

For Immediate Release

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**The Crème de la Crème of Midcoast Maine:
Friends of Midcoast Maine Gives Two
Smart Growth Awards**

The Friends of Midcoast Maine will honor a Damariscotta development and a Bath business with 2005 Smart Growth Awards at its Annual Meeting in Wiscasset on June 14. Receiving these awards are the Ledgewood Court family apartments in Damariscotta and the Café Crème in downtown Bath. Executive Director Jane Lafleur noted that “these two awards are representative of smart growth developments and businesses that positively contribute to our Midcoast Maine towns and residents.”

Smart Growth Developer Richard Berman will serve as keynote speaker and will present “Smart Growth Politics, Practices and Possibilities.” The June 14 meeting will be held at Chewonki Foundation in Wiscasset Maine at 5:30 p.m. The meeting is open to the public and space is still available.

Ledgewood Court family apartments is a twenty four unit, employer assisted development in Damariscotta. It merits the 2005 Annual Award because it provides twenty four units of affordable rental housing earmarked specifically for healthcare workers in the area; it minimizes the impact on the existing natural environment by using a 3.5 acre corner of a 10.5 acre property and preserving the remainder of the site as open space; it uses public sewer and water supplies and handles all storm water runoff on site without connecting directly to public storm drains or natural water bodies; it is designed as New England house styles connected by sidewalks; it is located close to downtown Damariscotta so residents can walk to local businesses; it involved neighbors and other community members early in the planning process to build support for the project and to address any concerns; it used seed money from Miles Health Care and two smaller Lincoln County health care providers to provide some of the first employer assisted affordable housing to be built in Maine in decades; and it is supported by the Maine State Housing Authority and others as a prototype for other employers in high-cost housing markets across the state.

The Café Crème is granted this award because it is located in the heart of downtown Bath spurring revitalization to the area; it provides a meeting place for locals and visitors from all walks of life; owner Tondra Schultz enlisted the support of Bath residents, organizations and business owners as

supportive partners; she renovated existing downtown space into a creative, vibrant, appealing environment for customers; Café Crème is located on the public bus and trolley lines and within walking or biking distance of most of Bath's population; it provides support to the community by offering book space to the Patten Free Library, display space for local artists, performance space for musicians and bulletin board space for community events; it provides an important "third place" for people beyond home and work to gather and socialize; it provides affordable beverages and food in an unhurried, relaxed atmosphere; it offers fun entertainment through "theme days" such as Las Vegas, Superheroes, and Hawaiian-Tropical days; it has become the bedrock of downtown Bath community life; and it serves as an example to other downtowns as a way to provide a commercial enterprise and needed service while nourishing civic participation and dialogue, through collaborative means.

Each year Friends of Midcoast Maine grants a smart growth award to reward those projects and individuals who uphold the principles of smart growth. In 2004, the Annual Award was given to the City of Belfast, the Quarry Hill Development in Camden and Chases Daily restaurant in Belfast.

In previous years the organization has given awards to Evan Richert, the former director of Maine State Planning Office and current Muskie School professor, to Bob Reny, owner of Reny's Stores for continuing the family commitment to operating stores in our downtowns, and to Gary Sukeforth for re-opening and operating the Common Market in Union

The Friends of Midcoast Maine is a non-profit membership organization that supports smart growth and works to protect towns and villages from unplanned growth and sprawl. The organization works in the Midcoast region from Brunswick to Bucksport. To register for the Annual Meeting at which these awards will be made, please call 236-1077 or visit the web site at www.friendsmidcoast.org for a registration form.