

VIPers Have Fun With Clay

by Erin Doyle and Allison Burger

On two Saturdays this spring, a group gathered at Featherstone to make pottery. Tessa organized the workshops which were attended by Ida, Martha, Colin, Laura, Dan, Karen, Sundy, Roxanne, Diamond, Alexander and Mary Beth. Sabrina and Nancy who work at Featherstone taught the participants how to work with clay.

Everyone got their own slab and began with rolling it in their hands into coils. The coils were then wrapped around to form an object. Most people made bowls, many of which became Mother's Day gifts.



Creating coil pottery together at Featherstone.

The pieces were fired, and at the second session everyone glazed them. Blue was a popular choice of color. Martha made a rainbow bowl using red, green and yellow.

Erin commented "It was fun and relaxing and a nice way to be with other people. I want to do it again! I liked our painting and our ceramics." Ida said it was cool to roll out the clay and great to have the teachers.

VIP is so grateful to Terry and Les Cutler for sponsoring these ceramics classes. We look forward to more art gatherings.

Fun at the Science Museum

by Alexander Campbell

Monday, June 4th, a small group of VIPers all got up nice and early to board the 7 AM ferry to visit the Boston Museum of Science. When we first arrived it was raining, but that didn't scare us! We went to see *The Martian* in 4D, and we felt like we were really there feeling the windstorm on Mars. We also saw a fun movie about the science of engineering. After that, it was back to the ferry and in bed by 9 PM.



Erin, Ida, and Martha with the fired pots.

Accessible Travel

by Mary Beth Grady

When board members Walter and Steve were planning their trip to the Boston Museum of Science, Steve requested that he be able to bring his power chair. Steve stated that his body is more comfortable with the support the chair provides and that he is more himself in the power chair. He is able to use the restroom, carry his lunch tray, & get around alone. Walter heard him & arranged for VIP to hire an accessible van & driver for the trip.

Special Olympics Swimming

by Greg Marshall

On April 22nd, I took part in the Special Olympics swim meet at Bridgewater State University. Our group did well. I came away with 1st and 3rd place medals. Other medal winners included Amanda, David, and Nathan.



A merry little friend who greeted us at the Farm Institute!



Tessa, Erin, and Dale befriend the sheep while the hens strut in the background.

Sunny and Chili: A Beautiful Day at the Farm

by Tessa Permar

For the first time in some years, the sun was shining on Monday the 21st of May as VIPers met farmers, animals, and flowers at the Farm Institute in Katama. We continued the tradition of a Spring general meeting, celebratory dinner, and tour of the farm thanks to Sundy and her generous farmer friends. The afternoon began with a tour of the garden, barns, and animals. Erin, Ally, and Ida recounted the moment when they walked into a greenhouse and much to their surprise, they recalled, “We got to eat the flowers!” Our sunny-faced guide recommended “the yellow ones, they taste like broccoli.” Celeste bravely plucked and tasted the gold and green stems, but decided that she preferred the blue petals across the greenhouse. We were led through barns, pens, and pastures. After petting some mischievous goats and feeding dandelions to a big friendly bunny called Thumper, Ida, Ally, and Erin noted how “they really take care of the animals, the cows, sheep, chickens, ducks, and bunnies.” Before long, some appetizing smells began to call us back to the picnic tables for our dinner.

We all lined up to sample a colorful spread of chili, salad, and cornbread. The picnic tables filled with happy eaters, thanks to our diligent friends serving the food. Though a few of us were chilled by the wind during the tour, we were all warmed by the hardy and nourishing meal. We gave Judi our ears for a brief but productive meeting. Alexander and Tony helped to give out sweet-smelling lilacs and then it was time for dessert; with cookies, brownies, fruit salad, and cake, there was something for everyone. As the sun started to dip, chairs and tables were folded up and warm goodbyes and thank yous were shared. It was nice to see the VIP members on this glorious—and delicious—day at the Farm.



Tri-presidents Alexander, Judi, and Tony share lilacs and thank-yous with VIPers who made a difference.

VIP gives their thanks to...

Tessa – for her great work planning our art activities at Featherstone!

Ann – for organizing another great season of bowling at The Barn!

Dale – for maintaining our Facebook page to share VIP with a bigger audience!

...and **Sundy** for her hard work as our employee improving VIP's organization from behind the scenes. She decided to step down after a great six months guiding us as we brainstormed and worked towards our goals.



Helen traveled all the way back north from Florida to celebrate Cinco de Mayo with her fellow VIPers, shown here with Roxanne (left) and Pat (right)!

