A belated Happy New Year to all…

**Highlights of 2014:**

**Mobile Garden Project . . . . .**
A Mobile Garden Project in partnership with the Barnstable Public Schools 21st Century Learning Grant at Hyannis West and Barnstable United Elementary Schools.

Funding was received by the Lombard Trust (many thanks) and we were able to hire Dave Scandurra and Julie Davis of Edible Landscapes to help start seeds in our brand new Grow Labs! A total of 60 students were reached, in both schools, and students were able to take large pots and/or window boxes with herbs, lettuce, kale, peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, flowers, and more to nurture and cultivate throughout the summer. In addition to this, we promoted the idea of a “mobile shopping cart garden” to encourage families without a sunny space in the yard not to give up on gardening. These carts were entered at the Barnstable County Fair, and Hyannis West received 1st place and Barnstable United came in 2nd. Congratulations to all! We will continue this project throughout the winter and spring of 2015, and were just invited, by Hyannis West, to partner with them on their 21st Century Summer enrichment program. This will give the students more time outside, in the raised beds, and an opportunity to dig deeper into gardening throughout the summer! Thanks to Extension Horticulturist Russ Norton for his guidance and his expertise with this project.

**Another 21st Century Project . . . . .**
Another 21st Century project took place at the Barnstable United Elementary School. Students did a thematic learning project around animals, and this made for a number of fun activities. “People and Pets Working Together” invited a group of therapy dogs and their handlers in once a month to “read” with the students. In exchange for their time and effort, we made fleece beds for all of the dogs that visited the program and presented them on the last day. Students measured, cut, tied and stuffed beds of various sizes to present to the dogs, who LOVED them!!

**4-H Afterschool Conference . . . . .**
Cape Cod Extension’s 4-H Afterschool Program was invited to be a presenter at the “All Eyes on Afterschool” Conference at Stonehill College in Easton MA on April 17th. This conference highlighted a variety of programs funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and our featured workshop focused on project-based learning and how to take an idea and “grow” it in a 21st Century Community Learning environment, which we have been doing with Barnstable Public Schools for 12 years now!

**Science Clubs . . . . .**
Science clubs at Ezra Baker School in Dennis, Barnstable Intermediate School in Hyannis, and a Forensics class at Centerville Library kept about 70 scientifically curious students busy with hands on experiments and activities through June of 2014.

**Sewing . . . . .**
Sewing workshops were held at the Senior Center in February and December. Students made cozy fleece pajama bottoms and tiered skirts, to name a few of the projects. More sewing workshops are being planned for the spring of 2015, so be sure to check the website.
Babysitting . . . .
Babysitting classes were conducted from Bourne to Truro in a variety of locations. Students learn necessary skills to keep children safe while their parents are away and how to responsible. This continues to be our #1 short-term program and students are given a certificate indicating their attendance and a Babysitter ID card to keep in their wallets!

Operation Military Kids Cape Cod . . . .
Working with military children under the umbrella of Operation Military Kids, continued to be a priority in 2014… care packages were assembled during a Cape Cod Volunteers event in April, and 28 boxes were mailed overseas, along with socks, snacks and cards made by children at West Villages, Barnstable Intermediate School and Barnstable United Elementary School. A special salute to Maureen Tuoey-Bedford for helping with this project, and to Yarmouth Rotary for paying shipping costs.

We applied for and received funding to host three separate camps in the summer of 2014 out at Smithfield Farms in Falmouth.

- STARS, STRIPES & SADDLES, a weeklong day camp, was offered to 14 military children (ages 8-14) experiencing the deployment of a loved one. Operation Military Kids MA funded this equine focused camp.

- A second camp was offered to 14 Air National Guard and Air Force Reserves children during the week of July 28-August 1. The 4-H/air force Military Partnership Project via Kansas State and UMASS Amherst funded this camp.

- A third camp was collaboration between Heroes in Transition, Smithfield Farms and Cape Cod Cooperative Extension. Seven families with a family member actively or recently deployed spent the week of August 11-15 out at Smithfield Farms. Families worked with the horses and received lessons, after which they sat down to dinner under a big white tent donated by the Barnstable County Sheriff’s office. Following dinner, children went off to participate in some very special activities, and parents spent the last 45 minutes in a support group with two licensed therapists.

On the last day of camp we dedicated the indoor riding ring out at the camp to Capt. Eric Jones, son of Cyndi and Ken Jones of Mashpee, MA, and Heroes in Transition founders in a formal ceremony. It was the highlight of the summer for many of us!

Military families were also invited to a special gingerbread House workshop in December. Families worked together to decorate gingerbread house for the holiday season at the Mashpee Senior Center, under the direction of the Gingerbread lady-Pat Taylor. It was nice to reconnect with some of the families from our Families in Transition camp in the summer! Special thanks to Cyndy Jones (Heroes in Transition) for co-hosting this event, and for the delicious snacks!

