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MAINELY MAGIRLS

The Source of Information For and About Maine Girls!

Mission:

Mainely Girls, a state-wide, nonprofit organization, was founded in 1996 with a two part mission: to work with rural communities to assist them in focusing on girls' needs in a preventative, proactive and positive manner, and to work on the state level to bring about positive change for girls.

Mainely Girls Editorial Board

Erin Brockette Christie George Vinitha Nair Mary Orear Sheryl Whittier Lucy Williams Zoey's E-Pal Campers & Club Members

Mainely Girls is grateful for the support of Bonnie Rukin Miller which makes this newsletter possible.

ZOEY'S E-PALS' CAMP

By Mary Orear

This past summer's Zoey's E-Pals' Technology and Leadership Camp was an unqualified, knock-your-socks-off success!

Sixteen girls from sixteen schools throughout Maine spent August's hottest week mesmerized by all they could learn about and do with the laptops loaned to us by Apple Computer. They spent six hours a day in three classes and learned to:

- · research and navigate the web,
- use the website as a communication tool,
- gather content for a website in regard to creative writing, images and basic design,
- build their own websites and databases,
- make computer presentations,
- tell a visual story using digital video/still cameras.
- edit, export and upload them to their website

In addition, Campers were taught the leadership skills necessary for them to return to their schools and work with their adult co-leaders, to recruit club members, and to run a successful Zoey's E-Pals' Girls' Technology Club.

The week was certainly not all work and no play – though the line between work and play was definitely blurred by the addition of computers!

The girls met with two Fab Female role models, Laura Cannon and Suzanne Hamlin; participated in science experiments at Jackson Lab; cruised Frenchman Bay with Diver Ed, looking at the ocean's bottom via Ed's underwater video camera and learning about the sea creatures he brought back up with him; toured Bar Harbor; swam almost every day at the College of the Atlantic beach; and took a farewell sunset cruise aboard the four-masted schooner, the *Margaret Todd*.

(continued on next page)

ZOEY'S E-PALS' CLUB

By Erin Brockette & Vinitha Nair

Joey's E-Pals' Club provides technology instruction in a fun, entertaining, girl-centered environment through weekly activities, starting with the basics of computers and advancing by the end of the school year to learning the latest in multimedia. The afterschool program educates girls in conjunction with an existing website (www.zoeysroom.com) which allows for an entertaining and interactive way to have girls learn more about technology, themselves and the world around them.



Once a week, E-Pals meet and follow the <u>TECH TREK</u>, an activity guide that provides step-by-step technology-based learning while girls are participating in a safe, on-line community. E-Pals also receive interesting, challenging, and fun activity sheets for them to use at home, allowing them to continue exploring their new skills.

Though some schools experienced delays due to laptop shortages and staff changes, this fall the girls who attended last summers Camp excitedly joined forces with their adult facilitators and found ways to implement the tech

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Opportunity Farm

Mainely Girls 69 Elm Street Camden, ME 04843

phone/fax (207) 230-0170 megirls@midcoast.com www.mainelygirls.org

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Little wonder homesickness wasn't a problem

ZOEY'S E-PALS CAMP (cont. from previous page)

and the girls begged to stay a second week or return next year as junior mentors for new leaders or for an "advanced" camp!

Since their departure, the girls have gone back to school, and all 31 co-leaders have received copies of <u>TECH TREK</u>. Written and published by Happy Dance Production's Vinitha Nair and Erin Brockette, the booklet is a comprehensive manual for organizing and running Zoey's E-Pals' Clubs and contains both the curriculum and activities.

We are particularly grateful to everyone who understood the vision and the importance of this project, and helped provide the necessary money, or equipment, or assistance, without which the Camp and Club could not have happened. In particular we'd like to thank Tara Maker and Apple Computer,

Susan Ross and Logitech Inc., The Libra Foundation, The River Rock Foundation, The Maine Women's Fund, The Maine Community Foundation, the MBNA Foundation, The Ward Center, Central Maine Power Company, The Baker/Cinciva Fund of Maine Initiatives, Flynn Quilt Frame, Clara Porter, Marilyn Moss Rockefeller, Caroline Morong, Yusun Hitt, Mary Jane Giulcher, and Carrie Lezotte.

