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The Alumnus

A quarterly alumni publication of Vermont Technical College

SUMMER 2010 VOL. 7 ISSUE 1



ALUMNI HOMECOMING DAY 2010

Alumni are invited to return to campus October 2 to take part in the 2010 Alumni Homecoming Day celebration.

"Now is the time to contact your former classmates and make arrangements to meet on the Randolph campus and catch up on what has been going on in your lives," said Carrie Clement, Vermont Tech Alumni Coordinator. "Alumni Day activities are structured to give alums time to sit and visit with others, but also provide the opportunity to tour campus, view fall foliage, pick apples, visit with faculty, and enjoy a mid-day luncheon."

While most activities throughout the day are free to alumni and their families, there is a charge for the alumni luncheon. Tickets for the luncheon can be purchased for \$12 per person or \$20 per couple. To attend the luncheon, alumni must pre-

(story continued pg. 2)

This publication is provided to you by:
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GOING TO THE DOGS

Alumna rescues one dog at a time

Ask Heather Bent about her earliest memory, and you'll soon see she was destined to work with animals. Most of her memories involve a young Heather, scrambling around her house, trying to resuscitate the mice that had been caught in the family's mousetraps.

"My parents were pretty well disgusted with me when they realized what I was doing," she said.

Even so, there was no denying her love for animals, and it made perfect sense when she enrolled in Vermont Tech's Veterinary Technology Program in 2001. Today, Heather has taken her passion for animals a step further by opening a dog rescue organization, Potter's Angels Rescue (PAR).

Named for her beloved Shar Pei, Potter, who died nearly a decade ago, Potter's Angels Rescue is a nonprofit that's dedicated to placing unwanted or neglected dogs in loving and everlasting homes. Opened for just one year, PAR has already placed 30 dogs in permanent homes and is working to place five more.

Heather's crusade as a dog rescuer started gradually, as her professional work

introduced her to the many dogs in Central Vermont in need of a good home. After graduating from Vermont Tech in 2003, she worked for a short time as a veterinary



Heather holds Moose (a.k.a. Cole) above at a fundraiser for Potter's Angels Rescue in February 2010.

technician at a local clinic, but she says she never really felt satisfied with her work.

"I loved helping animals," she said, "but these animals were lucky enough to have people that obviously loved them, and I knew that there were so many out there that didn't have that."

So she left the clinic and started her own business as a pet sitter and groomer, and in 2004 she accepted her current position as an animal caretaker at a private

(story continued pg. 3)

ALUMNUS/A OF THE YEAR Nominations Sought!

The Alumni Association Executive Board is now accepting nominations for the **2010 Alumnus/a of the Year**. A nominee must be a graduate of VSA, VATI, or VTC and must be at least 10 years from graduation. Nominees should have contributed something significant to their profession, community or college. Send your letter of nomination to the Alumni Office via snail mail or email.

**Deadline is
August 31, 2010**

(Alumni Homecoming story continued, pg. 1)

register and pay by September 24.

During lunch, alumni will be entertained by a local band. Alums will also enjoy a history slide show with photographs of the school dating back to its inception.

To register for the day's events, fill out the registration form on the back of this newsletter or print a copy from our website (www.vtc.edu) and send it to the Alumni Office. Prompt replies are appreciated as planning continues. The form can also be used to bring annual and lifetime dues payments up-to-date or make a contribution to the annual fund.

On Alumni Homecoming Day, alumni and their guests should report to the SHAPE Campus Center to sign in. Follow the signs to the back side of campus - near the apple orchard.

**Do YOU want to help guarantee a good turnout?
Help contact members of your class.
We'll even provide you with the list!**

At registration, alumni will be given an up-to-date schedule of events and refreshments. Class notes and yearbooks will be available for perusal.

"As always, we can provide alumni names, addresses, and phone numbers for those who would like to contact other members of their class" said Clement. "This step can help guarantee a good turn-out for the event."

Alumni Homecoming Day coincides with Vermont's foliage season and local accommodations are often booked weeks in advance. For a listing of local accommodations, alums should contact the Alumni & Development office.

Also, October 2 is the college's fall open house. Alumni are invited to participate in the campus tours and to visit with faculty about their academic programs.

ALUMNI NEWSBRIEFS

HELP - We Need YOUR Class Notes!

Send us your news about jobs, moves, weddings, babies, and other important events to the Alumni Office...and don't forget to include your photos! Submit your news online at www.vtc.edu/keep-in-touch or mail to PO Box 500, Randolph Center, VT 05061.

