

MARTHA'S VINEYARD DONORS COLLABORATIVE

News from the Martha's Vineyard Donors Collaborative

The impulse to charity is part of human nature, so there's a sense that it's supposed to be easy; in fact, it takes as much expertise as investing in stocks and bonds.

Melissa A. Berman
CEO
Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

A Very Social, Very Connected Summer: But Was It Successful?

Thank you to all of you who have helped make life on the Vineyard such a joy.

More than any time in recent memory, the Island's non-profit organizations are low on funding. The downturn in federal and state aid, and the continuing woes of the economy have left massive holes in the budgets of many of the Island's worthiest causes. Aiming to fill these gaps, the Island's non-profits responded with an unprecedented number of benefits of all varieties. During June and July one could go to a benefit almost every night of the week. And in August one could easily flit from two to three events

on most any evening. Some, like the Affordable Housing Dinners, the Tabernacle/Yard celebration of dance and theater, and the marvelous Possible Dreams auction, will be remembered for a long time. It was a very social, very connected summer.

However, we have heard some complaints about "benefit fatigue", and more than a few references to that sense of free-floating guilt that comes from invitations you didn't want to refuse but did, and acceptances you would just as soon not have responded to but felt you had to. Generally, Vineyarders — year-rounders and seasonal residents alike

— seem to have borne the burden of social philanthropy with gallantry, grace, good humor and reasonably open wallets.

Now that the summer is far behind us, the question arises as to how many benefits accomplished their objectives. How well did the benefits fill the funding gap? Our recent survey of Island non-profits shows that only half of these events achieved their fundraising goals. We are not surprised, given the large number of benefits and the competition for limited calendar dates.

So what is to be done? First, we have to recognize that

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“You are here because you want to be here. You are here because you owe it to be here...to give something back...because the Vineyard gives you so much.

You are here because the people on this beloved Island need your help to provide community services that are so badly needed.

You love this Island and feel you have to give something back.

Do it for yourself, your children, your grandchildren and all the people who live on the Island.”

— Art Buchwald

Making Your Year-End Gift Count

"Know the charity a little, know thyself a lot, and you can't go far wrong."

Melissa Berman
Chief Executive,
Rockefeller
Philanthropy
Advisors

We know you may be swamped at this time of year with requests from non-profit organizations for assistance. In fact, 50% of all donations to charity are made between Thanksgiving and New Year's.

First, you should think about what you'd like your donation to accomplish. How can you best achieve that goal?

Melissa A. Berman, chief executive of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, offered the following advice in a recent *New York Times* article:

- Efficiency does not equal effectiveness, so don't put too much emphasis on an organization's percentage of administrative expenses. A newer organization may be incurring start-up expenses that older organizations took care of a long time ago.
 - It's OK if your motivation includes personal recognition. Find an organization for whom your gift is meaningful.
 - If you'd volunteer for the organization (if you had the time), then it's a great candidate.
 - Be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think "help kids learn to read" vs. "help kids".
 - Recognize how you would like to see change accomplished, and by whom. If you believe change is the responsibility of federal government, give to organizations that lobby for the change you'd like to see. If you think change should happen at the local level, give to local organizations with programs that resonate for you.
 - Do you want to solve problems today, or prevent problems tomorrow? The answer to this question can further clarify your focus.
 - Give in the method most preferred by your chosen organization: mail, website, check, or credit card.
 - If you don't want to receive ongoing solicitations after you make your gift, simply tell the organization that you are making a one-time gift (even if you may give again in the future).
 - Goodness does not have to hurt. You do not need to make a gift that makes you feel financially unsecure.
- Once you've identified the what may the right organization to further your goals, how do you know if it is worthy of your gift? Here

are some tips from the Federal Trade Commission:

- Make sure the name and contact information of the organization are clearly displayed on any solicitation you've received.
- Ask what percentage of the donation is used for administration, and what these monies are used for.
- If the solicitation claims that your gift will support local organizations, call the local groups to verify.
- Do your homework. Research the organization before you make a commitment. Here are some useful sites:

Charity Navigator
www.charitynavigator.com

Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance
www.give.org

American Institute of Philanthropy
www.charitywatch.org

Finally, please visit the MVDC web site at www.mvdonors.org for a complete list of local organizations, their missions/programs, basic financial data, and a listing of their board members. If we have influenced your giving, please let us know.

What We've Been Doing...

