



# KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

**N**ancy Flasher is the coordinator of a community-based elective class for Provincetown High School Grades 10-12 called The Academy of Art, Science and Technology. Students participating in the course have the opportunity to develop a project of interest to them with a community mentor who has expertise in the student's area of need. Now in its third year, the Academy has proven successful and has branched out into a second program of special interest for motivated students.

A small and special grant was used to develop the program "After School Adventures" for 7th and 8th graders. The students committed themselves to a weekly meeting with their mentor for a 12-week period. All students showing interest were asked to apply by written, video or oral essay during the 2 hour weekly session. They were also asked to work with a community specialist either one-on-one or in a small team. They were also expected to keep a progress and ideas journal and, at completion of their selected study, to present an exhibit of their work. They were asked firmly if they could dedicate themselves to this explicit activity and share their knowledge while passing judge-

ment on the process. Each project was followed and reported to Principal Michael Marino.

Attendance was good, enthusiasm remained high and the staff concluded that all the projects met with success. Observing the students, I noticed a slip into a deeper maturity when we began to discuss "their subject." I observed a feeling of self-importance in a balanced way. Research is a skill that will be more natural in their future studies and also on their summer jobs. Their learning process was aided by this special time with one person working on one subject with one student. Some students reported plans to go on by themselves within their areas of interest. The students were relaxed and knowledgeable and eager to tell you of their projects. The changes in student expectations and outcome were most interesting as each student learned and matured by the process.

Of the many applicants, the students chosen for the after school adventures were Andrea Ribas and Bethany Pazolt to study veterinary science with Karen Silva of K.C.'s Kennels on Shankpainter Road. Tommy Czyoski had two mentors, Margie Erhart for writing and Anne Lord for clay figure modeling, Tommy illustrated his stories with sets and figures. Bobbie Taylor and Tyler Roderick studied web-page design with Jack Magill. Tyler Roderick's website ideals with wrestling. "I've used computers since first grade," he says, "I love watching wrestling with my grandfather Philbert and so I wanted to build on the subject. Wrestling has its own language, it's commands, it's like another language. My Uncle Randy is taking classes in HTML, so now he

can help me too. Beside keeping up with my computer skills, I'll have a summer job walking dogs at K.C.'s Kennels."

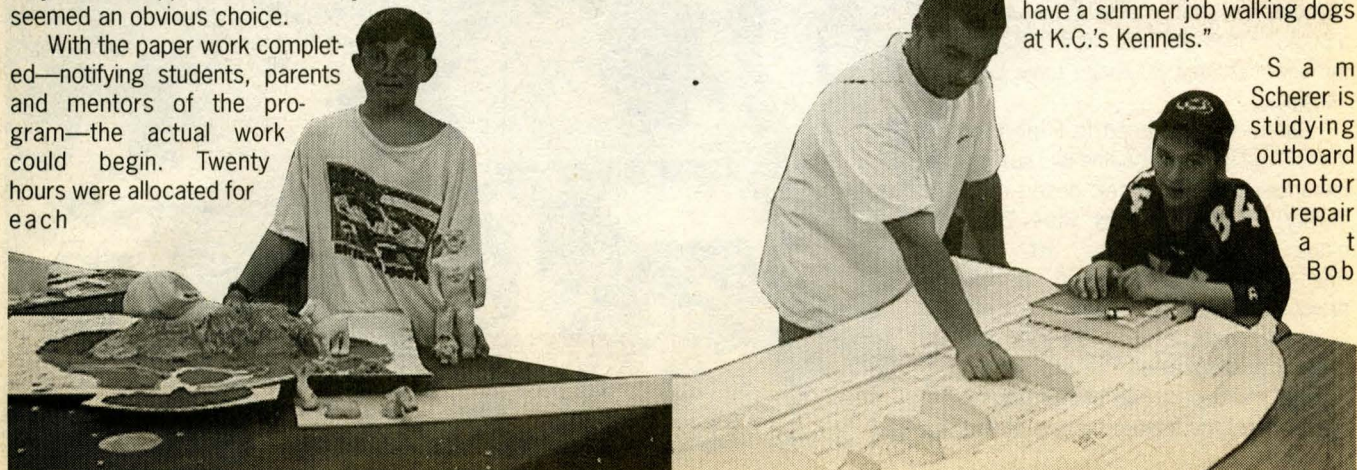
Sam Scherer is studying outboard motor repair at Bob

**The changes in student expectations and outcome were most interesting as each student learned and matured by the process.**

ment on the process.

