds or Flexible Flyers broke through the crust, the Cape Racers sped on by. According to Edward Black, a sled named "Bluebird" was the fastest around for many years. Rachel Cousins Snow, Black's Cape Rosier neighbor, declared, "Wouldn't they go! The stiff ones couldn't be steered, though." She remembers the story



Paul Venno

that Mona Cousins and Emery Black had quite a sledding feud. And Mona beat him every once in awhile to his deep chagrin. Vic Dyer recalled his sledding out on the Cape with gangs of kids and adults twisting, leaning, and steering their racers down the hills of the blueberry barrens near Goose Falls. In North Brooksville Roy Fowler claimed that in those days without all the trees, he could travel on the crusty fields over fences and stumps following Route 175 almost all the way to Brooksville Corners. Larry Dow's grandfather, James Babbage, was fastest in his neighborhood or so it's been told. Larry remembers cattails dipped in kerosene to light the way, and they'd burn for a long time. Late March and early April with cold nights and warm days set the fields up for good early morning crusts.

"It was also a winter wheelbarrow," Victor said. Paul Venno, Berwyn Peasley, Jerry Andrews, and Roy Fowler all remembered that bigger versions of the sled could carry wood, fishing gear, smelt houses, and other equipment into the woods or onto the ice. Paul said that his grandparents, Iantha and Hiram Blake, pulled their four-year-old daughter Lucy, Paul's mother, on a racer over the ice to Hog Island to visit friends. He showed me a very old rickety Cape Racer that had been made by his grandfather Hiram.

Occasionally, a Cape Racer would leave the Peninsula, but they really never caught on anywhere else. One story goes that Henry Condon moved to New Hampshire with his Cape Racer. One winter day in the Granite State, some folks gathered for sledding. The Maine native took out his racer. Later, one local commented to another, "There's some guy out there sliding on a damn ladder and didn't he go!"



Edward Black

The Caper Racers were work and play. Brooksville ad and youth alike sharpened up skates and polished their sleds greet winter with joy. Now, w advent of automobile traffic, r sanding, indoor entertainment and computers, and warmer w Brooksville residents have ab many potentially joyful mome winter play. Maybe we can en once again outdoor activities : young and old, dust off our sk skis, snowshoes, and even sle delight in this special season. Happy Winter!

Pen & Ink Drawings
"Cape Racers"
and
"Welcome to Brooksvi
signpost, are available
greeting cards. 10/\$1:

Leslie Moore

32€

Brooksville's Own Website

JACKIE PIKE & DOUG COWAN

Yes, it's true. Brooksville will soon have its own home on the Internet, and *you* can help the town put its best face forward! Based on an idea that Doug Cowan and Healthy Peninsula envisioned over the past year, Richard Merrill (of Autograff) and the Brooksville website committee are designing a beautiful site. We hope to include all the information you need and want about all things Brooksville: weather, announcements, news, upcoming events and meetings, downloadable forms from the Town Office, and much more. There is also a Health and Wellness section to direct you to local resources and health information. Look for our site on-line by Christmas at www.brooksvillemaine.org.

Four people so far have been trained as "webmasters": Gayle Clifford, Doug Cowan, Kathleen Caldwell, and Jackie Pike. We are looking for many more people to get on board with this exciting project. No computer experience is necessary, and there is no age requirement. We need reporters, photographers, artists, and

people to enter the information into the computer and make it look good.

One very important assignment will be to gather information from the many organizations and businesses here in town; we need a couple of real sleuths in this department. If you are part of an organization or business (including a home-based business of any kind) and would like to appear on the website, please contact us, or pick up a form at Buck's Harbor Market, the Town Office, or at Frank Snow's office.

You may not have a computer or online access right now, but Healthy Peninsula has secured free 10 hours a month dial-up internet access from 207ME for all Brooksville residents (see related article in this Breeze for details). Refurbished computers at a decent price are also available for people who need them. There are also plans in the works for basic training workshops to get you started. More info will be available from Doug or on the website. And don't forget that the library provides free access on their computers as well as wireless access

if you bring along a laptop. One of the friendly folks there will be happy to show you how to get started. It's a great way to keep in touch with the kids and grandkids.