At a summer party at Round Pond I had the good fortune to meet Jane Margolis who, with Allan Fisher, had just published <u>Unlocking the Clubhouse: Women in Computing</u>, (MIT Press). Their book is fascinating and quite readable, even for a non-tech person, such as myself. It analyzes the reasons for women's under-representation in the design and creation of new technology, describes the educational reforms that made a dramatic difference at Carnegie Mellon, (ranked as one of the top two or three computer institutions in the country), and discusses the implications of these reforms for middle school and high school computer education.

I was very pleased when Jane acknowledged Zoey's E-Pals' Camp and Club for girls as exactly the kind of middle school program and curriculum that will increase girls' interest and confidence in computer technology and show them how they, and what they value, can fit into the computer culture.

The Mainely Girls Newsletter will keep you informed of the 200 Club members' computer activities this year, and we're already looking for the next sixteen girls and schools that will participate in next year's Camp. Please let us know if you or your school is interested!

Club in all sixteen schools. (For girls' comments about the Clubs, see the newsletter's back cover.)

E-Pals' have begun to gather creative content for their future club website which will be con-

Unlocking the Clubhouse

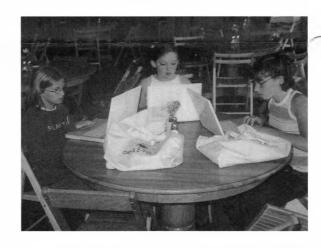
Jane Margolis and Allan Fisher

n in Computing

nected to Zoey's Room. Their activities include getting comfortable with their laptops, learning how to communicate with each other on-line, using their laptop's software programs creatively, and composing visual stories with technical tools.

During the spring semester, E-Pals will learn the required programming for compiling their individual school's club website. This includes learning how to program in HTML, manipulating digital still images and

editing moving images. By the end of the year, each club will have a functional website and know how to change out their website's content.



If you are interested in forming an E-Pals' Club in your school next year, please contact us at erin@zoeysroom.com! Become an E-Pal and log on to the network of tech girls in Maine. Zoey's Room is a mentoring program that relies heavily on adult volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer to help girls in your community become tech-savvy, call Vinitha Nair at 207.409.0476. Give girls in your area a chance to be involved in a program that is critical, timely, and as unlimited as a girl's imagination!

EATING DISORDERS UPDATE

In the summer of 2001 Mainely Girls received a three year grant from the Maine Mental Health Funding Collaborative to coordinate four rural communities' efforts to address eating disorders at the local level. Because there is no cure for eating disorders, education, prevention and early intervention are crucial. The aim is to create a successful model that can be replicated in many communities.

This initiative, called the Circle of Strength Program, began working in the Camden and Damariscotta areas, and will expand to the greater Belfast and Dover-Foxcroft regions

this year.

In the two communities, local steering committees are working on:

 organizing support groups for students with eating disorders, for their parents, and even for the team of care providers that works with these students,

 presenting the medical staff at local hospitals information about various forms of community support available for their patients and themselves,

• explaining eating disorders to students, especially

during Wellness Day sessions,

 identifying and providing resources for elementary and middle schools to educate students and help prevent eating disorders,

 establishing a community resource list of local individuals who are trained, experienced and willing

to work with eating disabled students.

• providing programs and opportunities for girls to strengthen their voices and use their words rather than their bodies to speak their realities.

In addition, one steering committee member in Damariscotta wrote, directed and produced an original play, *In Reality*, that examines some of the issues that lead to disordered eating, (see more about the play under Resources And Opportunities).

One year into this project, we are continuing to explore what a community can do to prevent eating disorders or provide effective early intervention, when necessary.

Mainely Girls has come to recognize the need in rural areas for more therapists specifically trained in working with eating disordered young people, and a multi-day training is being planned for the spring.

Please contact Mainely Girls to discuss resources or curriculum, if you are interested in the training, or any aspect

of the Circle of Strength Program.

Save The Date: The 10th Annual Camden Girl's Conference will be held on Friday, March 21st, 2003. The cost is \$10 per girl for those who pre-register, \$15 at the door. There will be more information in the January Mainely Girls Newsletter, and on our website by late February.

Note: For many schools this will be a teacher workshop day, but you can ask if your school can provide bus transportation.

BOOK CLUB: NOT JUST FOR HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS!

