



# PEP TALK

## Programs for Exceptional People's Monthly Newsletter

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We hope everyone had a great Labor Day weekend! We enjoyed the last full month of summer here at PEP and we're looking forward to an exciting fall. We threw a last day celebration for two of our seasonal staff members, PEP members worked hard at their enclaves and did some contract work, and they enjoyed their recreation activities, including a couple pool parties and a Seahawks football game.

We were fortunate to have a lot of generous community partners in August. The Spice and Tea Exchange store located in Coligny Plaza held a give back day on August 23 with a portion of their sales going back to PEP. The Lowe's Heroes selected PEP as the recipient of their annual project, and they replaced the carpet with luxury vinyl tile in five of the activity rooms in our new building. We're looking forward to our gala on September 8 and everything that will be happening in the next couple months!

*To submit any comments, ideas for future newsletters, or to write a letter to the editor, please email [taylor.sullivan@pepghi.org](mailto:taylor.sullivan@pepghi.org).*



Yoga with Yoga Bob



Contract Work



Mr. Trey's Birthday



Amanda Baked a Cake



Ms. Elise's Last Day



Trip to Spice and Tea Exchange



Filming Girl Talk



Ms. Jennie's Last Day



Michelle Won First in Kayaking



Mini-Golf



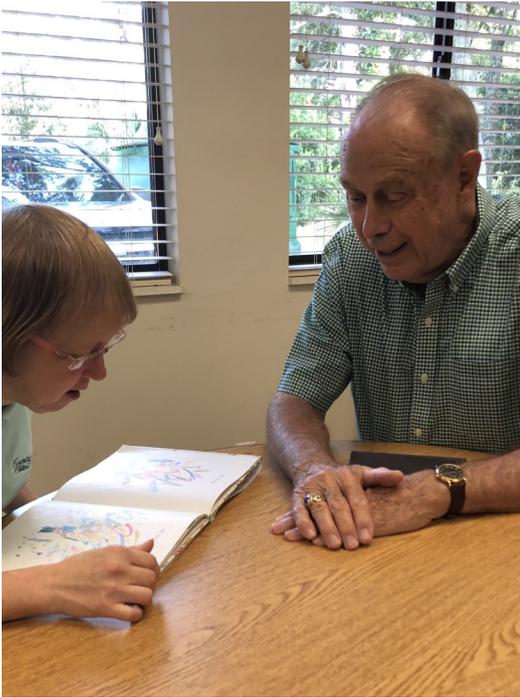
Dress Up Fun



Recycling Enclave

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Rick Graff



For September's volunteer spotlight, we are featuring Rick Graff, who is one of PEP's very dedicated volunteers and who also serves on the PEP Board of Directors. Rick has been an essential component to the literacy improvement of several PEP members over the years. His patience and direction helps members feel more confident in their reading skills.

We are fortunate enough to have Rick volunteer at PEP every Thursday morning reading with individuals who are interested in developing their literacy skills, then reading with a larger group of PEP members.

Continue reading to learn more about Rick and to hear all about his experience volunteering at PEP!

### ***How long have you been volunteering at PEP and how long have you been a board member?***

I have been volunteering at PEP for eight years. This is my third year on the board.

### ***What got you interested in volunteering at PEP?***

I had volunteered at St. Francis in reading. I left there and I heard about PEP and I thought I'd come over and talk about it and see if they want somebody. When I first showed up, the Executive Director at that time said, "Yeah, you can read to people." I said, "How about letting them read?" and he said, "Most of them don't know how to read." Then, I said, "Well, I'd like to try it." That's how it started.

### ***What exactly do you do when you volunteer at PEP?***

I have about six to eight people who read one-on-one at various levels, including one individual who is currently reading chapter books. Then, there is a group of people after the work enclaves leave that I read interactively with.

### ***Has reading always been a big interest of yours?***

Yes, since I was a youngster it has been a big interest. Since we have moved here 20 years ago, the library has seen a lot of books go from their door to my door.

### ***What is your educational background?***

I have a degree in History with a minor in Sociology and Philosophy. I'm a graduate of John Carroll University in Ohio.

### ***What is your career background?***

My career background has been in newspapers. I started delivering newspapers when I was 11. I worked for the Cleveland Plain Dealer through high school and college. When I graduated from college I worked there. Then, I worked for 35 years with The Wall Street Journal in management positions in three different locations in the country—Cleveland, Ohio, southern California, and then the national headquarters for the circulation department in Massachusetts.

### ***Where are you from and when did you move to Hilton Head?***

Originally from Cleveland, then moved from New England to Hilton Head in 1998. We started visiting here in 1979.