Please contact Doug Cowan at: 374-3706 (dougcowan@gmail.com) to find out more about how you can help us and how we can help you!



FREE DIAL-UP INTERNET ACCESS FOR ALL BROOKSVILLE RESIDENTS

Healthy Peninsula has been able to obtain limited dial-up internet access for all Brooksville residents from 207ME, a local internet provider (www.207me.com). To obtain the free service, you simply call 1-888-229-2411 by January 31, 2009 and mention the Brooksville Breeze. That entitles you to 10 hours/month of free dial-up access. The dial-up phone number is an Ellsworth exchange, so it is essential that your call to Ellsworth not be long distance. If you have Fairpoint as your local carrier, you should call them to make certain you have their "unlimited premium residential plan" so that the call is free. If you currently have their "unlimited economy residential plan," it will cost you an additional \$1.50 a month to upgrade to the *premium* coverage. On January 31, Fairpoint will merge the "economy" and "premium" services, so that will no longer be an issue. When you call 207ME, thank them for their generous offer and consider upgrading to their full supported internet/e-mail service at \$6.95 per month if you need more time. It is the least expensive dial-up access program in Maine.

Identities Revealed



Okay, we cheated a little. The photo is actually of the entering Freshman Class of 1949. Front row, L to R: Connie Gray, Evelyn Gray, Paul Bates, Ruth Stevens, Carol Steel. Back row, L to R: Earl Clifford, Georgianna Bowden, Edson Blodgett, Melvin Brown, Gerald Ryan.



One of the elders that Brooksville lost this year was Avis Poole. Born in North Brooksville, she was known for her big heart and her ability to feed all those she took into it. Her daughter, Bec Poole, shares Avis's recipe for venison mincemeat as a holiday gift to the community.

At this time of year during hunting season, my mother would get one of the boys to give her a deer neck which she would use to make mincemeat. I would do the grinding and get it ready for the oven. This is enough for ten pies, but it's worth the effort.

Avis's Venison Mincemeat

4 lbs of venison (the neck is great or you can use chopped lean beef- no need to cook this before hand)
 2 lbs of suet
 3 lbs of dark brown sugar
 2 cups of molasses
 2 quarts of cider
 4 lbs of raisins
 2 lbs of currants
 3 lbs of apples (peeled and cored)
 1 quart of grape juice
 4 large oranges
 3 lemons
 1 T cinnamon
 1 T mace
 1 T cloves
 1 t pepper
 1 t salt
 1 t nutmeg

My mother would cook the neck in a large kettle until just tender keeping the water over the neck during cooking. She would let it cool and skim off the fat and then take the meat off and grind with her meat grinder the meat, suet, apples, raisins, currants, oranges and lemons (after cutting in half and removing the seeds) into a large roasting pan. She would add spices, sugar, salt and molasses, (sometimes cutting the molasses in half and adding either some homemade grape jelly or some of the "skimings" of the grape jelly that she would save from jelly making during October). Once this

mixture was in the pan, she would add the liquids—just enough to make it a loose mixture—not too sloppy and not too stiff. This mixture went into the slow oven for a couple of hours until it had a deep rich color and smooth texture to it. She would add more liquids if the mixture seemed too dry. She packed it in sterilized jars with paraffin or froze it. Either way it just got better with age. Although my father thought her mincemeat would be better with some brandy in it, she always refused.

For those who prefer a meatless version or don't have boys to home deer necks:

Meatless Mincemeat

Make

¼ lb. butter
 1 cup brown sugar (more or less depending on taste)
 ½ cup molasses
 2 cups apple cider
 ¾ lb. dried currants
 1 lb. seedless raisins
 2 oz. chopped citron (optional)

Cook slowly, stirring occasionally until butter, sugar and citron is melted.
 Add:

2 cups peeled, chopped apples

Cook until apples are tender.