NEW Benefit for Alumni

Vermont Technical College Alumni Association benefits include savings on auto and home insurance! As a member of the Vermont Technical College Alumni Association, you qualify for a special group discount* on your auto, home, and renter's insurance through Group Savings Plus® from Liberty Mutual. This unique program allows you to purchase high-quality auto, home, and renters insurance at low group rates through the convenience of electronic funds transfer or direct billing at home. For a free, no-obligation coverage evaluation and rate quote, please contact Charlie Desmarais CPCU at 800-213-4896 or visit us online at www.libertymutual.com/lm/GSP-CharlesDesmarais

* Group discounts, other discounts, and credits are available where state laws and regulations allow, and may vary by state. Certain discounts apply to specific coverages only. To the extent permitted by law, applicants are individually underwritten; not all applicants may qualify. Coverage provided and underwritten by Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and its affiliates, 175 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA

Preliminary

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 9-11 a.m. | Registration in Campus Center |
| 9 a.m.-5 p.m. | SHAPE Open for Use (Swimming, Raquetball, Fitness Center) |
| 9:30-11 a.m. | Class Reunions for classes ending in 4 or 9 |
| 10 a.m.-Noon | Farm Tours |
| 10 a.m.-2 p.m. | Guided Campus Tours |
| 10 a.m.-2 p.m. | Hartness Library Open |
| 10 a.m.-3 p.m. | Bookstore Open |
| 10 a.m.-5 p.m. | Apple Picking in Orchard |
| 11 a.m.-3 p.m. | Academic Presentations |
| 11:30 | Class Photos |
| Noon | Varsity Baseball Doubleheader |
| Noon-1 p.m. | Alumni Luncheon |
| 1-2 p.m. | Annual Meeting |
| 2 p.m. | Alumni Soccer Game |
| TBD | VAST Alumni Class Reunion |

Please note that this is a tentative schedule of events; an updated schedule will be handed out at registration.



home in Woodstock. But out of the blue, she started receiving calls about needy dogs from people who had heard about her through the local grapevine. She worked with a number of owners who could no longer care for their pets, doing research and finding the dogs new homes. She even tried her hand at fundraising when she came across two dogs that needed medical treatment for heartworm.

“The thing that I love most about working with people involved in animal rescue is that there are no egos...we all work together with one goal in mind: to help as many animals as we can.”



“I realized that there was a real need for what I was doing, and I decided to advertise in ‘It’s Classified,’” she said. “And Potter’s Angels Rescue was born.”

As the sole volunteer for PAR, Heather does all the legwork to find homes that work for each individual dog. She takes them to a veterinarian when they need medical care, and she makes sure that all of the dogs are spayed or neutered before they are put up for adoption. She covers her expenses with adoption fees, fundraisers and coin boxes at a number of Randolph-area businesses: M&M Beverage, Blue Moon Boutique, Fenix Fine Foods and Drop Dead Gorgeous beauty salon.

“When someone is interested in one of ‘my’ dogs, I start by doing an over-the-phone interview,” she said. “It gives me an idea as to what kind of dog would work for them and their lifestyle.”

Then she checks their references and, if everything looks good, she sets up a home visit with the dog.

“This gives me a chance to meet the potential adopters and see where the dogs will be staying,” she said, “and it also allows the potential adopters to meet the dogs and get to know them.”

One of Heather’s greatest needs is finding foster homes to care for the dogs until she can find them permanent homes. While she would love to keep every dog, she already has five of her own, and she occasionally fosters one or two more. Any more dogs, she said, may mean an end to any peace on the home front.

“I would prefer to stay happily married for at least a few more years,” she laughed.

A Vermont native, Heather made the decision to enter Vermont Tech’s Veterinary Technology Program for a practical reason.

“I figured that if I’m going to spend a large majority of my life working,” she said, “I might as well be doing something that I enjoy.”

Before college, she had worked for two years in a local factory, and while she respected the employees who stayed there for their careers, she knew she couldn’t spend the rest of her days in a factory. “It basically scared me back to school,” she said.

She credits Vermont Tech with leading her to both her full-time job, which she loves, and her wonderful volunteer job with PAR. “I would not be where I am today had I not graduated from VTC,” she said. The animal behavior class at Vermont Tech has been especially useful in her work.