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Rick Graff

### *What has been your greatest joy volunteering at PEP?*

Seeing the pleasure and enthusiasm of the members. They're always upbeat, at least mostly. I've enjoyed seeing how some of them have developed in reading skills. Some of them were very reluctant to read initially.

### *What sorts of improvements have you seen with the members over the years—reading or otherwise?*

I've seen this place go from a day care facility to a different kind of lifestyle—a work and social environment.

### *As a board member and volunteer, what do you see for PEP's future?*

When I was originally approached to be a board member, it was because I was a volunteer and would give a different perspective than either a parent or someone who has no direct association with PEP. What I would like to see is the members having more work enclaves. Not to exclude the time they spend together because that is important. I also see this as a relief for the families, at least for a number of hours every day.



### *What is your favorite book?*

I like to read a number of series. I read a lot of espionage books. I also like to read a lot of historical military books. The first books I ever read were the Bobbsey Twins series. It was set back in the early 1900's, but they have been updated. My mother started to read them to me back in the early 40's.

### *What are your favorite types of books to read to the members?*

I like to read books that have a tilt toward cooperation and forgiveness, but at the same time, books that really make them laugh. A couple of the girls like the Madeline series. I love to do the Halloween books with the members. I try to throw a few of the holiday books in there.

### *What has been most rewarding for you as a volunteer or board member?*

As a board member, the most was rewarding was when we opened the Vocational Center and were really able to see the members get out into the community more. Then of course, the challenges we will now face with the move to Bluffton.

### *What are some of your hobbies outside of volunteering?*

I'm involved with the Knights of Columbus. I've worked on the POA committees at Hilton Head Plantation. When I was a kid, I was in Boy Scouts from age eight to 18. I was in the Army as a Reserve Officer. I have been married for almost 60 years. We like to travel and go on cruises. We picked that up about ten years ago.



## Get to Know Our Team

### Stephanie Ginn, Vocational Instructor

This month, the 'Get to Know Our Team' spotlight is really exciting because it is with the PEP employee who has been here the longest—18 years to be exact! She is hard-working, dedicated and remarkable with the members. Stephanie is most knowledgeable about PEP's history and has seen many changes and improvements to the organization over the years.

Keep reading to hear about all of Stephanie's experiences at PEP over the past 18 years!

#### ***How did you first hear about PEP?***

From a friend. My friend was working at PEP. I started as a companion working one-on-one with a member. After three months, I moved up to become a job coach.

#### ***What was PEP like when you first started?***

When I first started in 2001, it was about 18 members, and a small staff. I did the rehab support and job coach service. We would take out each member who had that service and we spent an hour with them wherever they wanted to go. We documented where we went and what we did and took hand written notes. We had contract work with some realtors, but no other enclaves. We did have some members working at McDonald's. PEP was on New Orleans Road. It was kind of a small building, but the work center was huge. And we had a storefront for crafts. We didn't have the programs we have now, like ceramics and recreation.

#### ***What are some of the changes you've seen at PEP over the last 18 years?***

Basically, all of the services we offer have changed since I've been here. We have grown in numbers, PEP has gotten larger. We have more jobs. Carrabba's was our first restaurant enclave. The ceramics program has grown and more pottery is sold. The lawn crew is awesome—we have never had that and it's good because it exposes our members to the community, which is the important thing. The recreation program is nice because it gives the parents a break. There was nothing like that when I started. I like the progress with the new building and the opportunity to get into Bluffton. One of my biggest dreams was to get PEP to Bluffton. Bluffton has grown tremendously and I think more people are looking for jobs in Bluffton because they don't want to cross the bridge.

#### ***How have PEP members impacted your life for the past 18 years?***

They're so loving. I've never worked with a group of more loving and caring people in my life. It's a family. The members care about you and they pick up on if something is wrong. The members have all grown with work, speech and participation over the years. Working at PEP has taught me a lot. It really taught me a lot of patience. It makes you want to be better. We are blessed.

#### ***Tell me about yourself.***

Before I came to PEP, I was working at a day care. I worked with 16 babies. I worked at Fuddruckers for four years. I have a husband and two girls, who are grown and I sent one to college. They are 19 and 25. It has been a

# Get to Know Our Team

## Stephanie Ginn, Vocational Instructor

struggle because my husband is ill, he's on dialysis. This is his second time around. He first had a kidney transplant in 2008. It has been very challenging and has been a big life change for us. If it wasn't for the members, I don't think I could've made it because they're always loving and caring. This job is not just a job, it's a second home to me. No matter what is going on at PEP, this is a peaceful spot for me.

