



# SHIFTING SANDS



## A Spiritual Message

### Why We Do What We Do

Whenever we are involved in a charitable activity, it is good to ask ourselves occasionally why we do what we do. And there are always several answers. We reach out to the developmentally disabled because we recognize the need; they are people who in certain areas of their lives are unable to do for themselves what others take for granted. We help because society — governments, other agencies, families— are not always able to do all that is necessary. We are charitable because it makes us feel good, we enjoy seeing the smiles on young faces and sensing enthusiasm of their gratitude. We do more because the disabled are members of our family, and in some way we feel a family —and loving— obligation.

All good reasons. But as religious people we have the added incentive of being charitable because God has been good to us and tells us to be good to others. “To do unto others as we would have them do to us” is a basic Christian tenet. Jesus told his disciples that they should love one another “as I have loved you,” and that doesn’t leave much room for holding back or stinginess. No

Alhambran or member of Porto Charities that I know of has yet been asked to give her or his life.

Parents, of course, understand this kind of love. There is a reason why God revealed himself to Abraham as a father and why scripture uses mother images to show us divine love: there is no more intense or permanent or unconditional love in our human experience. I think one of the blessings of the “new” Porto and of Porto Charities is that so many of the members have children who are developmentally disabled. They understand their needs because they have grown and struggled with them perhaps even more than the children themselves. And we who are without such family members reap the benefits of personal association, of getting to know the parents who love and the children who are loved. And the young people in their simplicity show us all a face of God that is too often obscured by the material striving and sophistication of first-world culture that has lost sight what is really valuable.

It’s good to look at the why of what we do. All our reasons for charity —and

## IN THIS ISSUE

A Spiritual Message	1
Housing Committee Report	1
Porto Charities, Inc., President’s Message	2
Dates to Remember	2
Member Profile	3
Grand Commander’s Message	4
Committee Chairs Need Your Help!	4
Your Porto Charities Website	5
Upcoming Events	6
Porto 104 Membership Application	7
Porto Charities Membership Application	8
About Porto 104 & Porto Charities	9

fraternity— are good, but to bring them into our religious perspective is to turn altruism into worship, to give our passing activities an eternal glow.

*Fr. Edwin Dill, ST*

## Housing Committee Report

Our committee (Ron Gutkowski, Stephanie Lee, and Mike Eisenberg) is pleased to announce that our survey exploring the needs and financial capacity of local families with ID or DD member(s) was mailed to Porto 104 and Porto Charities (PCI) families. Additionally, many local agencies serving this special community are making it available to their respective members via an electronic version.

Should a Porto 104 or PCI member choose to complete the survey electronically, please identify yourself within the survey as being a member to receive preferential treatment.

Survey results will be tabulated and analyzed by Dr. Heidi Graff of the George Mason University’s LIFE Program. We have

asked for replies/responses by May 31, 2012. Shortly thereafter, the results will be posted to the Porto Charities website.

PCI will utilize the results to prioritize its housing initiatives.

You are encouraged to promote the survey and reference the link below to view the survey:

[http://spedsurvey.gmu.edu/Snap/2012/housing\\_survey/](http://spedsurvey.gmu.edu/Snap/2012/housing_survey/)  
(Press “Control” and click to access the survey.)

Kudos to Stephanie Lee for her tireless effort in coordinating with Dr. Graff and her staff. ■

### Porto Charities, Inc., President’s Message

On Saturday April 28th, along with many of you, I had the wonderful pleasure of attending the Special Olympics Track and Field Meet at Episcopal School in Alexandria. It was a chilly day and rain threatened but it did not dampen the spirits and excitement of our Special Olympians. They were all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed as the saying goes, fully fitting that description as they were eager and full of energy as well as ready to do their best. While I have attended many prior meets, I always find that each is unique although the commonality of the Special Olympians is always consistent like a fine wine, rich with enthusiasm and anticipation. Each participant excelled and proudly triumphed. It never ceases to amaze me that the effort put out by the athletes is extraordinary. For their accomplishment I heartily congratulate them for a job well done. Kudos also go to the fine coaches and the many volunteers who make this a memorable event for the Special Olympians.

If you have not done so, please remember to complete the Survey distributed by the Porto Charities Housing Committee.

You can access the survey at [http://spedsurvey.gmu.edu/Snap/2012/housing\\_survey/](http://spedsurvey.gmu.edu/Snap/2012/housing_survey/). The Committee put forth a herculean effort to design, develop, and distribute the survey so please help by completing the survey and encourage others to do so as well. Dr. Heidi Graff, Director of the GMU Mason LIFE program, and her staff will complete a statistical analysis of the results for us. I enthusiastically applaud the Housing Committee members and Dr. Graff for their diligent endeavor to complete this very important initiative.

