

Belfast's Dead River Convenience Store Receives *Our Town, Our Children Award*

Jo Peavey, manager of the Dead River Convenience Store, received the *Our Town, Our Children Award* recently for her efforts to minimize underage drinking by adopting new alcohol marketing practices. Peavey was encouraged to change the store's alcohol marketing after working with Kristen Ireland and Ellen Marlow, both members of the state-wide Youth Empowerment and Policy Project (YEPP) that developed the "Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct." Peavey said that placing alcohol products and displays in areas less frequented by children and teens did not affect her overall alcohol sales, but was successful in reducing the impact of alcohol advertising on minors.

A breakfast will be held on March 19th for area retailers to provide them with the marketing guidelines recommended by YEPP so that they, too, can qualify for the *Our Town, Our Children Award* for their efforts to reduce the impact of alcohol marketing. Retailers who participate in the breakfast will be eligible to participate in a free Retail Beverage Service training by Frank Lyons offered on April 9th through the Healthy Waldo County coalition. Mr. Lyons is a former officer with Maine's Bureau of Liquor Enforcement. For more information, please contact Patrick Walsh, at 338-2200 ext 109.

While most underage drinkers do not get alcohol directly from a store, the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey conducted by the Maine Office of Substance Abuse in 2006, showed that 49% of Maine high school seniors had used alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey, 38% of 10th graders and 21% of 8th graders. It also showed that 29% of high school seniors binge drink, 20% of 10th graders and 8% of 8th graders. Binge drinking is defined as consuming 4 or more drinks on one occasion. Youth who participate in underage drinking are at high risk for alcohol-related injuries and fatalities, rape, sexual assault, sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy. According to national data, 20% of 18-20 year olds reported driving under the influence and 11% of fatal car crashes involved 16-20 year olds in 2006.

In addition to underage drinking, Healthy Waldo County is focusing on reducing high-risk drinking by young adults and the non-medical use of prescription drugs by youth and young adults.

Attached photos depict Alex Knight and Ellen Marlow, YEPP members and Jo Peavey, Dead River Convenience Store Manager