1 cup brandy (rum works well)
 ¾ tsp cinnamon
 ¾ tsp mace
 ¾ tsp ground cloves
 ¾ tsp all spice
 Pinch of nutmeg
 ½ tsp salt

Let's Not Forget Valentine's

Love is when your puppy licks your face every time after you left him alone all day.



*Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark.*

from *Crossing the Bar*
Alfred Tennyson



Clifford A. "Kip" Leach
1933–2008

On November 14, 2008, Brooksville lost not only a selectman but a true friend and neighbor. Kip was many things to many people, and, as a tribute, Brooksville Friends and Neighbors would like to collect your memories of him and create a book that will be kept at the Town House for all to enjoy. And, since Kip's life and his 47 years of service cover so much of twentieth-century Brooksville history, your stories will also be a reminder of times past to all who call Brooksville home.

But, and it's a very important but, we can't do it without your help. We need you to dig into your memory banks, leaf through your photo albums, reminisce with your friends, and help us make this happen. Here's what you can do:

1. Write up one of your favorite stories about Kip. Or more than one if you're of a mind to. If you've known him your whole life, we'd love some tales about him as a young man. We know that everyone doesn't like writing, so we'd be happy to sit down with you at your convenience and record your story instead. Then we'll type it up for you.
2. Lend us some photos to copy. You'll get the originals back.
3. Create a whole page in the book. We can scan it into a computer if you want and give you back the original.
4. You can get the information to us in several ways:
 - Drop it off to Gayle Clifford at the Town House
 - Mail it to: Brooksville Friends & Neighbors
P.O. Box 101
Brooksville, ME 04617
 - Call Sheila Moir at 326-4279 to set up a time when we can record your story

A word of warning: If we don't hear from you, we may just come knocking at your door.

Thanks for your help!

Katherine Clifford Bec Poole
Kathleen Caldwell Sheila Moir

“When I Was Your Age...”

SEVENTH & EIGHTH GRADERS INTERVIEW PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS ABOUT WINTER MEMORIES

Donald Smith’s grandmother, Pat Smith, recalled a lot more snow years ago. Five feet of snow one year impressed Wesley Moores’ mother, Carolyn McClure. Will Ludlow learned from his mother, Deb Venno Ludlow, that no one plowed or sanded the roads and they sledded on the hills. The Dyer family went skating on the Andrews’ pond. Christmas was celebrated differently years back for Tessa Clifford’s family, who went to church and Sunday school, and the children played in the snow, hiding in the high snow banks. Sally Blake, Taylor Allen’s step-mom, felt traditions are pretty much the same for her family.

Jinnie Perkins, Olivia’s grandmother, remembered getting her very own chamber pot for Christmas! and eating black duck and eels at her grandmother’s house. Presents

were usually things they needed like clothes.

Sara Clifford’s mother, Tracy Clifford, loved her favorite toy—a toy motorcycle with all the bells and whistles. Linda Closson, Shiann’s grandmother, recalled that everyone only got one present and her favorite was a transistor radio. Ursula Dyer, Savannah’s grandmother, made doll clothes for the dolls Savannah’s mother Christina always got for Christmas. Jessie Andrews learned from his grandmother, Edna Jones Andrews, of the old Christmas decorations made of glass with Santa and glass balls, paper and popcorn chains as well as lights on the tree. Special presents might be books, puzzles, mittens, pencils and candy. One year she received new ice skates, and around age five, she got a special doll and her father made a hand-made

wooden baby carriage for it. Edna recalled small family gatherings with close relatives when they ate and opened presents and talked. Russell Osborn, Aaron’s father, loved his Evel Knievel stunt set. Aaron’s father thought he got the best presents.

Outside of Brooksville, Aaron’s grandmother, Jane Perkins, recalled the muddy streets of Paris after a snow as she walked through the city streets. Mrs. Ladd watched the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City for several years and loved the window decorations along Fifth Avenue and even saw Santa Claus himself.