We've been very busy since our last newsletter! We've facilitated matches for everything from chess sets for the MV Public Charter School's after-school chess program, to a sailboat for the African-American Heritage Trail. We've helped Tisbury Waterways find an Excel expert to assist with the creation of a special

spreadsheet to track data, and provided numerous referrals to other technical resources.

Last June, we met with Island realtors to let them know what we're working on, and to solicit their ideas for communicating with seasonal residents.

Also last June, we surveyed non-profit organizations to gauge what types of support were most needed. As a result of this survey, we created two series of workshops (see below).

We're excited about the progress we've made since our last newsletter, and look forward to reporting even greater progress next Spring!

“Very valuable and up to the quality of the best workshops offered off-Island”

“Fabulous — stimulating.”

“Superb! Excellent on many fronts, systematic, thorough. Well organized.”

— Attendees, “Creating a Successful Major Donor Program”

Announcing MVDC Workshop Series for Non-profits

This fall, the MVDC announced two new series of workshops for Island non-profit organizations.

Raising Funds on Martha's Vineyard will focus on the unique challenges of fund raising on the Island, and **Creating a Professional Organization** will provide tools and guidelines to help organizations make sure their agency has the infrastructure to attract the support they need. The first workshop in the Raising Funds series, “Creating a Successful Major Donor Program” was held on October 20th at the Mansion House in Vineyard Haven.

Last June, we surveyed non-profits on Martha's Vineyard regarding their priorities for training and development in two areas: fund development and organization infrastructure. “We developed these two series based on the input we received from the survey,” said Barbara Bellissimo, MVDC executive director. “Non-profits wanted the Raising Funds series first, and we'll kickoff the Creating a Professional Organization series in March.

Thirty-four people attended “Creating a Successful Major Donor Program”, where they

learned how to define what a major donor is for their organizations, gained an understanding of basic principles related to major gifts, and gained skills in identifying major donor prospects, qualifying them, and getting board members and volunteers more involved in the process. Through the generosity of the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, scholarships were provided to seven attendees.

Reaction to this first seminar was overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to the non-profits' participation in future workshops.

Capital Campaigns Kicking Off

There are several capital campaigns kicking off on the Island. Here is a summary:

- The **FARM Institute** is raising \$4M to fund the move to their new location at Katama Farm in Edgartown, and the construction of new facilities there. Contact John Curelli, president, at 1.508.627.7007 or johnc@farminstitute.org
- The **Martha's Vineyard Hospital** will be raising \$35M–\$50M to fund the construction of a new facility. Contact the hospital's development director at 1.508.693.0410.
- The **Vineyard Playhouse** is raising \$1M to fund much-needed renovations to its historic theater building in Vineyard Haven. Contact MJ Bruder Mun-afo, creative director, at 1.508.693.6450 or info@vineyardplayhouse.org.
- The **YMCA of Martha's Vineyard** is raising \$10M to fund the construction of its new facility in Oak Bluffs. Contact John Clese, executive director, at 1.508.696.7171 or mail@mvyymca.org.

Current Opportunities to Help

We asked all non-profits what their current needs are. These are their responses.

Under \$250

The **YMCA of Martha's Vineyard** is opening the Island's first teen center in almost twenty years. The center will be open to teens aged 14 to 20, and these are some items that will help to make the center a safe, functional space for Island youth.

- VCR/DVD player
- Pool cues, chalk, rack
- Video games and player

Contact Lyndsay Famariss, YMCA of MV Youth Coordinator, at 1.508.696.7171 or youthmv@hotmail.com.

\$250–\$1,000

The **YMCA of Martha's Vineyard** has the following needs for its new teen center:

- 2 recliners or other chairs
- 2 desktop computers
- Folding ping pong table

Contact Lyndsay Famariss, YMCA of MV Youth Coordinator, at 1.508.696.7171 or youthmv@hotmail.com.

Over \$1,000

The **African-American Heritage Trail** is looking for sponsors to help with the purchase of the Captain Martin House on Chap-paquiddick (\$425,000). Captain Martin was the first and only African-American sea captain from Martha's Vineyard.

Contact Elaine Cawley Weintraub, Board President, at 1.508.693.4361 or beatrice91@adelphia.net.

The **Dukes County Health Council** seeks sponsors (\$1,250 each) for its series of six Health Forums, which will be presented jointly with the **Foundation for Island Health, League of Women**

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“Clear, well-sequenced, great information, consistently interesting and motivating.”