The Girls' Point Of View Book Club was originally organized last year for high school girls on Vinalhaven. From November through March every other week, fifteen girls and five women faculty members met at the Vinalhaven Public Library to share dinner or dessert and discuss their thoughts and feelings about books they read as a group.

Book suggestions came from everywhere: the girls, people in the community, the Library Journal, newspapers, readingrants.com, and amazon.com. The girls and women reviewed books at the meetings and voted on what to read. Organizing a Club after school hours and off school property allowed girls and women to choose books that might not be considered for regular school classes...books that often deal with some of the more difficult issues involved in growing up female. What did they read?

Titles included:

Speak - Laurie Anderson
Local Girls - Alice Hoffman
Deal With It: A New Approach
to Your Body, Brain and Life
as a Gurl - Esther Drill
Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants
- Ann Brashares

<u>When She Hollers</u> - Cynthia Voigt Perks of Being a Wallflower

- Stephen Chbosky

7 Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers

The Princess Diaries
Dreamland - Sarah Dessen

Angus, Thongs and Full Frontal Snogging

The Club was patterned somewhat after Valerie Osborne's wonderful GirlsTalk book club and mentoring program in Old Town, now in its 4th year.

Vinalhaven's school librarian, Susan Dempster, organized the *Girls' Point of View Club*, recruited girls and adults, and ordered and distributed the books through the school's library. She said that when each order of books came in, news spread like wildfire!

Funding was provided by the school's book club, the MBNA/Library Fund, the Island Institute, the Maine Community Foundation/Knox County Fund, and the Friends of Maine Libraries.

How successful was the Club? Many girls became so hooked that they began reading a book every few days. And, in early spring, the middle school girls came in to say they wanted to have their own book club!

We think this model would be easily replicated throughout the state with sets of books available for girls to choose from, and in the near future we'll be discussing this idea further with possible funders.

Opportunities & Resources

OLD TOWN: GIRLsTALK.

For a copy of this year's really incredible schedule contact Valerie Osborne at the Old Town Public Library: (827-3972)

PORTLAND:

ROOTS AND WINGS GIRLS' CONFERENCE

For girls ages 9 - 14.

December

Cost: \$10 per girl

For more information contact Pam Commings at 797-5277

ROCKPORT:

AVENA INSTITUTE

GARDEN GIRLS: Seasonal Days at Avena Institute

A series of seasonal days for teens aged 12-18. We will make herbal preparations, go for walks in the gardens and woods, make lunch together and do activities and games that will vary with the season. Lunch and herbal teas are provided.

When: Four times per year

(Fall meeting is Saturday October 26th.) Where: Avena Institute, Rockport, ME

Time: 10AM-4PM

Cost: \$10

To register call: 594-2403 (Registration is required.)

What to bring: Clothes appropriate for being outdoors (even if it is raining!) and that you are not afraid to get dirty, shoes or boots for walking or hiking in, hat, gloves, sunscreen, etc.

ROCKPORT:

AVENA INSTITUTE

MOTHER-DAUGHTER CIRCLE

This workshop focuses on the gentle blossoming of girls ages 10-12 and helps to create understanding for mothers and daughters about changes during puberty. It uses story telling and sharing of biographical experiences to help deepen appreciation for the inner and outer changes occurring during this time. The goal is to see the beauty in the blossoming, to know the joy of awakening to our cyclical nature as females, and to celebrate the connection between mothers and daughters. The time will be playful and creative and will include arts and crafts activities.

This special event is led by Pat Chanterelle, a Waldorf School parent who has worked with women's health issues since the '70's and is a chiropractor in Yarmouth.

When: March 21st Mothers only

March 22nd Mothers and daughters Where: Ashwood Waldorf School, Rockport

Cost: \$60 total for mothers and daughters members of

Avena Institute (\$65 for non-members) Please call 594-2403 to register.

The class will be limited to 15 girls and moms.

For more information please call: Bonnie Rukin-Miller 236-4703.

WATERVILLE:

HARDY GIRLS HEALTHY WOMEN

For a copy of their full fall schedule call 861-8131.

TITLE IX NEEDS GIRLS' HELP

In 1971, only 294,015 girls participated in high school athletics.