Operation Military Kids once again partnered with Operation Homefront in their annual collection of stocking stuffers and gifts for military families. Military families in the Barnstable Public Schools were invited to the Hyannis Youth and Community Center on December 16th to “shop” for their children and enjoy some holiday refreshments. Special thanks to military Mom Laurie Brown for her assistance with this event.

Operation Military Kids was also happy to assist Cape Cod Military Support group in collecting toys for their holiday party out at Joint Base Cape Cod on December 21st. Smithfield Farms provided pony rides to over 200 children, and also distributed vouchers when they ran out of time. As always, thanks to Jan Foster of Smithfield Farm, for everything she does!

We received information in the fall of 2014 about a new application process for the 2015 Military/Extension Partnerships Youth Camps through Kansas State University, much like the ones we have been hosting out at Smithfield Farms. Thanks to Bobbi Moritz at the Resource Development office here, we were able to apply for both the Department of Defense Youth Reintegration Camp and the Air National Guard/Air Force Reserves Summer Camps. The process this year was much more competitive but we are keeping our fingers and toes crossed!

Summer of Science . . . .
Seven students representing Barnstable Middle and High Schools attended the 4-H Summer of Science at UMASS
Amherst in June of 2014. This 3 day science camp provided hands on opportunities to explore Robotics, Electricity, Veterinary Science and Moviemaking. This annual event is a way to connect participants love of science with career paths in STEM and an introduction to the UMASS campus. Thanks to the Barnstable Intermediate School Principal Karen Stonely and assistant principal Patty Gardiner for helping to provide scholarships and transportations for these students, and to the UMASS Urban Education grant and a grant from Phillips (one of our sponsors) for the same.

Boys and Girls Club . . .

Lights On After School took place again on October at the Boys & Girls Club of Cape Cod in Mashpee, in partnership with Barnstable County 4-H. This annual event draws over 30 youth serving organizations who keep their lights on after school for children and families in Barnstable County. Each year we honor someone in the community who is going above and beyond for children, youth and families. This year, we honored Ray Tamasi, CEO of Gosnod, for his innovative work with substance abuse on Cape Cod including his Recovery Specialist led support groups that are free to families who have a loved one fighting addiction.

Boys and Girls Club was also the site for our annual National Youth Science Day experiment, and established a science club that features 4-H curricula- to the delight of their budding scientists. Children enjoyed designing and launching rockets and having a lot of fun at the same time!

Works in progress . . .

~The 4H Paws For Reading Project. This Reading to Dogs program will be offered to 4th and 5th graders at the Wixon Innovation School in South Dennis, MA, on Tuesday afternoons, 4-5 p.m. from January 20 to June 9th.

4H Paws for Reading is an innovative partnership between three community human service and educational organizations. Trained therapy dogs and handlers from The Companion Animal Program of Cape Cod work in collaboration with educators from Wixon Middle School, and Cape Cod Cooperative Extension 4H, through a 21st Century Learning Grant, which funds academic support services and enrichment activities to participating children and families. As the program grows, the coordinators anticipate building further collaborative relationships with other community agencies such as local animal shelters, libraries, schools, and Cape Cod Community College.

~Our second year of gardening at the Hyannis West Elementary School is currently in the planning stages and will resume in February, with Edible Landscapers Dave Scandurra and Julie Davis. We will be working, again, with the 21st Century After school program and have recently learned that we will also partner with them on a grant that was received to offer a summer program as well. This means that students will be able to continue gardening in the raised beds outdoors, and bring vegetables home to share with families. Can’t wait to get our hands dirty!

~Lots of calls for Babysitting programs in Mashpee, Sandwich, Dennis, Brewster, and more…we will work hard to keep an updated list on the website as registration is taking place at these sites.

~We received word that our 2015 summer camps have been fully funded! The DOD Youth Reintegration Camp will take place at Smithfield Farm from July 13-17th and the ANG/AFR Camp is scheduled for July 27-31st. Promotional materials are being created and this information will be released by the funders in late February or early March.

~A new afterschool partnership with Stonybrook Elementary School is off and running, under the direction of teacher and 4-H program associate Teri Colgan. Students are learning about pets and pet care, and had a recent visit from “Gelato”- a Companion Animal Dog who loves kids- and his mom, Bev Kimball. Bev and Gelato worked on safe practices when approaching an unfamiliar dog, which students were already working on in their workbooks.

~We also kicked off a Babysitting program next door at the Eddy School with another new trained educator-Cindy Lowman.

~We are currently planning a 3-day horse camp during February vacation for military children. As soon as we work out the details, the information will be posted on our website. The camp will run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (17, 18 & 19) at Smithfield Farm.

~We are also planning “The Kids Cooking Connection” at the Barnstable Senior Center beginning in February…as soon as we have the dates set up, we will re-post the flyer on our website. Because so many programs are in the planning stages, I am going to try to do a monthly blog to keep you up to date.

That’s it for now folks!