

Innisfree

VILLAGE VOICE
WINTER 2014

The Woodshop according to Denny



Andy and Chris L. are each adept at sanding our practical and beautiful bread boards.

I'm the woodshop guy and I'm also a Volunteer. I live in the village, I live in a house with coworkers, I cook meals, I clean... *and* I run the woodshop.

We try to provide a therapeutic work environment where everybody, no matter at what skill level, can help accomplish something, can be a part of creating a beautiful, tangible product as the result of our labor.

We're starting with raw lumber. We take that and turn it into something as functional as a nice cutting board or a small stir fry spatula. But whatever beautiful product we make, it's not nearly as important as the whole process. Everything takes a backseat to providing a therapeutic experience.

I have been clear in saying I am not a fine woodworker; rather in the woodshop I exude, "We are all in this together and I happen to be in charge."

As a manager, I guide and direct the woodshop, even without superior woodworking talents. This works at Innisfree because meaningful engagement is our #1 product.

When a visitor comes and tours the woodshop during our working hours, they see what we are doing. We are engaging people in all levels of production. No one level is more important than the other level because they all come together in the finished product. I can assure you I have had a tear in my eye as I watch Maggie blossom in her skills and in her relationships in the woodshop. We all grow.

If you're working with machines and you love tools, it doesn't get any better than this.

Continued on next page

Denny surrounded by his woodworkers.





Willie sands a lazy susan.



Sally completes her puzzle.

Others like different activities and there's a place for that, too. Today Sally can no longer do the tasks involved in wood-working but she still comes to the shop. Now she assembles puzzles. That keeps her mentally engaged and it draws other people to her, as it did with Bob. It's their way of engaging with us, with friends in a familiar setting.

It's my goal (and I'm not saying I accomplish it to perfection) to mesh the different personalities, the different skill levels, the different stages of life into what is



Paul and Maggie are a wonderful duo, complementing each other's talents in the woodshop.



Helping Hands

Laura and Denny arrived together at Innisfree in May 2006. Both have been invaluable in the running of the village ever since. Laura has become a strong leader in our weavery, an avid vegetable gardener in the early morning hours, the back bone of our trading post buying, bagging and organizing. She has waged a fierce battle against the invasive species on our land and been the steady, long term involved in the guidance of Sunflower. Laura is a member of the Board of Directors. Besides all the "official" roles Laura has capably assumed, she is the heart and soul of our village, providing a kind shoulder or a firm hand and knowing which is needed. How lucky we have been.

called the woodshop. Given the potential for mishaps, the fact that we do it safely is perhaps my greatest accomplishment.



Kim loves her job of sanding.

January Happenings

Peter Manuel was very excited to introduce his idea to the Activities Committee—An Intercultural Evening with foods, songs and dance from our various countries! Peter is a volunteer in Sunflower and a native of India. He planned for over a month and wanted everything to be just so. What he couldn't control was the weather, so our intended Intercultural Evening became an Intercultural Luncheon due to snowy weather. We had food from Slovakia, Belarus, Japan, Switzerland, India, Norway, Ireland, England, the 'north country' of the Michigan U.P. and lots from Germany (wow, the German guys made meatballs and sauerkraut and home-made pretzels). Our blessing was in Hebrew and Nich performed some Irish and Vermont tunes. Thanks to Peter for a great idea and a very fine luncheon.



Baker Brooke surveys the morning's creations.



Silver Medalist Chris and his friends celebrate after the Xperience Tennis tournament in January.



Picturesque food from our Intercultural Event, Norwegian smørbrød and Indian rosquilla



Brett celebrated his birthday and 35 years at Innisfree this past January. Congratulations Brett!

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a newsletter of
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Robert B. Nelson III

September 25, 1954 - January 9, 2014

His happy smiles, his infectious chuckles when amused, his genuine affection for everyone around him, our friend Bob Nelson would rise to the occasion no matter how challenging or difficult especially when it involved a meal!

Known as Rob to his family and BOB to us, sister Sue sent this remembrance.

Very generous, always helpful, and ever-looking his dignified best.

"Can I help you set the table for dinner?"

*"Can I help you chop the onions?"
(He loved chopping onions!)*

Such a gentleman, a serious fellow who had a very strong sense of himself, Rob made it very clear he expected to be respected as the adult he was. Yet, with a twinkle in his eye, he possessed a delightful sense of humor.

Raising his glass at the family holiday dinner, recalling what his dad would always say, Rob would toast with gusto, "Thank goodness we still have each other!"

Rob lived for 37 years at Innisfree, a life-sharing community for adults with

Bob continued to enjoy his time in the woodshop, especially relishing break time with some peanuts and his friends.



disabilities and working farm nestled against the Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains. Innisfree was Rob's home and extended family where he thrived happily and well. He was a regular in the bakery and wood shop and it was at Innisfree that he would distinguish himself by insisting he be called "Bob." As he grew older and his distinctive beard grew longer and grayer, he was Susanna's Uncle Bob-o and our Grampa Bob-o.

We are blessed he lived a rich long life of 59 years.

2013 Donors

Thank you. Thank you! THANK YOU! The year 2013 ended with us counting our blessings... and you, those listed on these pages, top our list. We are grateful for your support which has assured the continuation of our lifesharing mission. With your help the village is humming: bread baking, lunch cooking, herbs drying, wool spinning, fiber artists weaving, gardeners planting, woodworkers sanding, clay firing, coworkers singing. The magic continues. To our friends, old and new listed below, you have helped to make it all possible. Again, THANK YOU!

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Willie sits proudly by the meeting room table that the woodshop refurbished and he artistically decorated.



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Spectacular winter sunrise January, 2014