

# PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP

Promoting economic growth, leadership and education within the City of Portsmouth

Newsletter No. 28

[www.portsmouthpartnership.org](http://www.portsmouthpartnership.org)

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## ROBBIN THOMPSON DRAWS OVER 800 TO PortsEvents' COURTYARD CONCERT

[Richmond's Robbin Thompson has a large Hampton Roads fan base](#)

ALTHOUGH RICHMOND SINGER-SONGWRITER

Robbin Thompson has played, recorded and collaborated with some of the best-known people in the music business, these days his favorite pastime – other than sailing the Chesapeake Bay - consists of playing smaller, more intimate venues with just a microphone and a guitar. Accordingly, when contacted about performing at one of PortsEvents' 2011 First Friday "Concerts in the Courtyard," he was determined to find a date that would work prior to embarking on a European tour in the fall. A description of Olde Towne's Courthouse Gallery and Courtyard cinched it: "I LOVE doing gigs like that, and I love coming to Hampton Roads," he said.

ROBBIN'S VISIT TO OLDE TOWNE brought a lot of fans to the Courthouse Gallery, too: 816 people who attended the concert that night also visited the museum's PULPFICTION: THE ART OF PAPER exhibit, roughly double each of the previous two months' attendance.

PortsEvents' COURTYARD CONCERTS, begun in April of this year, have brought over 2,400 visitors to the Courthouse Galleries' exhibits, and generated over \$4,100 in beverage donations to the city. From November '11 through March '12 performances will move indoors to the adjacent Arts Annex, and feature jazz from the Woody Beckner Quartet in November, a family Winter Wonderland opening event with Skye Zentz in December and, skipping the month of January, return in February with local jazzman Jae Sinnett and his group.

PortsEvents' mission is to put "feet on the street" in Olde Towne, and the teaming of its weekly Olde Towne Farmers' Market with the Courtyard Concert series has given visitors many new reasons to discover why pedestrian-friendly Olde Towne's shops, restaurants, theater and museums are always worth a visit.





# PARTNERSHIP CHECK TO FUND “INNOVATOR GRANTS”

PROCEEDS FROM THE PARTNERSHIP’S recent fund-raiser at Mario’s will support nearly seven “innovator grants” within the Portsmouth Public School System, says Portsmouth Schools’ Foundation’s Executive Director Maureen Mizelle.

Portsmouth Schools Foundation Exec Director Maureen Mizelle cites “Innovator Grant” – funded projects for the Partnership. Phil Rudisill and Gary Leggett look on.

INNOVATOR GRANTS FUND projects which shoot beyond the pervasive “teach to the test” mentality, employing an interdisciplinary approach toward encouraging kids to stretch their powers of creative thought in new and unique ways. At the Partnership’s September board meeting Mrs. Mizelle cited, as an example, a Wilson High School project in which kids who, wanting to expand upon their classroom study of whales, decided to build a life-sized replica of a whale. First, plans for a smaller scale model were ordered. Then, the students “did the math” to determine how much plastic material would be required to build a life-sized model. Finally, sheets of heavy-duty plastic were ordered, spliced together, and inflated to produce a room-filling, life-like replica. After a few days’ display in Wilson’s commons area, the unit was taken to Hodges Manor Elementary School where learning stations were set up allowing the high school students to give presentations to – and answered questions from – the younger kids.

IN THE END, IMAGINATION was teamed with math, hands-on crafting, writing, public speaking and more to produce a project which engaged both high school *and* elementary students. The cost? Just \$500 – the typical amount of an innovator grant. The Partnership is glad to have a local organization like the Schools Foundation which supports such programs, proud to have schools full of kids who can “think up such good stuff,” and especially grateful to have an administration which encourages creative thought in the classroom. We’re eager to hear about the next seven projects!



In the belly of the whale . . .



The whale takes shape at Wilson High School



The whale with kids at Hodges Manor



## SCHOOLS FOUNDATION HONORS DAN HOFFLER

THE PORTSMOUTH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION is pleased to announce that Dan Hoffler – Churchland, 1967 – has been named Distinguished Alumnus for 2011. An event in his honor has been scheduled on December 7, 2011 at Portsmouth’s Renaissance Hotel. For information regarding tickets and sponsorship opportunities, please call Maureen Mizelle at 393-5356.



PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP - CITY OF PORTSMOUTH - PHRA  
**GPDC 13 years 1,000 jobs \$14,000,000 tax revenue**

