

# MARTHA'S VINEYARD DONORS COLLABORATIVE

## Our Island & Philanthropy

Your generosity is the lifeblood of island non-profits. We want to thank everyone who was an MV donor during this summer of unprecedented fund raising events and parties, which included the Vineyard's first telethon. These organizations play a critical role in preserving the character of the island.

While benefits are a fun and important part of Vineyard life—they aren't enough to fund the budget anymore. As the accompanying articles show, our rapid growth and high cost of living are creating deficits. Many small organizations just don't have the resources to compete in the crowded summer event schedule. Many non-profits are having to cut costs/programs or scramble to find new funding sources. The need is real as shown by the items on **The Vineyard's Holiday Wish List**; these basics aren't covered by operating costs.

We need a thriving non-profit community. As you plan your annual giving we urge you to consider how important the Vineyard is to your family and make it an important part of your philanthropy as well. Thank you.

## How You Can Help:

- Give directly to your favorite Vineyard charities. Our on line Directory of Non-Profits has detailed information on the full range of island organizations.
- Give to the Permanent Endowment Fund if you wish to make a lasting contribution to the island. Call Paul Ryan at the Dukes County Savings Bank Trust Department (508-693-8850).
- Consider some of the items on **The Vineyard's Holiday Wish List**.
- Volunteer or join a Board. Many organizations seek talented people to help them achieve their missions.

## Out at sea lies a magic, timeless place we call, "The Vineyard."

Mike Wallace told thousands of Vineyard moviegoers this summer, "**Almost everything you love about 'The Vineyard' is protected, maintained or made possible by Island non-profits.**" He narrated a special movie trailer, produced by the Donors Collaborative, which ran in all island movie theaters and can be seen on our website. The trailer addressed the importance and needs of our non-profit community.

Its natural beauty, historic charm and celebration of the arts make it a special place, but "The Vineyard" is more than that. It's catching your own dinner, the smell of the ocean, the feeling of walking barefoot, access to beaches and ponds, the sense of community, the small town feel of Alley's, the camaraderie of the Derby, the Ag Fair, the skate park, the ice arena or jumping off the bridge. Non-profits play an important role in providing and protecting all these classic Vineyard experiences and every shot in the trailer was taken at a non-profit or was of something they protect or make possible.



David Vigneault  
Dukes County Regional Housing Authority

*"Many working island families are having a hard time making ends meet. Our cost of living runs 60% higher than the national average while our wages are significantly lower." D. Vigneault – Dukes County Regional Housing Authority*

## "The Vineyard" is in jeopardy due to island economics...

The heart of "The Vineyard," however, is its people and our health, human services and housing organizations all provide an important safety net for the people who are the backbone of this island, our year round community.

(continued on page 3)

## The Vineyard's Holiday Wish List

We asked island non-profits about their needs and this is just a small portion of the response. See a complete listing at [www.mvdonors.org](http://www.mvdonors.org)

The **Regional Housing Authority** wants a \$2,300 swing set, activity tower and slide for a new playground shared by two adjoining properties and \$19,000 to landscape the Fisher Rd. townhouses.

**Vineyard Health Care Access** wishes for \$2,000 a month to provide an Emergency Assistance Fund to help uninsured or underinsured people with urgent medical needs.

The **Polly Hill Arboretum** wishes for a \$575 Dosatron Injector to accurately apply liquid fertilizer and a \$600 Davis Wireless Weather Station for evaluating plant hardiness and adaptability.

The **Island Food Pantry** wishes for a double door stainless steel heavy duty commercial refrigerator, \$2319.

The **Cape Cod & Islands Chapter of the American Red Cross** needs an emergency vehicle for disaster services on Martha's Vineyard and wishes for a new or gently used van/SUV .