In 1972 Title IX was passed: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

In 2001 over 2.7 million girls participated in high school athletics - an 847 percent increase. One might consider this success.

Now, thirty years after Title IX's introduction, the U.S. Department of Education has appointed a Blue Ribbon Panel called the Commission on Opportunity in Athletics to examine Title IX, and some are concerned that the individuals appointed to this commission will reduce or weaken the work that has already been done.

Meanwhile, we're receiving word from the National Institutes of Health that girls experience a dramatic decline in physical activity during adolescence, even with Title IX in place. "By ages 16 or 17, at least one-third of girls report they have no regular leisure-time physical activity." And, "Given the current epidemic of obesity, the researchers conclude that the 'precipitous' drop in activity levels during adolescence 'should sound an alarm' for action."

First of all, I hope that the National Institutes of Health are intending to address the Blue Ribbon Title IX Panel.

Secondly, during October and November you can share girls' views and your views with the Commission regarding participation in, and equal funding for, girls' and women's sports. Perhaps a few hundred thousand e-mails from those 2.7 million girls would have some clout?

Email: OpportunityinAthletics@ed.gov

Website: http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/athletics

TURN BEAUTY INSIDE OUT, MAINE

Aileen Fortune of the Gender Project of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension is creating a statewide campaign to support girls in feeling good, strong and confident in their bodies and their lives! Inspired by the *Turn Beauty Inside Out* project of New Moon Magazine, the aim is to create a new definition of beauty for girls based on "good works, great hearts and activism." (www.newmoon.org)

Aileen envisions a Maine project that partners with and supports the efforts of the many organizations currently working with girls throughout the state.

The first of four organizational meetings was held in Portland on October 16th and attended by Nancy Gruver,

New Moon Magazine's founder and president. Nancy is particularly interested in Maine's statewide effort because the sees it as a possible national model. If you would like to participate and attend the next meeting on Monday, November 18th, please contact Aileen Fortune at 1-800-287-1535.

IN REALITY PLAY GIVES GIRLS A VOICE

Eating disorders, suicide, and depression have been on the increase in the last few years, and teens are being told to step forward and ask for the help they need. The problem is that many people are not sure exactly what the issues are, or how to respond. *In Reality*, a realistic play written to reveal what goes on in the lives of many girls every day, is meant to enlighten and provoke thought and discussion. The authors, Lane Kalloch, 20, of Round Pond, Sara Olsen, 18, of Bremen, and Maisie Newell, 18, of Nobleboro, hope that it will find a wide audience. For more information about the script or production, call Lane Kalloch at 529-5846 or the Mainely Girls office.

HARASSMENT BOOK & WEBSITE

The American Association of University Women's AAUW) new book, <u>Harassment-Free Hallways: How to Stop Sexual Harassment in Schools</u> provides surveys to determine the extent of sexual harassment in your school, proven and practical strategies to help prevent harassment, and an extensive list of resources. It was developed by representatives from the National Education Association, Wellesley Center for Research on Women, New Moon Publishing girls' editorial board, the National School Boards Association, The GSLEducation Network, and others.

AAUW's Harassment-Free Hallways Online Resource Guide is an excellent resource for teachers, parents, and others concerned about girls' safety in our schools. This free guide is available online: www.aauw.org/7000/ef/harass

GIRLS' HEALTH WEB SITE

The Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health (OWH) launched a new health Web site, www.4girls.gov, to encourage adolescent girls to choose healthy behaviors. The site provides girls ages 10-16 with information on fitness, nutrition, stress management, relationships with friends and family, peer pressure, suicide, drugs, self-esteem, and other topics in an interactive, user-friendly format.

"Girls make important choices about lifestyle behaviors during adolescence that can influence their health and well-being throughout adulthood," said Dr. Eve Slater, Assistant Secretary for Health. "This Web site provides girls

with the tools to begin taking responsibility for their physical, mental, environmental, and social health by providing them with information in the language they understand."

The 4girls Web site includes six sections:

- Becoming a Woman,
- Fit for Life,
- You Are What You Eat,
- Mind over Matters,
- Choosing Not to Use,
- Putting It All Together.

The site also features a Parent/Caregiver section that provides lists of publications, organizations, and web sites they can use to help address the issues that face adolescent girls.



