



PEP TALK

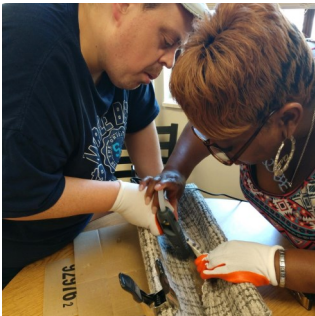
Programs for Exceptional People's Monthly Newsletter

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Well, you can certainly tell it's July here in the Lowcountry! We hope everyone is staying cool and having fun this summer—we definitely are here at PEP! As usual, we had a lot of exciting stuff going on last month, from starting to make ergonomics products for Gulfstream, to making new custom order ceramic pieces. We were also fortunate to have had received multiple grants and donations in June, which you can see on page nine. Also on page nine, you can find the Save the Date for PEP's biggest fundraiser, the Annual Gala. The extensive planning for the event has begun, and the gala will take place September 8 at the Sea Pines Country Club. We had a blast at our recreation activities in June. We had some fun in the sun at the beach with Pockets Full of Sunshine, we danced the night away at Summer Jams at Shelter Cove, and we saw Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom. We look forward to an awesome July!

PEP will be closed July 4 in celebration of Independence Day.



Making Foot Rests



Lauren's New Haircut



PGA Store Golf Simulator



Fun in the Sun



Eugene's Hydrangeas



Hunting Island



Concert at Shelter Cove



AJ Patriotic for Flag Day



New Ceramic Pieces



Landscaping New Building



Story Time with Greg



Ready for Jurassic World

PEP's Ceramic Program and Store

July Featured Micro-Business



The ceramics program has been a staple of PEP for many years; however, within the past year, it has seen its most success. PEP members, families, and friends have seen this program go from a small, volunteer run operation in a little space in Hilton Head, to a fully functioning, profitable micro-business in a beautiful building located in the heart of Bluffton. A lot of this success can be attributed to Kara Artman, Ceramics Instructor and Artist-in-Residence. She is the woman behind the daily operations of the ceramics program and studio, the creator of ideas for the incredible pieces, and the professional artist who teaches PEP members and lets their creativity shine.

Kara first learned of PEP through a friend and started volunteering twice a week in the ceramics program in June 2016. After four months of volunteering, she was offered a part-time job. She had only been a part-time staff member for two months when PEP asked her to go full-time in December 2016 and open up the store and studio. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she focused in ceramics and also took basic art courses, as well as art therapy and sign language. Kara is a successful independent artist and her work (made mostly of repurposed materials) has been featured in many galleries (www.karaartman.com). PEP is lucky to have her and she is adored by the members.



PEP is also lucky to have so many wonderful supporters of the ceramics program. The ceramics store and studio at 163 Bluffton Road that we have had since April 2017 was made possible with many grants and donations. BB&T-Carswell Insurance and Berkeley Hall Charitable Foundation awarded us grants to purchase the equipment such as the pugmill and two kilns, while the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry graciously awarded PEP rent money for the building. Several volunteers and PEP members, staff, and families helped get the building ready by painting and putting up shelves. "Judy Russell helped a tremendous amount. Judy got all of the shelving, cabinets and most of the furniture for us," says Kara. The rest of the furniture was donated by St. Francis Thrift Shop.

Operating the storefront and studio, making the pieces, and selling the pieces is no small feat for Kara and the members—it takes a lot of work. Let's start with all the equipment they have to operate and keep in stock. The studio has a slab roller, a pugmill, two kilns, 75+ glazes (rotating selections), and mounds of texture patterns. Then, there's the actual process of making the pieces, which is about a two and a half to three week process in total. First, Kara rolls out a piece of clay on the slab roller, then the members pick out what texture they would like the piece to have and they roll the texture into the clay, then they pick out what shape they would like it to be from the selection of bowls and dishes. After that, they grease it so the clay won't stick, they gently shape the clay into the dish, then they trim the edges and clean them with a sponge. Then, it goes on the shelf for two days. After that, it comes out of its dish, the back is cleaned, and Kara writes each of the members' names on their piece. It then goes on the shelf to dry for a week. The kiln is then loaded with all of the pieces and it takes 24 hours to heat and cool down. Then, the kiln is unloaded and the pieces are glazed. They then go back in the kiln for another 24 hours. After that, they come out, members price them, and then they are ready to be sold. Quite the endeavor, right?

