Berwick for a Lifetime, an all-volunteer subcommittee of Envision Berwick, is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of all residents, while creating opportunities for older residents to maintain social connectedness, engage in local recreational opportunities, and remain active in community life. The Town of Berwick's Age-Friendly Community Action Plan recognizes the invaluable contribution that older residents make to the community and provides a forward-thinking approach to enhancing the opportunities and addressing the changing needs of Berwick's residents.

BFAL Contact and meeting information:
Email: berwickfal@gmail.com
Phone: 207-619-3519
Meeting Location: Berwick Public Library (BPL), 103 Old Pine Hill Road
Meeting Time: First Friday of every month @11:30am

In 2023, Berwick for a Lifetime was awarded the official Age-Friendly Community recognition plaque after completing the AARP Lifelong Community Action Progress Report, making Berwick a permanent member of the Age-Friendly State of Maine network!



BFAL Goals and Initiatives

The goal of Berwick for a Lifetime is to help the Berwick area and its town leaders better understand the needs of older residents and support the healthy aging of all residents. Through multi-generational events and programming geared toward older adults, our hope is to raise awareness of their needs within the community.

Grants

BFAL met their 2023 goals through many hours of volunteer work and the following grants:

AARP Community Flagship Grant: $4,594.00. Funds established the Handy Helper Tool Kit, which is a collection of adaptive tools that can help individuals with everyday household tasks, resulting in a better quality of life. These tools can be checked out at the library.

Southern Maine Agency on Aging Grant: $11,000 This grant funded BFAL's Lunch and Learns; Yoga; Zentangle; food and supplies for Social Seniors; Walking poles; Large Print books; Winter Emergency packs and more!

UMaine Center on Aging: $500 This Dementia Inclusion Grant funded three Memory Care Kits. Designed to help individuals experiencing memory challenges, the kits facilitate involvement with their caregiver and help them enjoy quality time together with these brain exercising activities and games. Kits can be checked out at the library.

Here are just a few things this dynamic volunteer group is working on to help improve the lives of Berwick residents.

BFAL Monthly Meetings: Volunteers meet the first Friday of every month at 11:30am at the Berwick Public Library. Meetings are not only a time to plan out projects and volunteer opportunities, it is a time to catch up with friends!

BFAL had an attendance of **83 people at meetings** over the course of the year.

Food Commodity Box Deliveries – Monthly deliveries: BFAL volunteers pick up federally subsidized food commodity boxes at the Sanford distribution center and deliver them to Berwick residents who are enrolled in the program. It is a great way to give back to the community!

Last year **78 food boxes** were delivered to residents.

Sand Bucket Brigade: Volunteers fill buckets with sand and deliver to residents who are 65 or older, or those who are mobility challenged of any age, to prevent injuries due to slips and falls on the ice and snow.

Last year **35 sand buckets** were delivered.

Winter Emergency Preparedness Kits: Residents can borrow kits at the beginning of the winter from the Berwick Public Library, to help them in the event of a winter emergency or power loss. Each kit includes a flashlight, battery operated radio, wool blanket, hand

and foot warmers, wash cloth wipes, a whistle, emergency preparedness information, Ensure and healthy snacks.

This is a new program, so statistics will be available next year.

Other programs and events hosted by Berwick for a Lifetime

In 2023, Berwick for a Lifetime hosted more than a dozen special events, programs and activities! It was an incredibly busy and successful year, with literally something for everyone. Check out all the activities this group has been up to:

Lunch and Learns – with 119 people in attendance: Residents can come to the library to listen to an informational talk given by qualified specialists, on many different subjects, and go home with a delicious boxed lunch, free of charge!
Here are some of the topics that Lunch and Learns covered:

The Importance of Hydration and Fiber
Fall Prevention
Pain Management
Shopping for Nutrition
Berwick First Responders Conversation
Healthy Eating on a Budget

Special Programming – with over 300 people attending: BFAL volunteers like to have fun, learn, and connect. Check out some of these activities that were hosted by this active group:

Meet and Bleat
Coffee Catch Up
Medicare Information Session
Outsmarting the Scammers
Medicaid Information Session
Senior Housing Information Session
Open House for BFAL at the Primal Fit Gym

Special Activities that are good for the body and mind **– with 554 people taking part** in this great selection of active programs:

Berwick Walkers – Meet twice weekly: Mondays at 11:30am and Thursdays 1:00pm. The group walks paved surfaces and wooded trails. Want to get out there and walk, but don't want to do it alone? Get on your walking shoes and join us!
There were **33 walks held last year (our first year)**, and the number in attendance was approximately **223 people**.

Social Seniors - Meets weekly at the Berwick Public Library: Looking to get out more, connect with people, and enjoy a hot coffee/tea with snacks, while meeting new

friends? Social Seniors is the place to be! Join this welcoming group at the library every Wednesday morning at 10:30am!
Social Seniors saw an attendance of **256 folks** over the course of the year, who come together to share in good conversation, coffee, and friends.

Gentle Yoga – Two separate six-week sessions of gentle yoga were offered free of charge to older residents of Berwick, and were held at the library.
These classes saw an attendance of **53 people getting their yoga fix!**

Zentangle – Patty Weeks's professional and fun instruction was a great in this multigenerational program, learning the art of Zentangle at the library**.**
Attendance of 22 people!

Community Events

Berwick for a Lifetime volunteers know the importance of citizen involvement to maintain a healthy, active, and caring community. BFAL can be found at events like:

The Christmas Tree Lighting
Bring Your Lawn Chair to Sullivan Square
Run for Fox Sake 5K
The Winter's Farmers' Market
Election day at the polls
Hackmatack Farm and Harvest Days!

They can also be found creating programs that bring joy and inspiration to residents, as well as services to those who may need a helping hand. Join in the fun and help make Berwick a true lifelong community!