The Breeze Staff wishes everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Joyous Kwanzaa and generally happy holidays and hopes that the joy of the season is shared with family and friends as in days of olde.

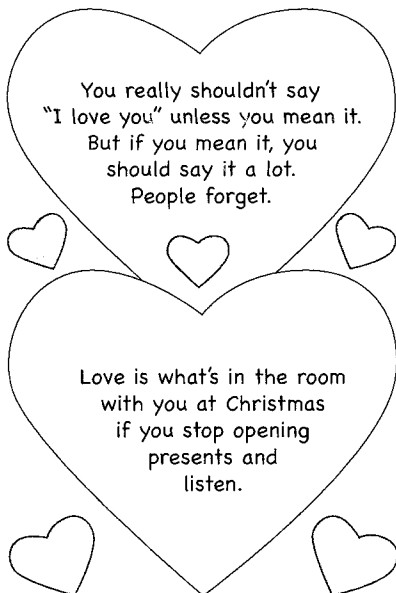


HELPFUL HEALTH TIP — PREVENTING FALLS

We all know that falls may occur in the homes of our elder citizens. Just a few preventive measures can cut down on the risk of tripping. Take a look around your home and see if you can decrease your risk of falling by doing just a few simple things.

1. Add some nightlights in your bedroom, hall, and bathroom
2. Remove all loose throw rugs
3. Keep bedding tucked in so you won't trip
4. Install grab bars next to toilet, shower, and tub
5. Use only non-slip mats in bathroom
6. Use a non-slip mat by kitchen sink to prevent slippery floor
7. Remove any cords or wires that could trip you
8. Install handrails on both sides of stairs, even short runs
9. Keep articles off the staircase

Preventing falls can prevent injuries, hospitalizations and even death. A little prevention goes a long way. And for sure, keep exercising to improve strength and balance. It will help maintain your active life!



Activities

Brooksville Elementary School

Basketball schedule and school events are posted on the website.
<http://www.brooksvilleschool.org>

Brooksville Free Public Library

Hours: see box to right • Preschool Story Hour: Mon., 10:30 am • Bri the Reading Dog begins second Sat. in Feb. • Book Club: 2nd Mon., 10 am • Books on Wheels, free delivery of materials to patrons who are unable to come to the library • Book signing, LeCain Smith, *The Maine Directory of Complementary & Alternative Health Practitioners*, Jan. 15, 7 pm • Info: 326-4560

Get Strong, Get Healthy

Exercise at the Community Center • Mon., Wed. & Fri., 7:30-8:45 am • Leader: Sylvia Wilder • Info: 326-4801

Neighborcare

Neighbors helping neighbors. Volunteers provide free health-related services, respite, transportation, errands, etc. Call Jeannie Gaudette for assistance or to volunteer at 326-4735

West Brooksville

Congregational Church, UCC

Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols, concluding with candle light, Dec. 24, 7 pm • Rev. Allen Myers • Info: 326-8283/348-5693

Brooksville United Methodist Church

Buck's Harbor Sanctuary: Sundays, 9 am • Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service, Wed., Dec. 24, 7 pm • Rev. Gary Vencill • Info: 469-7850

Brooksville Community Center

Call for information about events or rental • Betsy Jones, 326-8296

Majabigwaduce Chapter DAR

2nd Monday of each month, except Jan. & Feb., 6:30-8 pm, Brooksville Town House • Info: 326-8570
hotchkiss@midcoast.com

Reversing Falls Sanctuary

Bagaduce Rd., North Brooksville • Annual Cookie Walk, Dec. 20, 9 am-noon • Annual Advent Spiral, Dec. 21, 4 pm • Watch for more events

Open Mic

Local entertainment/community gathering and potluck supper • First Sunday of each month, 5-8 pm, Reversing Falls Sanctuary, North Brooksville • Info: Tim or Lake, 326-9255