PEP's Ceramic Program and Store

July Featured Micro-Business

Even though it's hard work, the ceramics program members absolutely love it. Lindsay, one of PEP's artists, says, "My favorite part is painting. I like blue and sparkles. My favorite thing to make is the pineapple dish." Lindsay also mentioned her mom was an artist and that's who she got her love of art from. All of the PEP artists are extremely talented, and some have even created their own unique style. "With Corey's new designs, to be able to give him a tool that he can use and be able to express his creativity in an easier and more precise manner was wonderful," says Kara. She also says, "I really enjoy the end results of what we make and getting to see their response to what they have created."

If you've ever stopped by the store or Farmers Market, you've seen the variety of pieces that are made. Some of their best sellers include the ornaments (2 for \$5 and they make the perfect hostess gift on a wine bottle), and the baby sea turtles. Other pieces include large and small bowls, plates, big turtles, crabs, flowers, mushrooms, and butterflies. The tagline of the ceramics program is "Each piece is as unique as the person who made it," and that couldn't be any more true. "There's never a duplicate, no matter how hard we try. Nothing will ever be exactly the same as the one before it," says Kara.

PEP is fortunate enough to have lots of staff and volunteers to help the members create these unique pieces. One of these helpers is Elise Maglione, a college student who works at the ceramics store during the summer and volunteers there on breaks during the school year. Her major is Social Work and she plans on working with adults with special needs when she graduates. "It's been absolutely fantastic. I'm positive I have the best summer job out of all my friends. It's fun hanging out with everybody and watching them make really great stuff. They are all so patient and talented," Elise says.

Along with patience, being a part of the ceramics program is beneficial to PEP members in many ways. "There's hand-eye coordination, figuring out how to price the pieces and learning monetary value of the things they make. Their memory is also tested. They have to learn to be salesman and learn how to work the card reader and register, and figure out change. They're getting to express themselves creatively. It's just a really good creative outlet for them, emotionally," Kara says.

Their hard work certainly pays off, as the revenue of the program increases. Along with at the storefront, PEP ceramics are sold through many other vendors, including The Greenery, Eliza Bleu Boutique, Maye River Gallery, and Aunt Laurie's. PEP ceramics also created the award plaques for the 2017 Bluffton Business Awards and sold pieces at the 2018 All Saints Garden Tour. PEP ceramics can also be found at the Bluffton Farmers Market every Thursday, weather permitting.

There are some exciting things in the future for the ceramics program. PEP artists are working on some brand new "faux wood" pieces with carved in initials that can be custom ordered. It may only be July, but they are already starting to look for Christmas venues for our holiday products. They will also be moving the store and studio space into PEP's new building before the end of the year.

The best way to show the ceramics program and our artists support is to buy their art! They appreciate any and all sales, whether they come from the storefront, the Farmers Market, or one of our other venues. Another way to get involved is to volunteer. Volunteers are needed in the ceramics studio on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. If interested, please fill out the volunteer form on our website or just stop by the store!



Volunteer Spotlight

Jennie French



For July's volunteer spotlight, we have Jennie French, an outstanding volunteer and seasonal PEP staff member. In 2013, Jennie and her family were new to the area and she found about PEP because her parents were friends with one of our PEP members and her family. Jennie started volunteering at PEP and then became a part-time staff member working one-on-one with one of our members. Jennie then moved into a full-time position at PEP. In the summer of 2015, Jennie accepted a full-time position as Teacher Assistant in Special Education at Hilton Head Island Elementary, due to her neighborhood being re-zoned and wanting to keep her son in the Hilton Head schools.

Now, Jennie volunteers at PEP teaching sign language classes every other Tuesday during the school year, and working part-time Monday and Wednesday as an instructor at PEP during the summer. We are thankful for any time Jennie can give to PEP because the members truly love her and love the sign language classes. Read on to learn more about Jennie!

What exactly do you do when you volunteer at PEP during the school year?

When I volunteer, it's strictly sign language. I teach sign language. I'm not a certified interpreter or anything, I'm just fluent in sign language because of my past experiences. We found that the members at PEP really were interested in it, so we do it in a fun, game-like fashion. We give the members opportunities to pick whatever vocabulary words they want to learn, and if I don't know it, we look it up together.

What do you do when you work part-time at PEP during the summer?

Pretty much everything that the other instructors do. I go to enclaves if they need me, I do sign language pretty much every day that I'm there, and I go on trips if they need help. I'll fill in wherever it's needed.