WOMEN MAKE MOVIES FOR GIRLS

By Christie George

The Girls' Project, a new initiative from Women Make Movies (WMM) funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, is a unique and compelling collection of films and videos by independent women filmmakers centered on young women's lives around the world. Recognizing the critical need for an alternative to mainstream portrayals of girls' lives, WMM has assembled this collection as a response, a challenge and a call to action.

A mix of documentary, shorts and feature-length films, the 25 titles included in *The Girls' Project* tell intimate stories, share complicated truths and offer models for young women creatively responding to the challenges in their lives. Perhaps most importantly, the collection provides an opportunity for young women to see their lives rendered both honestly and accurately and for adults, parents and educators alike, to see young women in a new light.

International in scope, these films and videos can be used to introduce young women to their counterparts around the world and to encourage conversations about the issues that matter to them most - from sexuality to self-esteem, peer pressure and body image, to the need for creative expression.

Over the last several months, *The Girls' Project* has been screened at public audience venues and film festivals and in more intimate settings with young women. The response has been powerful and inspiring, and it has convinced WMM that the creation of this kind of collection has long been overdue. From classrooms to community centers, these films increase the visibility of girls' issues by

challenging outdated representations of young women and celebrating girls' individual strength and collective power.

Since 1972, Women Make Movies has supported the work of women film and video makers in offering an alternative perspective on the issues of the day. *The Girls' Project* extends this mission by bringing independent media to young people, encouraging them to think of women as media makers and inspiring them to reclaim media and see themselves as the owners of their own images.

More information about *The Girls' Project*, including how to receive our special catalogue and resource guide on the collection, can be found at:

www.wmm.com/girlsproject.htm.

LONG CREEK YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTER

On the afternoon of August 5th girls from the Maine Youth Center moved into their new digs at the Long Creek Youth Development Center. Mainely Girls is very pleased to report that at the eleventh hour, decisions were made to provide the girls with the amount of space that had been allocated for them in the original plan.

The twenty-three girls moved into a pod with thirty private bedrooms divided among three connecting units. Such space and organization will allow the hold-for-court girls to be separated from the committed girls, a major goal and one absolutely necessary to provide for effective girls' programming and rehabilitation.

That the girls' space needs were finally recognized and met can be credited to actions taken by The Girls Action Group, a coalition of individuals representing various organizations, which was formed in July 2001 to secure for incarcerated and hold-for-court girls the treatment they need and deserve. The Girls Action Group has recently recommitted itself to continuing this work on behalf of Maine girls in the juvenile justice system.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS FOR GIRLS

Opportunity Farm is a residential group-home campus that provides safe, supportive, family-style homes for atrisk youth who experience on-going conflicts with family, peers, school and/or community, struggle behaviorally and/or emotionally, need structure and consistency that may not be occurring in their present environment, and have been subjected to some form of abuse and/or neglect.

Since 1910 this option has been a possibility for Maine boys. Starting this December, it will also be an option for girls!

The new girls' program is gender-specific to meet the challenges and needs of girls in today's society. It will incorporate the same family-teaching model used at the boys' program but will be modified to recognize and respect the inherent differences between boys and girls.

The new campus is located on Bennett Road in New Gloucester. The new facility, one half mile from the boys' campus, includes living accommodations for eight girls and

will function independently from the boys' campus.

And, Opportunity Farm has plans to open two additional facilities for girls in the next few years.

Such programs for girls are very scarce in Maine and greatly needed, and we congratulate Opportunity Farm for breaking new ground for Maine girls! More information can be found by calling (207) 926-4532 or at their website: www.opportunityfarm.org



MAINELY GIRLS WISH LIST

We wish we may, we wish we might... have donated:

- someone with whom to share our large, beautiful office space
- free or low cost office space in the mid coast area
- volunteers to help with clerical or computer tasks
- a color printer
- · newsletter writers
- · peace in our time

"GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS?" CONFERENCE & VIDEO

On October 5th six leading scholars on girls' psychological development, health and education gathered at the Jniversity of Maine in Orono for a conference on girls' aggression, sexuality and body image.

The conference was part of the Women's Resource Center's ongoing Girlfighting Project, which brought Lyn Mikel Brown, an associate professor of women's studies education and human development at Colby College, to UMaine as a 2001-2002 scholar-in-residence.