Attendee, “Creating a Successful Major Donor Program”

Current Opportunities to Volunteer or Become a Board Member

The **AIDS Alliance of Martha’s Vineyard** seeks the following:

- Board members with diverse experience: volunteer work, fundraising, real estate, appraisal skills,

performing or graphic arts, culinary arts, 12-step programs or community organization.

- Three Prevention Program Committee members for new projects focusing on

teens, immigrant and minority health outreach, and addictions.

Contact Les Holcomb, Program Director, at 1.508.693.8868 or aamv1@vineyard.net.

Current Opportunities to Help (continued)

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Voters and Martha’s Vineyard Hospital. The need for sponsorship is critical for the first two forums: “Health Care Policy” (January 23, 2005) and “The New Hospital” (February 13, 2005). For more information about these forums, see “Non-Profit News” on page 6.

Contact Tad Crawford, Board Chair, at 1.508.693.1430 or tadcrawford@vineyard.net.

The **Island Community Chorus** seeks the following:

- \$20,000 to make its Peter R. Boak Music Award scholarship program a self-sustaining endowment
- \$10,000 for risers for 100 singers

- \$5,000 to expand their sheet music library
- \$5,000—\$10,000 to engage professional accompanists and guest performers.

For more information about the Island Community Chorus, see “Non-Profit News” on page 6.

Contact Mimi Davisson, Secretary, at 1.508.693.1430 or mimidav@aol.com

The **Martha’s Vineyard Chamber Music Society** seeks \$10,000 to fund a commissioned work by award-winning composer William Kraft for their Summer 2005 music festival. Donor(s) will have the concert named in their honor, receive two complimentary season

subscriptions to the MVCMS, four additional individual tickets to the concert, and special dinner with Mr. Kraft and the artists.

Contact Nancy Rogers, Executive Director, at 1.508.696.8055 or nancy@vineyard.net.

The **Martha’s Vineyard Whole Health Alliance** seeks \$7,500 to fund the publication of the expanded 2005 edition of the *Vineyard Directory of Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practitioners*.

Contact Bud Macy, President, at 1.508.693.2876 or emacy@adelphia.net.

The **YMCA of Martha’s Vineyard** has the following needs for its new teen center:

- Multifunctional color copier
- Pool table
- 3 laptop computers for YMCA staff

Contact Lyndsay Famariss, YMCA of MV Youth Coordinator, at 1.508.696.7171 or youthmv@hotmail.com.

Here's the latest news from some of Martha's Vineyard's non-profit organizations.

Non-Profit News

Dukes County Health Council Collaborates to Deliver Health Forums

The Dukes County Health Council (DCHC) has collaborated with the **League of Women Voters, the Foundation for Island Health, Island Health, Inc. and the Martha's Vineyard Hospital** to sponsor a series of six monthly forums about health care on Martha's Vineyard.

These forums will provide opportunities for hard-hitting discussions in which off-Island and on-Island experts, Vineyard health care clinicians, and part-time and full-time Vineyard residents can talk about improving the Island's health care system. Through these discussions, and reports about them, the DCHC hopes to encourage a wide range of Island residents to think about health care with a sense of shared vision and hope.

The forum topics and tentative dates are:

Health Care Policy:
1/23/05

The New Hospital: 2/13/05

Primary Care: 3/20/05

Mental Health: 4/17/05

Funding Health Care:
5/15/05

Rural Public Health:
6/19/05

All forums will be held at the Martha's Vineyard Hebrew Center.

Island Community Chorus: Striking a Chord

The Island Community Chorus loves to sing and the community loves to hear them. After a recent concert at the Whaling Church, a retired choral director was overheard saying, "We couldn't have heard better in Boston!"

Hundreds of past and present, seasonal and year-round Islanders are alumni of the Chorus. About 100 singers perform in each of three concerts each year: a December holiday concert, a spring concert, and a July 4 concert (the Tabernacle's summer kick-off event).

The all-volunteer Island Community Chorus doesn't require auditions, and anyone high school age and older is welcome.

Several years ago the Chorus created the Peter R. Boak Music Award to honor its music director. It is given annually to a Martha's Vineyard resident who is a high-school senior or graduate attending college to prepare for a career in music or the performing arts.