Tell me about your background (education, career, etc.).

I have a Bachelor of Education from the University of South Carolina and my Masters in Special Education from Vanderbilt. My first job after graduate school was in North Carolina and it was for a program called the Family Infant and Pre-school Program. I served kids with disabilities in their homes, so it was kind of like early intervention. I had various other jobs with that same program. I also taught second grade, as well as an integrated pre-school program in North Carolina. Then, we moved to Texas and I stayed home for a while with my kids and also did a lot of tutoring part-time. In 2012, we moved here.

Tell me about your background in sign language.

When I started college at USC, I heard about a camp called Camp Burnt Gin in Sumter, and knew it was something I would really like, so I started working there in the summers. They always needed people to work in the cabins with the younger kids who were hearing impaired. My sign language was very limited, but I was very interested in it. Once you're so immersed in it, you can't help but learn it, and I loved working with that population. I just made sure that throughout the years in school, I maintained opportunities to use it through classes or volunteering. In the beginning, it was a challenge, so I did take classes. Then, I actually had an opportunity in college to teach beginning sign language, and that really helped, too. I've never been interpreter level, but my current job in the school system gets me around kids who are hearing impaired, so I use it every day. It also benefits me to come and volunteer at

Volunteer Spotlight

Jennie French

PEP during the school year because it helps me keep it up.

What made you want to learn, and then teach, sign language?

I just had a real interest in that population and recognizing how isolated people who are hearing impaired really are from their peers. I got more inspired when I had my first son. He had a lot of allergies and ear infections as a kid. I taught him signs because he got so many sets of tubes and surgeries with his ears that I recognized that when his ears were clogged, he wasn't hearing well. I started signing with him and there was a point when he was a toddler that he had more signs than verbal speech. Sign language allowed him to be less frustrated. It's not necessarily just a skill that's only beneficial for the hearing impaired population.

What are some of the benefits of PEP members learning sign language?

For one thing, we make it fun. We usually connect some sort of snack to the class. At the end of the class, if they want a snack, they have to sign "yes, please" or "no, thank you," and they get a big kick out of that. I think just the fact that they learn it and there are quite a few members now who use it consistently. Myself and the members can communicate better with the members who use it. They have learned so much and I've seen so much progress across the board. We always start off with practicing signs we already know and I try to make them words that are functional for members and that they can use throughout their day.

What's your favorite part about working with adults with disabilities?

The connections that I develop with them. When I say, "I love you" to the members, they know I mean it. I've really developed a deep connection with so many of the members who have been there since I was there the first time. That's true of my kids at school, too. I also just love seeing their growth and progress socially and academically.

What do you wish the community knew about PEP members?

I wish people knew that when you encounter someone with a disability, all they really want is for you to acknowledge them like you would anybody else.

Have you seen changes with this population over the years in schools, organizations, and the community?

Yes, I've seen more inclusion, especially in the schools. For example, I took three fifth graders into regular science and social studies class this past year and that's like a dream job for me to be able to watch how they progress socially and academically and how with just a little extra support from me, they can learn the same thing that their typically developing peers can learn. I watched how they can be accepted by peers who are typically developing. As far as our members, I've seen a lot of positive changes when it comes to the enclaves, like what the members are capable of and their confidence with their abilities.

Tell me about yourself (hobbies, family, etc.).

My husband and I have been married for 27 years. My husband is with the FBI, so his job brought us here in 2012 from Dallas. We have three boys: Dylan—he's 22 and he just graduated from The Citadel with a Criminal Justice degree and is working outside of Charleston at Coastal Evaluation Center, Carson—he's 21 and he's a Marine and is stationed at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, and Luke—he's 18 and he will be a senior at Hilton Head High School. As far as hobbies, my number one hobby is spending time with my family. I love the beach. I take yoga and am more recently getting more into it. I like reading. Family time is number one, though. I am originally from Pittsburgh, but I grew up in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. After I graduated high school, I got into USC and moved down here.

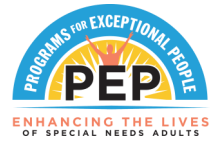
Interested in volunteering?

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

www.pephhi.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!



Get to Know Our Team

Dr. Carol Myers, Board Vice President

This month, we are featuring one of PEP's hard working board members and PEP parent, Dr. Carol Myers. Carol serves on our board as Vice President and is the mom of Michelle, a long-time PEP member. Carol puts a lot of time and effort into making PEP be the best it can be, and she's also the main planner for PEP's biggest fundraiser, the Annual Gala.