Gazette Workshop

by Martha Keenan

Sundy arranged for the *What's Happening* crew to learn about newsletters with John Kennedy, who writes for *The Vineyard Gazette* and teaches journalism classes at Boston University. John is married to *Gazette* publisher Jane Seagrave, who gave us a tour of the offices. We got to see the ancient printing press and the bridal photos in the layout room.

In the class we discussed the purpose of a newsletter. Our focus is to work together on a project and share stories. We learned about writing articles by answering a series of questions. The twelve of us paired off and interviewed each other. Along with a reporter's notebook and pen, we left with lots of good ideas and suggestions.



Amanda and Jillian brightening up Owen Park!

Potluck and Dance Success on Cinco de Mayo

by Sundy Smith

This year the spring potluck and dance happily fell on Cinco de Mayo. A bit of Old Mexico—from decorations to costumes to foods—filled the Chilmark Community Center on May 5. The thoughtful potluck included enchiladas, tacos, rice and beans and many other delicious dishes, including an array of desserts. After dinner, doors and windows were opened as DJ Dern—back by popular demand—got everyone up and moving with music. The evening was voted a great success and needs to be repeated. Hasta la vista!



VIPers getting the inside scoop on how to put together an engaging and informative newsletter!

Friends of Owen Park Clean Up Day

by Heather Tilton

Amanda and Jillian and I helped to clean up Owen Park this past Earth Day. It was a beautiful day and we were proud of ourselves for joining the effort with The Friends of Owen Park neighbors' group. We went to get out and represent VIP's interest in this group's ongoing advocacy for specific design improvements to Owen Park. We are advocating for sea level wheelchair access to the beachfront and dock. Our presence was warmly welcomed.

We had a nice time meeting people while cleaning the beach and we all met at the Sailing Camp afterwards for a picnic. There were three giant dump trucks filled with all kinds of large debris. It was amazing to see how clean the beaches were afterwards. Like a new island!

This fall, work may begin at the top of the park for a pulloff and wheel chair accessibility and proceed gradually over time renovating other areas of the park. Each area has an agreed upon plan.

Busy Season Brings New Jobs

by Dale Ferry and Allison Burger

With summer upon us, Donald, Ally, Ida and Tony are among the islanders taking on new employment opportunities.

- Donald, who could be trusted to know where any item could be found at Ace Hardware, is now bringing in freight and stocking the shelves at the Vineyard Home Center (VHC) on State Rd. in Vineyard Haven. He often can be seen walking to and from work, about 1/2 hour each way, or to the Woodland grill for lunch. He enjoys the new crew he is working with and looks forward to helping you find items for your projects!
- Ally is a bagger at the Edgartown Stop and Shop on Tuesdays and Fridays. She enjoys helping customers. Stop and Shop has a break room where she has lunch. She commutes from Oak Bluffs and is learning the bus routes.
- Ida is now working hard cleaning the locker rooms at the YMCA in addition to dog grooming. She enjoys interacting with the sweaty clientele after they have finished their work-outs.
- Tony is once again working for Tripp Barnes, though Tripp no longer runs the moving business. Tony is helping Tripp with a variety of tasks, and enjoys spending time with him. Tony also stays busy running on the beach and working out at the Mansion House.

These businesses are fortunate to have such cheerful and energetic individuals on their staff!



Donald at his new job at the Vineyard Home Center.

The Southwick Zoo Adventure

by Martha Keenan and Mary Beth Grady

For several years Vineyard Supports has sponsored a Monday men's group. Greg Marshall, Robb Gale, Nathan LeBlanc, David Lambert, and Mark Baird are all members and RJ Cage is their fearless leader.

On May 21 they explored the Southwick Zoo in Mendon, Massachusetts. Greg and RJ were strapped together on a zip line. They flew very fast. Sam the camel provided Nathan and Greg a ride upon a saddle on his hump. Visiting the aviary, all the guys had a chance to feed the birds with food on popsicle sticks. The colorful parrots landed on their arms and shoulders. The group had a memorable adventure.



Nathan going for a ride with his new friend Sam the camel.

Jenny's One-Woman Show

by Martha Keenan

Saturday, May 19th I went to *I Got Sick, Then I Got Better*, a one-woman show by Jenny Allen at The Vineyard Playhouse. I know Jenny from drama club. She talked about her life when she had ovarian cancer and her struggles. I learned a lot about her treatment during that difficult time. Jenny used the simple set of four chairs on the stage to help tell her story, from spinning anxiously on the doctor's stool in the beginning to relaxing in her favorite lemon Adirondack chair at the very end. It was fascinating to hear Jenny tell such a serious story with such a sense of humor.