Bridge Housing Corporation Nears Final Approval

It looks as if the Tisbury Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is about to approve Bridge Housing's proposal to buy the Norton family's

24-acre wood lot on State Road in Vineyard Haven. Bridge will sell the northern 16 acres to the Land Bank for permanent conservation and build Bridge Commons, 15 two-family affordable houses (duplexes), on the southern eight acres.

The ZBA approval is Bridge Commons' last regulatory hurdle. The Martha's Vineyard Commission approved the project last June.

Bridge Housing has a \$100,000 line of credit from Boston Community Capital, which must be repaid at the first closing under the construction mortgage.

This summer, Bridge held three fund-raising parties to help raise the "gap money" between the \$7 million total development cost and the \$6.3 million they expect to receive from selling the 30 homes.

This project has had a tremendous amount of help from Vineyarders and others. Their first major donor was the Island Affordable Housing Fund. Their biggest off-Island gift was \$35,000, a donation from a board member's colleague.

YMCA Reaches Founders Campaign Goal

The YMCA raised \$500,000 last summer to fund its general operating costs for the next three years.

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Non-Profit News (continued)

(continued from page 6)

In addition, the YMCA, in conjunction with the **Martha's Vineyard Public Schools**, secured \$950,000 to offer Island-wide after school programs for the next

five years. The new program combines the Y's existing Creative Choices program with academic assistance to help kids succeed in their social and academic goals. Finally, the YMCA's

administrative offices will be moving to the Cottagers Corner building in Oak Bluffs. This facility will open in January, and will also house the Island's first teen center in 20 years.

Results of the MVDC Summer 2004 Events Survey

In late October, the MVDC surveyed Island non-profits about the success of their events during the summer.

As you know, there were a record number of events held this summer, which had fundraising goals ranging

from less than \$1,000 to over \$500,000. Half of the organizations achieved their goals; half did not. Those who did not reach their goals fell short by at least 25%.

Finally, two-thirds of the organizations indicated that

they will rethink their event strategy for next summer. Most will develop more specific plans, diversify the types of events they put on, and secure more event sponsors to reduce their expenses.

Social, Connected, Successful? (continued)

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the need to support local non-profits is real. We sometimes forget how much we depend on these organizations. It is no exaggeration to say Vineyard non-profits are an essential part of what makes the Island habitable, safe, beautiful and exciting. They help turn a largely transient population into a community.

Second, we need to extend our giving beyond "benefits" giving. We have to recognize that while benefits are fun — and an important part of the social life of the Vineyard — they will never be sufficient sources of funding.

Seasonal residents need to realize it's important to include the Vineyard in their annual giving. You can begin

to choose among the organizations on the Vineyard that best fit your interests and support them at a level you find comfortable.

To help you choose, you can visit our website: www.mvdonors.org. There, in one place, are descriptions, names and missions of various healthcare, environmental, arts, social services and educational organizations. In just a few minutes you can draw up a list of the organizations that match with your particular philanthropic interests.

While the MVDC does not provide a seal of approval for the organizations we list, a call to our executive director, Barbara Bellissimo, at 1.508.696.4647 (or an email to bar-

bara@mvdonors.org) will supply up-to-date information about what these organizations are doing, how active they are, some of their recent accomplishments and, if you are interested, an introduction to key people from the organization.

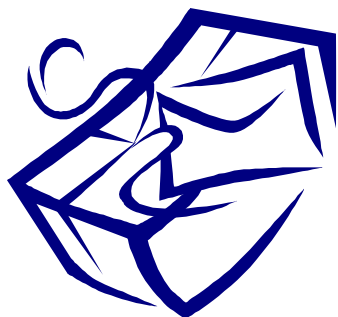
So Vineyarders, you deserve a hearty thank-you for what you may have contributed to benefit the Island's non-profit organizations this summer. Giving is good; giving systematically is better. Let the MVDC help you become a more active participant in our community.

We have to recognize that while benefits are fun—they will never be sufficient sources of funding.

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**Expanding philanthropy on Martha's Vineyard
by linking donors with local organizations**

**MAKING YOUR
YEAR-END
DONATION
COUNT
(SEE PAGE 2)**



**What do you get the
person who has
everything?**

Donate in their name
to a worthy Island organization.

Contact the Martha's Vineyard Donors Collaborative for our
Directory of Martha's Vineyard Non-profit Organizations,
or visit us online at www.mvdonors.org/directory.html.