We are lucky to have Carol and the rest of her family be so involved with PEP. She brings a lot of irreplaceable energy and spunk to the organization. Continue reading to learn more about Carol.

When and how did you first get involved with PEP?

In the 90's, we came here for vacations and we met one of the founders of PEP. We got really excited because Michelle was going to graduate high school eventually and we needed somewhere to retire. I called Florida thinking Disney World would be a great place for people like Michelle. They didn't have anything specific and the programs in the counties surrounding Disney had three year waiting lists. Michelle started coming to PEP when we would vacation here, then we moved here in 2001. It has been a great experience for Michelle. This is her life.

When and how did you become the Vice President of the Board?

About 10 years ago, I joined the Board. I became Vice President for the first time several years ago, and I stayed Vice President because Hilary Drammis said she would be President if I would be Vice President. She's good.

Why did you choose PEP for Michelle to attend?

There is nothing else here like PEP. PEP is dynamic. This is Michelle's family. What I like is the staff, as well as the members, treat everyone with respect and dignity like they would anyone else. No one puts anyone down. They take care of each other. We've had several community projects where they help other people, like the elderly or individuals in the service. They give to the community, they don't just take. I think that's important.

How has PEP been beneficial to Michelle?

Let me count the ways! It gives Michelle a life. She can't drive, so when she was born I thought she would never be able to go out with her friends like her sisters did, but she does. She goes out with her friends all the time. She does everything from seeing ice hockey and the Globetrotters, to going to the theater and the movies. She has a good life and it wouldn't be like that anywhere else. PEP gives her a job coach and enclaves that she needs to work.

Get to Know Our Team

Dr. Carol Myers, Board Vice President

What kinds of changes have you seen at PEP since you've been involved?

The staff is excellent and at a different level now. The programs are more developed and there are more enclaves. The recreation and leisure program is fantastic. We have more members now and it's a bigger family, which means we have more chances for fundraising. We also get more community support now that there are more people and we are getting more well known. The newsletter is a wonderful new addition, also.

What are you most excited about for the future of PEP?

The move is exciting. We will get to be more practical by cutting down the cost of transportation. The building is a step up and I will love to see all the members together there. We have more room to do individual programs at the same time. The programs will be more developed and at a higher level, like the Gulfstream partnership, which is fantastic.

Tell me about your background (education, career, etc.).

I have a Bachelor of Science and a Doctor of Optometry from The Ohio State University. I moved to Illinois and taught at the Illinois College of Optometry. When we moved back to Ohio, I worked at several other ophthalmologists' offices. After we moved here, I got licensed for South Carolina and then worked at Volunteers in Medicine. I then worked at some other ophthalmologists' offices around the area, and then retired. I've been married 49 years and we have three girls: Dana, who lives in Nashville, Sheryl, who lives in Port Royal, and Michelle, who lives in Bluffton.

What are some of your interests and hobbies?

I've played tennis for 20 years and am on a USTA team here. I started bridge three years ago. I love art and I do watercolors and acrylics and take classes.

You're the main planner of the gala—how can PEP families and supporters help?

If they can get one or two gift certificates from service businesses like dentists, spas, hair salons, car detailers, or restaurants, that's very valuable because people bid on those items. If they could get a sponsor of any kind (ranging from \$500—\$2500), that would be helpful.

What kinds of life lessons have you learned from Michelle?

Many. Don't waste your time worrying about things because everything turns out ok. Life is what you make it. She is very happy. I asked Michelle once, "Does it bother you that you can't do what other people can do, like drive a car or go out by yourself like your sisters?" and she said, "No, mom, should it? I have a good life."



