

PEP TALK

Programs for Exceptional People's Monthly Newsletter

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March was another exciting month here at PEP. We kicked it off with the PEP Family Meeting, which was held March 1. We announced our prospective plans to move our organization to a new building in Bluffton. These plans have continued to progress throughout the month, and we hope to have more formal news in April. We will be sure to keep everyone updated.

PEP members have continued to work hard at their enclaves, as well as at the micro-businesses. The ceramics program unveiled new crab pieces that are sure to be a hit. Their ceramic pieces are also now being sold at Eliza Bleu Boutique and Maye River Gallery. The lawn crew has acquired several more jobs and is continuing to grow (read page two). PEP members also worked on two contracting jobs this month.

It was a busy month for our recreation and leisure program. Members went bowling, saw a movie, attended a car show, explored Oatland Island, and golfed. They also enjoyed activities at PEP including baking, bookmobile visits, wood-working, and visits from Sasha Comfort Dog.



Baking class



Bowling at Station 300



Mini Golf



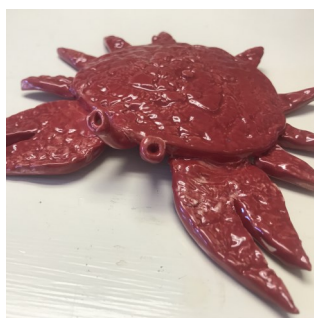
Ceramics in Bluffton



Working on a Contract Job



Bookmobile Visit



New Crab Pieces



St. Patrick's Day



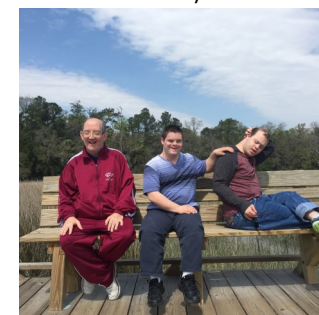
Seeing a Play



Woodworking



Sasha Comfort Dog Visit



Oatland Island

PEP's Lawn and Home Care Service

April Featured Micro-Business

PEP's Lawn and Home Care Service was officially launched as a micro-business about two years ago, through a grant from the Belfair 1811 Charitable Fund and donations from Heuser Ace Hardware in Bluffton. The lawn crew consists of six PEP members, and they take turns completing jobs. Typical lawn care jobs usually require about two to four crew members. Tim Thayer, Director of Community and Employment Services, has been operating the Lawn and Home Care Service from the start. His responsibilities include staffing, scheduling, finding jobs, and assessing all of the jobs, then taking the crew out the first day of the job to explain what is needed. Damane Daley, Lawn Care Instructor, trains the crew, takes them to the jobs, and helps them to master the lawn care tasks.

The lawn crew is able to complete many jobs, including: mowing, weeding, trimming, planting, laying mulch/pine straw, and power washing houses and driveways. Prices vary per job, but a typical lawn care job is around \$30 per hour, and a one-story power washing job is around \$100. The lawn crew has five contracts right now, which provides them with about three jobs per week. In addition, they complete several other one-off jobs per week. Dan Merkel, Board Treasurer, currently holds a lawn care contract with our crew. "They come weekly on Thursday at 10:00 a.m. and always on time. They have been as effective as the other landscaping service we have had, and a bit more dependable," says Dan.

PEP lawn crew members work very hard and have a good time doing it. They each have their favorite tasks when working on Dan's yard; Shawn spreads the dirt, David waters, and Robert runs the equipment. There's always an organized system set up for each job, based on each member's strengths. "There are some members good at cutting grass, while there are some who are good at blowing leaves. The ones who enjoy the task, I let them do it. We know their limitations and know who likes doing each task," says Damane.



In several ways, this is an extremely rewarding micro-business for our members. Tim explains, "It's not only giving our members something to do, but it's giving them training in the hopes that in the future they can go and hire with an outside service." It's also a rewarding experience for our staff. "I love training them. I set a goal for them and whenever I see them reach that goal, I'm excited. I just love being in the community with them," Damane says.

The PEP Lawn and Home Care Service is a growing business and we appreciate any help we can get with spreading the word around the community about our services. Our crew does immaculate work for a very fair price. The best part about hiring our crew is that the money goes toward a wonderful cause. Our members earn wages for their time and effort, and the money also helps our program grow, so we can continue providing services. To schedule an appointment with our lawn crew, please call PEP at 843-681-8413 and ask for Tim.

Volunteer Spotlight

Daniel Ginder



This month, we're featuring another wonderful PEP volunteer, Daniel Ginder. For the last four years, Daniel has been volunteering at PEP every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during lunchtime from 11:30-12:30. He is adored by the members and gets a big welcome of cheers whenever he walks through the door.

Read on to learn more about Daniel and his experience volunteering at PEP.

Tell me about what you do when you volunteer at PEP.

I basically assist with all the members' lunches. I make sure I talk to every single person when I walk in the door. They make my day. After lunch, if they need any other kind of assistance, I help out as much as possible.

When did you start volunteering at PEP and how did you first get involved?

My eldest daughter was on the Hilton Head rowing team and there was a spaghetti dinner. PEP members came to the spaghetti dinner every year.