The **Nantucket Soundkeeper** wishes for a boat trailer that can accommodate his 17' patrol boat. (continued on page 2)

## Meet Some Small Organizations Doing Important Work

Many people are surprised to learn we need **The Island Food Pantry** on Martha's Vineyard but with 50 volunteers, no paid staff and the support of many Vineyard businesses, organizations and individuals they serve hundreds of island families each winter who can't make ends meet due to high rents and fuel costs. They also provide granola bars to the elementary schools for breakfast supplements. Total visits to the pantry have been increasing over the years but revenues have not; 7 of the last 9 years they've run a deficit. Contact Armen Hanjian, Coordinator, at 508-696-8225

You may know **Martha's Vineyard Chamber Music Society** from their summer concert series but they also run an important program for the Vineyard Public Schools where string instrument lessons were completely cut in the 1970's. The Society developed an after school strings program that has expanded to include over 200 students, and is an integral part of the island school curriculum. They subsidize instrument rentals and provide promising students scholarships for music lessons. Contact Kathy Retmier, Executive Director, at 508-696-8055

Many Vineyard heads of household find themselves under financial and personal stress due to the high cost of living here. **Women Empowered** works to empower women (and men too), to gain control over their lives through instruction in basic life skills including: family budgeting, credit repair, checkbook balancing, decision making, problem solving, job search skills, coping skills and personal organizational skills. Women Empowered has no paid staff but helps over 100 Vineyarders get back on their feet each year. Contact M. Kaye Flathers, Director, at 508-696-8880.

**The Martha's Vineyard Donors Collaborative** is an advocacy organization devoted to strengthening the non-profit community on the Vineyard. It does this by increasing the total amount of money donated to Vineyard charitable organizations and by helping those organizations improve their own capabilities through workshops and technical assistance.

## Special Tax Break Expires 12/31/2007

If you're 70½ or older you still have time to make **tax free** contributions of up to \$100,000 directly to public charities from an IRA. The expiring law excludes the withdrawal from Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), so it's not taxed, and benefits donors of all levels of income. Restrictions apply so check with your tax advisor but this could be a great opportunity if you:

- Have excess retirement savings,
- Are subject to a 50% of income limit on contributions,
- Are subject to a phase out of itemized deductions,
- Have named a charity as beneficiary of your IRA; you can enjoy the donation during your life.



**Want To Be Anonymous or Save Time?** Direct your tax deductible donations through us. Write one check and we'll distribute the funds for you.

## Holiday Wish List (continued from p. 1)

**Sheriff's Meadow Foundation** wants a \$900 tractor shed, a new \$25,000 (or used) commercial wood chipper and DonorPerfect software for tracking donors and donations, \$10,000.

**Phyllis Vecchia Creative Drama** wishes for \$2,000 to supplement an intergenerational drama workshop that has seniors at Windemere putting on plays with preschoolers.

The **Marine and Paleobiological Research Institution** wishes for a \$99 refractometer to measure the water salinity.

**MV Girls Ice Hockey Booster Club** needs a set of equipment (excluding skates) for new players who can't afford gear, \$500.

**Second Chance Animal Rescue** wishes to build a much needed "no-kill" facility for the island. Also, they have a vet but need a medically equipped van for low cost early spay/neuter.

The **African Artists' Community Development Project** seeks \$500 scholarships to send Zambian orphans to high school and a chance at a better future.

**International Film Festival** wishes for a used van/SUV to transport equipment from venue to venue and accommodations on island to host visiting filmmakers.

**Windemere Nursing & Rehabilitation Center** wishes to renovate Unit 2, the assisted living wing. Originally built as a nursing home, the renovation will make individual units more homelike for the residents. Total cost of \$75,000.

Although active since 1975, the **Vineyard Council on Hunger** now needs its own 501(c)(3) and is looking for professional help with preparing and filing State and Federal forms.

**Island Affordable Housing** needs a scanner (new or used).

**Island Children's School** is looking for people to join their Board. They also need a canister vacuum cleaner, scanner and fax/answering machine.

**Hostelling International Martha's Vineyard** wishes for lawn furniture, a washing machine, crushed stone for the driveway and clean sand for the volleyball court. (continued on page 4)

Contact information is available at [mvdonors.org](http://mvdonors.org) or 508-645-3690

## What if we couldn't protect our scenic beauty?

### Trying to Keep the Vineyard Special

(continued from page 1)

Unfortunately, "The Vineyard" is in jeopardy due to island economics:

- The cost of living here is 60% higher than the national average; it's 12% more expensive to live here than in Boston BUT our wages are significantly lower - 31% below State average.
- Real estate skyrocketed; housing costs almost twice national average;
- We're the second fastest growing county in the state and that excludes a large and growing undocumented population.