Once they felt they could focus themselves for their after-school commitment, their application and essay would be viewed or read and then discussed with a small group of the program staff. Only 10 to 12 students were eventually selected when each child identified his/her field of interest. The program staff searched through mentors who had applied and matched up student to mentor. Some community members were asked even if they had not applied because they seemed an obvious choice.

With the paper work completed—notifying students, parents and mentors of the program—the actual work could begin. Twenty hours were allocated for each



Well's North Truro Garage. Michael Vinagre and Cid Rodrigues are studying model boat construction. Besides knowledge, a lasting friendship will come of this pairing, since both young men come from fishing families. Michael Vinagre's family boat is the *Rock 'N' Roller* out of New Bedford. , With his grandfather at the helm, they fish Provincetown waters in the summer season. His father spends his summer on the wharf buying fish and steers the boat to New Jersey for winter fishing. Michael has spent up to 3 days at sea on fishing trips, "Well, 3 days, it's not the greatest thing in the world, but the boat is 80' long and comfortable so you don't get seasick."

Cid's father works the *Blue Skies* out of Provincetown. Both boys are getting the warning to "stay away" from fishing. Difficult work, a dying occupation and several government restrictions are steering the plans of these young men. Both still have a strong interest in boats and in the sea. Cid has been building models of his own design, much more detailed and complicated than those available in kits. "From his head," he says. He plans to become a naval architect. He feels he already "knows a lot" and has a talent in this field.

Michael was impressed by Cid's work and asked Cid teach him, hence a student mentor to a student. Cid chose a simpler design to start the process. The result will be a 2' long electrified functional boat. With Cid on the varsity baseball team and Michael on the middle school team, both are split between studies and jobs. They wish for more time. "We always need more time," both stated. Michael works for the Portuguese Princess catching lines and Cid works at Flyer's Boat Yard renting boats and instructing the renters. Both gave an enthusiastic "yes" to suggesting the After-School Adventures Program to others. Bethany Pazolt and Andrea Ribas have been working with mentor Karen Silva at K.C.'s Kennel. They bathe, brush and clip the nails of dogs and cats. "Depending on what the owner wants," Bethany told me. "I've been doing this all my life. I did research on mice. I had up to 50 until I separated the boys from the girls and paired them in different tanks. You have to put the females in the upper tank because the female scent rises. It's gross, you can get so many mice. I have just two now, both boys, no problems. I've worked with birds too, I want to major in veterinary science. There's a school in Ohio with a good reputation. I'll be studying 8 to 12 years. I'll study science, business and go through an internship."

Bethany is saving for her tuition. She works as a bus girl at the "Wee Packet" Restaurant in Dennis. The after school program gave Bethany and Andrea a chance to reevaluate and reaffirm their interest in their future careers.

Tommy Czyoski has two mentors. Not



**Nancy Flasher was amazed at the level of commitment by both students and mentors. As for the future of the program... this springs from a federal grant which may be a one-time-only event.**

only is he writing a story but he is illustrating it with a sculptured landscape and clay model figures of a giant, a hobbit, ghosts, dragons and a horse. Margie Erhart mentors the writing, Anne Lord mentors the sculpture. Tommy story tells of a medieval boy who, having lost his mother at an early age, was raised by a protective grandfather who has died, and he ventures into the woods. His name is Troyden—a boy on a journey. The hobbit and the giant live together; the hobbit hiding in the giant's armor viewing the world through a diamond in the giant's chest. "This is a magical tale of woods and a journey. all of life in the tale is magical. I'm going to camp for a month so I'll have to leave it. When I come back, I'll continue. I have it stored on the computer." A young Joseph Campbell, retelling the tale of the rite of passage. The tale will most likely grow, change and mature after Tommy's adventures of camp in Maine.

A wide variety of topics for a young group of people. The enthusiasm remained high because each student could pursue a special interest—no force, all ease. While less formal than the Academy; the students are younger and they are funded by a starter-grant program. The students are to be commended because of their commitment and interest and also because they also balance sports, homework, and home duties to pursue their interest. Each noted that the relationship to their mentors was a good experience.

Nancy Flasher was amazed at the level of commitment by both students and mentors. As for the future of the program... this springs from a federal grant which may be a one-time-only event. The final day and exhibition was a tribute to students, mentors and school faculty. Negativity and disappointment were nowhere to be found. Learning was accomplished and self-pride emerged naturally.