Michelle (PEP member) was the first person I met and she was going up to get dessert and I helped her out and kind of got hooked then. I went over and talked to the Executive Director at the time and told her some of my ideas, and I've been here ever since.

Can you tell me a little bit about your background?

I was born in Chicago in a family of four boys. We moved to the Atlanta area when we were young and that's where we were raised. I have lived in Naples, FL, and my wife and I had a B&B out in Seattle, Washington. I lived on Dafuskie when I first moved here 29 years ago. I have two girls, 17 and almost 21. I work for Sysco, the food company.

What has been most rewarding about volunteering at PEP?

The members. Their smiles when I walk in the door and sometimes even cheers.

What sorts of things do you like to do when you're not working or volunteering?

My wife and I are beach volleyballers. I like hanging out with my two beautiful daughters and my beautiful wife. I'm a big fan of the movies. I'm a runner and I'm in a quite a few races annually and I ride my bike. I just like enjoying the outside on Hilton Head.



Do you have a favorite memory from volunteering at PEP?

They're all good memories. To be honest with you, there's not one in particular because it's every day. The positive energy I get when I walk through the door is what does it for me.

What do you wish people knew about PEP?

Just how awesome the members are. How authentic they are. The members have big, happy smiles and 99% of the time have happy attitudes.

In one word, how would you sum up your time thus far volunteering at PEP? Why?

Grateful. I'm just grateful for the opportunity. When I first started, I didn't think that my little hour three days a week would add up to four years, so I am extremely grateful that you guys keep letting me come back.

Interested in volunteering?

Fill out the volunteer interest form on our website!

www.pephhi.org/volunteer-application

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

– Winston Churchill

Get to Know Our Team

Dr. Hilary Drammis, Board President

Dr. Hilary Drammis was elected Board President in September 2017 by the suggestion of many Board and staff members. Hilary has been heavily involved with PEP for about six years now, since her son, Evan, first joined the program.

She has an incredible background and PEP is very lucky to have her leading our Board. Read on to learn more about Hilary...

You have an impressive education and career history—can you share a bit about that?



I have a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with areas of specialty being behavioral and family systems. I'm a diplomate in Forensic Psychology, a Certified Family Therapist, and I was a Certified Sports Psychologist. I was in Private Practice in Chicago, then when my dad got ill, I started running a professional baseball team—Triple-A for the Angels.

Your son, Evan, is a member of PEP. How does he enjoy the program?

I think it's great for Evan to be here and I think the staff is very kind, gentle, and patient. He does enjoy it and he enjoys how he is treated. He works at Carrabba's.

What sorts of things have you learned from Evan throughout his life?

Gosh, he's taught me so much. He has taught me what's important in life. He taught me patience, and he taught me to be a better mother. He's just a really good example of a genuine human being. Through his suffering, I've learned to not complain about the little garbage. He's my hero.

What else are you involved in within the community, aside from PEP?

I'm on the Strategic Planning Committee at Wexford. I'm also on USTA Tennis.

What are you most excited about for PEP's future?

I think the transition to the new location and the new building will be incredible. We'll all be under one roof. I think it gives us better opportunities to expand the programs we are offering; not only enclaves, but activities for the members. The goal is to make it be the most fun and productive experience for all the members in an encouraging and positive environment.



Hilary's son, Evan, working at Carrabba's.

“The goal is to make it be the most fun and productive experience for all the members.”

What are your goals for PEP for the rest of the year?

To get us in the new building successfully and happily, and to get every member's set program that enhances their lives where they are learning, experiencing, and enjoying it.

What accomplishment are you most proud of in your life so far?

Probably being a mom. I have a daughter, too. Not that I feel I'm great at it, but I feel like that's the most rewarding. When you help people who are needy, then that should be fun and make you feel good.

Giving Opportunities



Use AmazonSmile and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Programs For Exceptional People. Click the link below to start buying and giving to PEP!

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/57-1036680>

You can also donate via mail, over the phone, or through PayPal by using the 'Donate!' button on our website!

**10 Oak Park Drive C-1
Hilton Head, SC 29926**

**843-681-8413
pephhi.org**

Aunt Laurie's

A PEP Supporter of Three Years

Aunt Laurie's recently celebrated their three year anniversary as a company, as well as their three year anniversary working with PEP. Aunt Laurie's sells gift baskets filled with authentic gifts that display the spirit of the lowcountry. The greatest thing about these baskets is that they are all assembled by people living with disabilities. Laurie Brown, Founder and Owner of Aunt Laurie's, says her mission is "to help individuals with a variety of disabilities feel productive in life and learn work skills and life skills, and I do that through these custom gift baskets." She works with over 20 different organizations and programs across the country, one being PEP.

The baskets start out at the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Center where they are hand woven by individuals in that program. They are also shipped out of this location. Laurie stores all of her inventory at that facility, as well. From there, the baskets can be customized with items chosen by the customer, or the customer can choose from one of Aunt Laurie's already assembled 'creations.' This is where the relationship with PEP comes in to play.