Meditation

Tibetan Buddhist: Thursdays., 6 pm, • Call for winter location • Info: 326-4047

Brooksville Yoga

Unique combination of yoga and Yamuna Ball Rolling • Foundations: Tues, 4-5:30 pm. Continuing: Wed., 9-11 am • Special workshops in January • 5 Black Bear Rd., 2nd Floor • Instructor: Alison Chase • Info: 326-4205

Rosier Rainbow Grange No. 203

now selling tickets for Santa Bag raffle to benefit Grange Hall restoration. Tickets from any Grange member • Info: Mim Black, 326-4559

Brooksville Friends and Neighbors

1st Wed. of every month, 6:30-8 pm, Town House • Info: 326-0916

Middle Eastern Dancing

New class starting in the new year, Brooksville Elementary • "Let's Shake It, Not Shiver," free class for kids 4th grade and younger starting in March • Info: Christy McLaughlin, 326-8836

Brooksville Historical Society

meets every second Wed. of the at 7 pm at the Town House. All welcome • Info: 326-0899 or rchapman@downeast.net

To List Your Event

Send information by Aug. 15, Nov. 15, Feb. 15 & May 15 to:

Brooksville Friends & Neighbors
P.O. Box 101
Brooksville, Maine 04617

Town Office

Monday 9 am-2 pm

Wednesday 9 am-2 pm

Thursday 6 pm-8 pm

Selectman John Gray
Richard Baker

Town Clerk Amber Baker

Treasurer Freida Peaslee

Tax Collector Joanne Van d

Burn Permits at Fire Station
Thursdays from 7-8 pm

Harbormaster Sarah Cox
326

Library

Monday 9 am-5 pm

Wednesday 9 am-5 pm

Thursday 6 pm-8 pm

Saturday 9 am-12 noon

Post Office Window

Mon.-Fri. 8:30 am-12:15 pm
2 pm-4:15 pm

Saturday 8:30-10:30 am

Post Office Lobby

Mon.-Fri. 7 am-4:45 pm

Saturday 7 am-11 am

Buck's Harbor Market

Mon.-Fri. 7 am-6 pm

Sat. & Sun. 8 am-6 pm

New Talents Emerge at Open Mic

LYDIA MOFFAT

Have you ever noticed the musical sounds that float through the West Brooksville fields and forests on warm Sunday evenings? Or the cars lined up along the road and meadows, gathered around the shabby barn at the Valley of Stars on Coastal Road between David's Folly and the school? It's the weekly Brooksville Open Mic, open to anyone looking for a friendly audience, a place to visit with friends, or a good meal of soup and crusty bread. Valley of Stars Farm hosts the free, open-to-the-public Open Mic every Sunday from 5–8 pm during the warmer months.

Valley of Stars currently runs Tinder Hearth Bakery, a small vegetable farm, and educational workshops. The group considers the well-being of the community to be directly linked to the vibrancy of its arts and public gathering spaces, and wishes to support the growth of arts in the everyday life of the community. In 2005, Lake Larsson, the creative director behind Valley of Stars, provided the impetus for the Open Mic

and has watched her “baby” grow in size, variety, and vivacity every year.

This summer the Open Mic grew quickly from “one-pot-of-soup” nights to “three-pot-of-soup” nights with 80-100 people attending during the peak summer months. Every week you could find children running and laughing in the backyard, surprising talents emerging from the neighbors you never knew wrote poetry or songs, and people of all ages from Hancock County talking and enjoying baked treats from the Tinder Hearth oven.