The human toll is substantial. After rent, utilities and heat, about a third of Vineyard renters can't afford medical insurance or food:

- More than 1 in 4 island households earns less than \$25,000 a year.
- Food pantry usage was up 15% last winter. Over 150 children were served.

The stress of financial problems creates anxiety, fear, and depression. It can lead to increased domestic violence, our above-average levels of



*"The Vineyard is growing at a rate 7 times that of the rest of the state and the skyrocketing cost of real estate is making it harder and harder to save our critical open spaces."*

## What if we couldn't help people in need?



*"The demand for our services has really increased over the years because there are so many more people living on the island now. We need more funding and licensed staff in order to provide the most basic services."*

drug and alcohol abuse and broken homes. These aren't unemployed or homeless people; these are hard working/professional people we need: nurses, teachers, law enforcement, and carpenters. Island economics have forced many good people to go find a better life elsewhere. **We're losing our friends, important members of the community, our middle class.**

The same island economics jeopardize our non-profits; costs grow faster than revenues; some run big deficits, programs/services suffer or are cut:

- The Food Pantry has run a deficit 7 of the last 9 years due to increased demand and fuel costs .
- Rapid population growth and the stress of financial problems increase the demand for health & human services at the same time government funding is being cut or staying flat. Plus it's hard to recruit professional staff because of the high cost of living here.
- Skyrocketing real estate makes it harder to save our critical open spaces and preserve land for environmental or recreational purposes.
- The YMCA received a multi-year government grant to run the MV Public School's after school program but after the first year funding was cut back.

## What if we couldn't preserve our historic charm?

Many important Vineyard non-profits have small professional staffs or are run by volunteers. Rent is one of their biggest costs and recent big rent increases are eating directly into program costs and reducing basic services.

Island economics effect the entire non-profit community, including our arts and culture, civic, education and recreation organizations. They all need more revenue to provide basic services.

As the trailer showed, almost everything you love about "The Vineyard" is protected, maintained or made possible by non-profits; they play a pivotal role in maintaining the character of the island.

As you plan your annual giving we urge you to consider how important the Vineyard is to your family and make it an important part of your philanthropy as well. **Be an MV Donor.** Thank you.

**We'd like to acknowledge the MV Donors who helped make the movie trailer possible:**

- Jeremy Biggs
- Don Brown
- Comcast
- Jack Davies
- Ben Hall (Capawok, Island & Strand Theaters)
- Bob Lasala (Entertainment Cinemas-Edg.)
- Mike Wallace

## Holiday Wish List (continued from page 2)

Since more filmmakers have switched to HD, the **MV Independent Film Festival** needs a \$3,600 Sony HD videotape machine and they offer to share it with the other island film festivals.

**Audubon Society at Felix Neck** wishes for free or low rent housing for their summer camp counselors, five \$175 microscopes, a scanner, a new laptop, digital projector and personal microphones.

**Habitat for Humanity** is building a home in Vineyard Haven. They have labor but need doors, trim, plywood, bathroom fixtures, countertops, insulation and roofing shingles.

**The Yard** really needs two vehicles either cars, vans or trucks.

**Plum Hill Preschool** (Waldorff) wishes for a miracle. They are struggling due to increased rent and seek a permanent home. They also want new board members interested in furthering holistic, nature-based education.

The **Safe Haven Camp** for children with HIV/AIDS needs a new Mac computer, printing of 150 T-shirts for campers & staff and scholarships for campers (\$1,000 per camper a week).

## MARTHA'S VINEYARD DONORS COLLABORATIVE

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeremy Biggs

Meg Bodnar, Treasurer

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Peter Temple



What if we couldn't preserve our historic charm?

Did you see our movie trailer? Details inside!

Give A Gift to the Island From  
The Vineyard's Holiday Wish List

# BE AN MV DONOR

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*Celebrating & Enriching Our Island*

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