Laurie purchases ceramic pieces and brings them to PEP, they are hand painted by our members, then Laurie buys them back to include in her baskets. This process is beneficial to PEP because it provides compensation, as well as spreads the word about our organization to all of her customers across the country. Each PEP ceramic piece included in a basket has a PEP sticker on the back of it, so customers know where the gift came from. Ceramic gifts painted by PEP include starfish ornaments, palm tree ornaments, small coasters, and trivets. Laurie also purchased some baked goods and snacks for Christmas last year that were made by our members in the Hilton Head PEP kitchen.

There are over 100 items customers can choose from to build their own basket. These items include baked goods, dog treats, seasonings, sauces, towels, ceramic pieces, sprays, etc., and they are all crafted and/or packaged by individuals with disabilities. These gift baskets are popular with realtors in the area, and they also make the perfect gift for friends and family.

When asked why she started the company, Laurie said, "I was born with a passion to help people with disabilities." She left her corporate job in Michigan about three years ago, and moved down to Hilton Head. She worked with SCORE, a non-profit organization funded by the Small Business Association, and she and her mentor wrote the business plan for Aunt Laurie's and launched the company.

Aunt Laurie's has been a major success and has helped many wonderful organizations, like PEP, throughout the country. PEP looks forward to continuing the relationship and including our members' hand painted ceramics in the baskets. Visit www.auntlauries.com to learn more about the company and to shop for a unique basket of your own!



Recreation and Leisure Calendar

April 2018

Tuesday, April 3

Bike Riding

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

*Members must be able to ride a three-wheeled bike. Only five members allowed.

Wednesday, April 4

Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Thursday, April 5

Farmers Market

Pick up at Market—5:00 pm

Pick up at HHI—5:45 pm

Wednesday, April 11

Ceramics in Bluffton

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Tuesday, April 17

Sign Language with Ms. Jennie

Pick up at HHI—4:45 pm

Pick up at Bluffton—5:15 pm

Wednesday, April 18

Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Thursday, April 19

Pinckney Island Shuttle

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Saturday, April 21

USCB Baseball Game

Drop off at HHI—10:00 am

Drop off at Bluffton—10:30 am

Pick up at Bluffton—4:00 pm

Pick up at HHI—4:30 pm

Wednesday, April 25

First Tee Golf

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Thursday, April 26

Farmers Market

Pick up at Market—5:00 pm

Pick up at HHI—5:45 pm

Friday, April 27

Movies at Northridge Cinema 10

Pick up at Northridge—TBD

Pick up at Bluffton—TBD

*Members will need \$6.50



Members will be going to the RBC Heritage! Tickets were donated for members to attend April 16, 17, and 18.



PEP in the News

Click to watch our recent Girl Talk segments!



Our Year-End Annual Appeal Supporters

Thank you for your generous donations!

Alan Sutton	Ken and Barb Baldwin	Rhode Lowell
Ann O'Neil	Ken and Helene Gruber	Richard and Carol Graff
Aubrey Vaughan	Kenneth and Linda Grubbs	Richard and Janet Macdonald
Barbara Duprey	Kirby and Carol Sullivan	Richard Chase
Beach Properties of Hilton Head	Larry and Carol Russell	Richard Dean
Bob and Phyllis Bidwell	Lawrence Forlenza	Richard Jacoby
Brad and Nancy Simpson	Lee and Judy Sturm	Richard Wiles
Brendon Hemily	Linda Volkhardt	Robert and Erma Lenz
Carolina Landscape & Maintenance	Lou and Pam Divan	Robert and Janice Oppenheimer
Clifford Nickerson	Marshall and Sharon Clary	Robert and Terri Dalton
Cynthia Foster	Marty and Lenore Gleason	Robert Costantino
Daniel and Ann Merkel	Marybeth Magnuson	Robin and Greg Storey
David and Linda DuRegger	Mary Ella Jones	Roger and Arleta Hommes
David and Paula Green	Marylin Riley	Russell and Jennifer Lamb
Genevieve Geer	MaryLou Adams	Sheryl Myers
Harvey and Pamela Geiger	Medical Pavilion of Hilton Head, LLC	Stephen and Linda Joss
Herb Egoroff	Mel and Barb Pearson	Stephen Remke
Herbert and Shirley Forder	Michelle Graff Wagner	Stuart and Linda Silver
Heritage Classic Foundation	Mike and Laura Levine	Susan Ochsner
Hilary Drammis	Moore/Corpora Foundation	Terence and Gale Seikel
Janet LaBelle	Nishan and Diana Vartabedian (Vartabedian Family Foundation)	Terry and Chris Baehr
Jeff and Wendy Hall	Nick Esposito	Theodore Athanas
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Jesse Burnett	Patsy Reinsch	Thomas and Lorraine Donaher
Jimmy and Phyllis Rowe	Paula Hart	Timothy Scanlin
John and Mary Britton	Peggy Chase	Tom and Barbara Gloven
Joyce Braude	Peter and Mary Zych	Tom Reed
Juliana Dolan	Polly Rowles	Tony and Wendy Schlegel
Julius Parrella	Randolph and Merrill Light	William and Joanne Dugle
Kathy Meyer		William Worrall