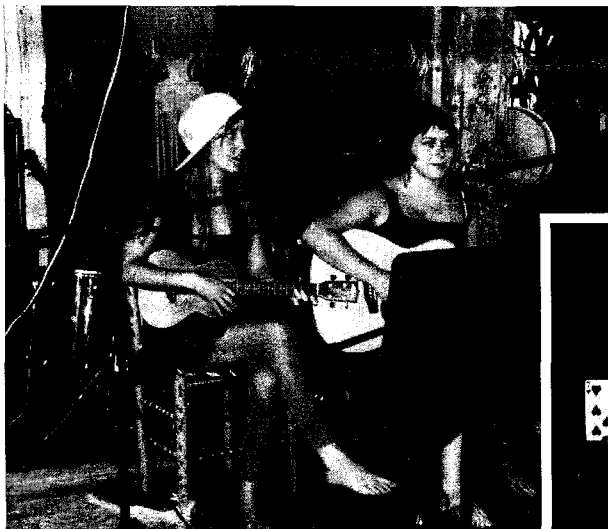
This summer held many outstanding performances from locals and special guests. Lake's mother, Barbara “Oma” Larson, was the Open Mic's resident elder, reading poems and always letting the audience know what's on her mind. Another weekly favorite was 13-year-old Alex Turanski, drawing shrieks from the audience with his impressive magic tricks. The eldest visitor this summer was Harry Weiss, 96, from Bangor, who wowed the audience with his magical jazz piano playing in an hour-

long “special feature” showcase in July. In mid-August, Bill McHenry's innovative saxophone playing stole the show, drawing a crowd that packed the barn and spilled out the doors, listeners eager to witness music unlike any that Brooksville has heard before.

In the spring of 2008, Larsson and the Valley of Stars crew were awarded a small grant from the Healthy Peninsula Project to help support the Open Mic. With the grant money they purchased the necessary equipment to make quality recordings of the weekly performances. After recording all summer, Larsson is currently producing a CD that collects some of the best performances. She aims to finish the CD before the end of the year. Larsson says that it will feature many of the Open Mic's beloved local performers, including Sarah and Oceana's folk duets, Matilda's beautiful cello, Joel's outrageous stories, Timbered Lake's powerful original songs, and the Midnight Zap Band's bluesy jams.

Valley of Stars has received a number of other small donations from individuals who love the Open Mic and want to make sure it remains in the community. Next summer the group plans to begin a fundraising campaign to restore the old barn. The restoration would provide more room for the Open Mic, as well as a better space for other gatherings and workshops.

Every year the weekly Open Mic has stopped as soon as the weather turned cold. This year the Valley of Stars crew decided to team up with the Methodist Church to hold a monthly Open Mic at the Reversing Falls Sanctuary in North Brooksville. Please come join your friends and neighbors for a potluck-style Open Mic on the first Sunday of every month all winter!



Left:
Bridgette Semler
& Estelle Poole

Below:
Alex Turanski



The Brooksville Breeze

The Newsletter of Brooksville Friends & Neighbors
Published quarterly — Spring, Summer, Fall & Winter

PRSR
U.S. Po
PAI
Brooksvil
Permi
ECR V

Brooksville Friends & Neighbors
(BFN)
P.O. Box 101
Brooksville, ME 04617-0101
Phone: 326-0916



Newsletter By:

Joan MacCracken, Becky Poole,
Judy Tredwell, Peter Beaven,
Jean Webster, Katherine Clifford,
Sheila Moir



The Brooksville Breeze originated as a newsletter to increase community communication, thus supporting the mission of Brooksville Friends & Neighbors (BFN) to strengthen and encourage local activities that promote health, both physical and emotional. *The Breeze* welcomes your comments, suggestions and donations to offset costs of printing and mailing. It is published four times a year.

Tell us who *you* are:

The Breeze, P.O. Box 101, Brooksville, ME 04617

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

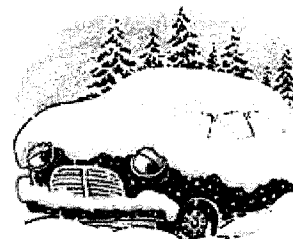
E-mail _____

Not a Brooksville Resident? To receive *The Breeze* by e-mail, send us your e-mail address and a donation (checks to Brooksville Friends & Neighbors)

Comments and Suggestions _____

**GET A RIDE
OR
GIVE A RIDE**

Reminder: Please fill in and return your transportation sur



Drive safely this winter