



MEDIA RELEASE

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July 15, 2008

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Damariscotta Partners with Foundation to Set Course for Future

Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul Community initiative helps residents discover what they love most about Damariscotta to guide growth and change

DAMARISCOTTA, ME – What will Damariscotta be like in 20 years? Will it be the place it is today? The Orton Family Foundation awarded the Town \$100,000, staff support and technical assistance to invite the people of Damariscotta to answer that question—to envision a future and then make sure that the future becomes the vision.

The Foundation is working with Damariscotta and three other towns to develop and adopt a “Heart & Soul” approach to land use planning. In Heart & Soul Community Planning, the qualities that make Damariscotta a great place to live are identified among as broad a cross-section of citizens as possible, recognized, and used to make decisions and steer change.

Town Manager Greg Zinser noted that “This partnership with the Orton Foundation, and Friends of Midcoast Maine, who will coordinate the project, will allow us to address the concerns of our citizens while we plan for our future together.”

Damariscotta's citizens have the answers to what matters most to them and the know-how to ensure sustainable economic, environmental and social well being for their town. That is why Heart & Soul Planning engages a broad base of local people to help shape the future; through its Damariscotta Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) and other groups, citizens have already begun learning what is most important about their town. The full participation of those who live and work in Damariscotta will help residents find common cause, direct the forces of growth and change, and protect the elements that people treasure and that connect them to one another and to their community—their heart and soul.

“Damariscotta is an ideal community for Heart & Soul work,” said Bill Roper, President and CEO of the Orton Family Foundation. “The town has a distinct identity it wants to sustain for future generations, it serves as a regional hub for smaller surrounding towns, and it enjoys a high level of citizen participation. The Damariscotta Planning Advisory Committee will be a springboard for involving as many people as possible to learn what matters most as residents face the pressures of growth and change.”

Ultimately, Damariscotta's Heart & Soul Planning work will generate community support and understanding of a shared, values-based vision to be developed over the next two years and presented in the long and short term plans of the town.

The Foundation this week also announced partnerships with three other towns: Biddeford, ME; Golden, CO; and Victor, ID, each of which was also awarded \$100,000 and other Foundation resources for 2- to 3-year projects.

The Orton Family Foundation, based in Middlebury, VT, and with an office in Denver, seeks to help small cities and towns discover and describe their Heart & Soul and build on those attributes in planning toward a vibrant, enduring future. The Foundation serves cities and towns under 50,000 in population in the Northeast and Rocky Mountain regions, and was created in 1995 by Lyman Orton, owner of the Vermont Country Store.

The Town of Damariscotta and the Damariscotta Planning Advisory Committee are working to lead a community driven process to make the Damariscotta region a better place to live, work, play, do business and visit for all people by advancing policies and practices that foster sustainable land use and prosperity. The DPAC is charged with “fostering a community visioning process, establishing and maintaining an on-going long range strategic planning process and monitoring implementation, incorporating and promoting public dialogue about community and regional planning and recommending implementation strategies, and providing community outreach and promoting, facilitating and incorporating public dialogue in on-going planning efforts”.

For more information and news about Damariscotta visit www.damariscottame.com

For Friends of Midcoast Maine visit www.friendsmidcoast.org.

For more information and news about the Orton Family Foundation visit www.orton.org.

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