Recreation and Leisure Calendar

July 2018

Tuesday, July 3

First Tee Golf

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Thursday, July 5

Mama Mia Showing at HHI Library

Pick up at HHI—4:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—5:00 pm

Saturday, July 7

Explore the Lowcountry

Drop off at HHI—8:30 am

Drop off at Bluffton—9:00 am

Pick up at Bluffton—3:00 pm

Pick up at HHI—3:30 pm

*Need comfortable shoes, hat, bagged lunch, and \$10

Tuesday, July 10

Summer Jams at Shelter Cove

Pick up at HHI—7:00 pm

Pick up at Bluffton—7:30 pm

Thursday, July 12

Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

*Members need \$5

Tuesday, July 17

Mini-Golf

Pick up at HHI—5:15 pm

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

*Members need \$5

Wednesday, July 18

Ceramics in Bluffton

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Thursday, July 19

Sweeney Todd Showing at HHI Library

Drop off at HHI—4:30 pm

Drop off at Bluffton—5:00 pm

Saturday, July 21

Beaufort County Water Festival

Drop off at HHI—8:30 am

Drop off at Bluffton—9:00 am

Pick up at Bluffton—3:00 pm

Pick up at HHI—3:30 pm

*Need comfortable shoes, hat, bagged lunch, and \$10

Tuesday, July 24

First Tee Golf

Pick up at Bluffton—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

Wednesday, July 25

Bowling at Station 300

Pick up at Station 300—5:30 pm

Pick up at HHI—6:00 pm

*Members need \$5

Thursday, July 26

Movies at Northridge Cinema 10

Pick up at Northridge—TBD

Pick up at Bluffton—TBD

*Members need \$6.50



PEP in the News



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!

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

843-681-8413

pephhi.org

Thank you to our supporters!

Recent grants and donations PEP has been grateful to receive



A reception for the grant recipients was held at St. Francis Thrift Shop on Tuesday, June 19. PEP's Executive Director, Steve Maglione, and Community Relations Coordinator, Taylor Sullivan, are pictured far left.

Knights of Columbus—\$16,876

Holy Family Ladies Guild—\$1,000

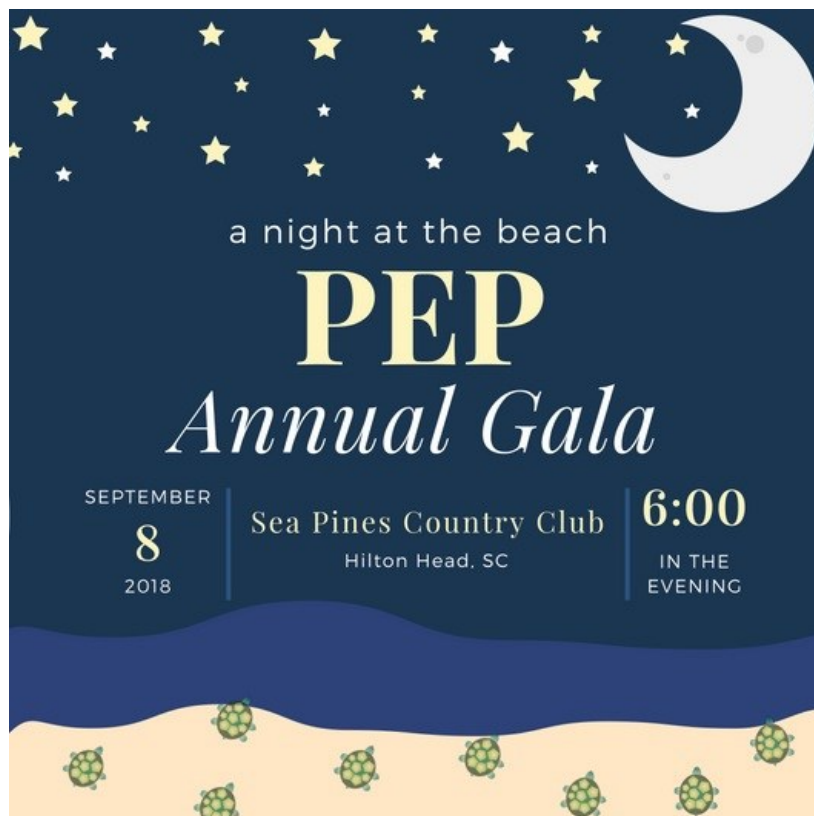
Bob and Loretta Warden—\$5,000

St. Francis by the Sea—\$1,000

St. Francis Thrift Shop—\$4,000

St. Luke's United Methodist Church—\$750

Long Cove Club—\$4,000



You're Invited!

PEP's biggest fundraiser of the year, the Annual Gala, is coming up in just a few short months! It will be a fun night with dinner, dancing, a silent auction, and a live auction. Tickets are \$85 each.

Interested in promoting your business by becoming a sponsor?

Presenting Sponsor—\$2,500

Platinum Sponsor—\$1,500

Gold Sponsor—\$1,000

Silver Sponsor—\$500

Contact Taylor Sullivan at (843) 681-8023 or at taylor.sullivan@pephhi.org for ticket and sponsorship information.