“Many of the animals I place come with bad behaviors that have been unintentionally

reinforced throughout their lives,” she said. “I use my knowledge to teach people how to work with and understand their animals.”

She also comes across dogs with diseases that she needs to educate people about, and having the medical background from Vermont Tech has made that easy for her. She fondly remembers her veterinary technology professors, especially Dr. St. Denis and Professor Stalnaker, who were especially helpful during her time in college.

For the past six years, Heather has worked full time for a couple in Woodstock—two people who she says truly love their pets.

“I do many things for them,” she said, “but my main job is grooming, medicating and feeding their two Lhasa Apsos.” One of her charges is currently being treated for bladder cancer, and Heather makes regular trips south to Massachusetts to bring her for treatments at the Tufts University veterinary school.

Thanks to her two jobs, she has been fortunate enough to meet a huge network of people with interests similar to her own. Her Facebook page has attracted a great many “friends,” not to mention adoptive pet owners. She has received financial support through her fundraisers, business support from Vermont Volunteer Services for Animals, and even signed artwork from artist and dog lover Stephen Huneck. She has also gotten help with a new logo, and she’s working collaboratively with a friend on a new website.

“The thing that I love most about working with people involved in animal rescue is that there are no egos,” she said. “We all work together with one goal in mind: to help as many animals as we can.”

By Kelly Collar

To see the dogs that are available for adoption, visit Heather’s page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PottersAngelsRescue or look up Potter’s Angels Rescue on adopt-a-pet.com.

Dean of Academic Affairs Pat Menchini has been named Vermont Technical College’s Interim President. The position is expected to last six months to a year as a national search unfolds for a new president to succeed Ty Handy, who took over as President of Northwest Florida State College in Niceville, FL earlier in June.



Menchini followed an unusual route to the interim president’s spot—unusual at least for Vermont Tech, whose presidents have tended to reflect the college’s focus on technical education and engineering. Menchini is a nurse by profession and joined the college in 1993 when it took over the Putnam School of Nursing in Bennington, VT. In that year she was named Director of Nursing Programs, a position she held until 2003.

As Director of Nursing, Pat was responsible for coordinating three separate and distinct programs into one unified program and curriculum. Under her guidance, Vermont Tech’s associate degree in nursing has more than doubled in size.

In 2003 Menchini was named Associate Dean of Allied Health and Director of Nursing Programs, advancing to full Dean of Allied Health and Director of Nursing Programs in 2004. In 2006 she was appointed Dean of Academic Affairs, responsible for coordinating all of the college’s academic programs as well as 86 full time faculty and approximately 60 part time faculty.

During her tenure as Interim President, Menchini will focus on addressing the decline in numbers of students coming out of Vermont (and New England) high schools, as well as oversee the

college’s many ongoing capital projects.

“We hope to meet the declining enrollment challenge in two ways,” Menchini said. “We’ll look at expanding our dual enrollment programs, in which high school students take VTC distance-learning courses which lead to full credit. And we’ll continue to move towards becoming a four-year baccalaureate college.”

On the capital expenditure side, Menchini will oversee renovations to several campus buildings, as well as improvements to the school’s infrastructure. Future projects may also include the purchase of an anaerobic biodigester—part of the college’s new sustainability emphasis—and an \$800,000 upgrade for the library. The college also plans to rebuild the Vermont Enterprise Center, a business incubator building, which burned down two years ago.

“It’s going to be a busy year,” Menchini said, “but there’s a lot of energy and excitement on campus. Applications for the coming year are up over last year with some programs already filled or wait-listed. We’re bringing the Diesel Power program to Randolph, which will be a great help to students and faculty. And our Williston campus continues to grow and expand. All and all, I think we’re well positioned for the years – and challenges—ahead.”



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Are you a family member of an alumnus/a? If a VTC alumnus/a is no longer at this address, please pass this newsletter along and share their new address with us. Thank you!



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ALUMNI HOMECOMING DAY 2010 REGISTRATION FORM

- Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ ticket(s) to the Alumni luncheon at \$12 each, \$20 per couple.
- Enclosed is \$25 for my annual dues.
- Enclosed is \$150 for my lifetime dues.
- Enclosed is \$ _____ for the annual fund.
- I am handicapped and would like assistance on Alumni Day.

Name: _____

Major & Year: _____

Address: _____

Guest's Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Clip and send to: Alumni & Development Office, Vermont Technical College, PO Box 500, Randolph Center, VT 05061