Dr. Brown's work was funded by the American Association of University Women's Educational Foundation.

While at UMaine, Brown completed research for her forth-coming book, <u>Girlfighting: Betrayal</u>, <u>Teasing and Rejection</u> Among Girls.

Other scholars included: Sharon Lamb, Mary Madden, Deborah L. Tolman, author of the forthcoming book <u>Dilemma of Desire</u>. Janie Victoria Ward, author of <u>The Skin We're in: Teaching Our Children to be Emotionally Strong. Socially Smart, Spiritually Connected</u>, and Catherine Steiner-Adair who is featured in two recent educational videos, "The Power of Girls, Inside and Out," and "Real Strength, Boys Talk About Life."

The Diversity Coalition, a group of girls from the mid-coast area presented, "Girls Voices," a dynamic combination of performance and film.

A videotape incorporating footage from the brief lectures, and the very rich conversational exchanges of ideas, perspectives and observations among leaders in their fields is in process and will be available from The Women's Resource Center sometime next year.

GIRLFIGHTING

I, for one, am eager to get my hands on a copy of Lyn Mikel Brown's new book on girl fighting when it's published next summer. Meanwhile, I attended two presentations by Lyn on this subject and want to pass along some of her key points.

First of all, Lyn stresses that girl fighting starts young. Three year old girls already understand social ostracism. And being rejected can lead girls to later reject others.

Girl fighting or relational aggression is a way of life for many teen girls today – it's the way girls treat each other. It's often done behind someone's back.

It can involve colluding with other girls and betraying your best friend. This collusion provides a way of connecting with a group and creating a sense of security.

Friendships between girls are intensely intimate, and when a friend betrays the trust of a best friend, a girl feels that her whole world has turned against her. She is honestly at a loss to understand what she has done "wrong" to bring on the betrayal. The girl being targeted is devastated but is afraid to confront the group.

Aggression is more subtle, indirect, and covert. It's the method girls tend to use when they don't feel comfortable expressing their anger directly. It can be very emotionally abusive, but is often difficult for others, especially adults, to detect.

Lyn puts girlfighting in a cultural context and attributes it to girls' feelings of powerlessness in our culture. She believes one possible solution is to help girls find other ways to have power and feel powerful. And Lyn stresses the need to create school cultures that stop dismissing girl fighting and start identifying it as serious aggression that girls need help dealing with.

Mombors	ship form
	they will become and the families many will raise by
□ \$10 (girls) □ \$20 □ \$35 □ \$50	□ \$100 □ \$250 □ \$500 □ \$1,000
Please make your tax-deductible contribution payable to Mainely Girls and return it with this form to: Mainely Girls 69 Elm Street Camden, ME 04843 For our records, please fill out the following:	Please send my friends the Mainely Girls' newsletter: 1. Name
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COMMENTS FROM ZOEY'S CLUB MEMBERS:

"Zoey's Room is like, so cool! LOL.* I always loved computers, and Zoey's E-Pals' Club gave me a chance to go to an awesome camp, learn more about technology, and start my own club! Teaching other girls about Zoey and how to make a website is the bomb!"

-Alisa McKenzie, E-Pals' Club Leader, NorthHaven

"I am in the Zoey's E-Pal's Club at Molly Ockett! It is soooooo... much fun I am very glad that you started it!! Savannah [E-Pals' Club Leader] is very informative!! I thought that your web site was awesome and can't wait to create one for Molly Ockett!"

—Hannah, E-Pals Club member, Molly Ockett

"[I] just started the club; it's going great! You should be getting email from my club members. They are having a lot of fun so far."

—Hayley Drisko, E-Pals' Club Leader, South Bristol/Bristol Consolidated

"I would really like to help any girls that are

coming next year because I know it was a great experience for me and I know it will be for them. It is something that will really help me for future plans."

—Julia Martin, E-Pals' Club Leader, Searsport

"I showed my friends what I did at Camp and now they all want to join, because of me!"

"This is important to me because I get to socialize with other people just like me who want to learn about computers."

"I really like the experience of meeting new people and trying new things. And I like working with the camera because I want to shoot movies or direct when I grow up."

"I like how the Club is about getting girls into technology and supporting each other."

* Laugh Out Loud

Mainely Girls 69 Elm Street Camden, ME 04843