I'm from Fairfax, SC (Allendale County). It takes me an hour and a half to get to PEP every day. I'm dedicated and a good team player. I'm a self starter and I'm honest.

### *What are some of your hobbies?*

I love fishing, singing, dancing, going to church, and volunteering any way I can. If somebody needs me to do something, I'll help. I love doing crafts, too.

### *What do you enjoy most about your job?*

Working with the members and doing the enclaves. I love going to Carrabba's and doing the contract work. I just like being out and seeing them being productive. They love their paycheck.

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

I'm excited about the new building and moving to Bluffton. There is great potential out there. As PEP grows, I'd love to see us try and get group homes. I think there will be more job opportunities in Bluffton. I really see us expanding and maybe even someday getting another building. I think we have a lot of people here willing to work and make things happen for our members.

### *What do you consider to be your life motto?*

I don't really have a motto, but I see myself evangelizing and ministering to other people. I've been getting more engaged in the church and ministering the community—getting groups together to go visit the sick and the homeless.



PEP is selling tickets to the Italian Heritage Festival, taking place Saturday, September 15 from 11 a.m.—4 p.m. at the Coastal Discovery Museum at Honey Horn. Tickets are \$6 each.

**Purchase your ticket by calling  
(843) 681-8413**



The Italian-American Club of Hilton Head Island is a charitable service organization which promotes Italian heritage/culture, while raising and distributing funds for scholarships & charitable organizations in the Hilton Head and Bluffton area of South Carolina.

# Recreation and Leisure Calendar

## September 2018

### Wednesday, Sept. 5

#### Mini-Golf

Pick up at HHI—5:15 pm  
 Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm  
 \*Members need \$5

### Friday, Sept. 7

#### Seahawks Football

Drop off at Bluffton—6:30 pm  
 Drop off at HHI—7:00 pm  
 Pick up at HHI High—9:15 pm  
 Pick up at Bluffton—9:30 pm  
 \*Members need \$6 for concessions

### Saturday, Sept. 8

#### Explore the Lowcountry

Drop off at HHI—9:00 am  
 Drop off at Bluffton—9:30 am  
 Pick up at Bluffton—3:00 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—3:30 pm  
 \*Need comfortable shoes, hat, a bagged lunch, and \$10

### Tuesday, Sept. 11

#### First Tee Golf

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

### Wednesday, Sept. 12

#### Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm  
 \*Members need \$ for concessions

### Thursday, Sept. 13

#### Bluffton Farmers Market

Pick up at Market—5:00 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—5:45 pm

### Wednesday, Sept. 19

#### Ceramics

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

### Thursday, Sept. 20

#### Movies at Northridge Cinema 10

Pick up at Northridge—TBD  
 Pick up at Bluffton—TBD  
 \*Members need \$6.50

### Friday, Sept. 21

#### Seahawks Football

Drop off at Bluffton—6:30 pm  
 Drop off at HHI—7:00 pm  
 Pick up at HHI High—9:15 pm  
 Pick up at Bluffton—9:30 pm  
 \*Members need \$6 for concessions

### Wednesday, Sept. 26

#### Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm  
 \*Members need \$ for concessions

### Thursday, Sept. 27

#### Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm  
 \*Members need \$5

### Saturday, Sept. 29

#### Pizza Party Adventure

Drop off at HHI—9:00 am  
 Drop off at Bluffton—9:30 am  
 Pick up at Bluffton—3:00 pm  
 Pick up at HHI—3:30 pm  
 \*Hosted by Ms. Mary Jo and Ms. Jennie



## PEP in the News

Click to watch our most recent episode of Girl Talk



**Betsy McDaniel**  
Girl Talk Host

**Taylor Sullivan**  
PEP

**Kara Artman**  
PEP Ceramics

# Thank you to our supporters!



Thank you to the Lowe's Heroes project for donating their time, resources, and efforts to put new luxury vinyl flooring in five of the activity rooms in our new building!



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!

**39 Sheridan Park Circle, Box 2  
Bluffton, SC 29910**

**843-681-8413**

**[pepghi.org](http://pepghi.org)**

## Interested in volunteering?

**Fill out the volunteer interest form on our website!**

**[www.pepghi.org/volunteer-application](http://www.pepghi.org/volunteer-application)**

The PEP Ceramics Program is in great need of volunteers! We are looking for individuals to spend time at our ceramics store in Bluffton, specifically on Mondays and/or Fridays. No art experience necessary - just be willing to get a little messy and have some fun!