I am indeed pleased to report that Porto Charities recently was surprised to receive a most generous contribution of \$14,000 from an anonymous donor who certainly believes in our cause and the work that we do. I am sure you all join me in publicly thanking this person for this overwhelming gesture of goodwill.

I hope to see you all at the Porto Derby on May 12!

*Carmen DiPlacido*

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### MEETINGS

**WHERE:**

**Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) De Sales room/downstairs classroom (DS), Vienna, VA**

**WHEN:**

**Second Thursday of every other month. Next meetings:**

- ❖ Thursday, June 14 — Porto 104 Divan, 7-8 PM; PCI, 8-9 PM
- ❖ Thursday, August 9 — Porto 104 Divan, 7-8 PM; PCI, 8-9 PM
- ❖ Thursday, November 8 — Porto 104 Divan, 7-8 PM; PCI, 8-9 PM

### EVENTS

- ❖ Saturday, May 12 — Porto Derby Trivia Contest, 6-10 PM
- ❖ Saturday, August 4 — Lake Anna Party, 11 AM to 8 PM (swimming and boat rides)
- ❖ Sunday, September 30 — Bishop’s Mass and Reception, 5-7 PM
- ❖ Friday, October 5 — Golf Tournament, 9 AM to 3 PM
- ❖ Saturday, October 27 — Oktoberfest 6-10 PM (bingo)
- ❖ Saturday, December 15 — Christmas Party, 6-10 PM (band)

### ARE YOU AWARE OF EVENTS OF INTEREST?

In order to maximize the number of social opportunities available to our young and not-so-young members with intellectual disabilities, the Porto 104 and Porto Charities Board is working very hard at coordinating its events with others in the community. To this effect, Leo Alonso, who has both the PCI and the GMU LIFE calendars, is in contact with Chris Desmarais, Director of the Options Program at Paul VI HS, and Donna Patchett, head of the parents group at the Davis Center, to ensure that we avoid as many overlaps as possible and that there is an event every 3 to 4 weeks for our young adults to enjoy.

If there is an event in the community that could be of interest to our group and that we may not be aware of, please pass on the information to the editor of the newsletter ([adkins\\_blanch@verizon.net](mailto:adkins_blanch@verizon.net)) or to Leo Alonso at [bettyleo@aol.com](mailto:bettyleo@aol.com). ■



## MEMBER PROFILE

### Emily Dalgetty

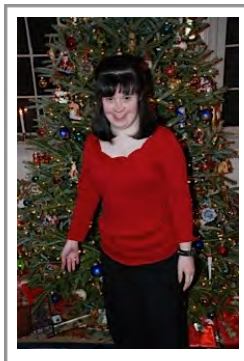
Emily Dalgetty not only loves her own birthday (she celebrated her 26th in April), but she loves keeping track of all the birthdays in her family. That includes four older siblings and their spouses, and eleven nieces and nephews! Emily's sister Susan lives only five minutes away, so she goes there frequently for dinner and sleepovers. Her



other two sisters live in North Carolina and her brother is in Leesburg. She keeps a calendar by her bed, and writes the name of each family mem-

ber and friend on his or her birth date. Then she gives constant reminders to her mom to send cards, buy gifts, and make phone calls!

Every year for Christmas her brother makes a pictorial calendar for her, which she uses not only to record birthdays, but for dances, parties,



Alhambra events, and Challenger softball games. This is her fourth season playing softball, with Coach Mary Jane Gutkowski.

Emily's schooling was at Vienna Elementary and Thoreau Middle School; then she graduated from the Paul VI High School Options program in 2005 and went on to three years of job training at the Davis Center. In September 2008, Wildflour Bakery, where she works Monday through Friday from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm, hired her. Emily loves her job, the support staff and working along side so many friends. Over these past years she has helped make empanadas, sandwiches and cookies, but her favorite job is making dog biscuits. After they have baked and cooled, she helps count and package them. She also does clean up work, washing bowls and cooking utensils and keeping her worktable clean.

After work Emily just likes to relax with her large collection of movies and DVDs. She enjoys watching and re-watching the videos of her four siblings' weddings, because she was a bridesmaid in each of their weddings, starting when she was nine years old up until the last one two years ago when her brother got married.

In the summer Emily enjoys going out with family or friends on her par-



ent's boat and swimming and tubing in the Potomac River. She always looks forward to family beach vacations. This year she will be returning to Bald Head Island, NC, and since there are no cars, she gets a big kick out of taking a boat to get there and then riding around the island on a golf cart! She also flies with her parents every August to celebrate her grandmother's birthday in Kansas City, MO. This year her grandmother MeMe will be 103 years old!

Some of her other interests have included participating in Special Olympics for many years, taking Therapeutic Riding lessons, dance lessons with recitals and going to the Parks and Recreation summer camp every year till she started working. The Alhambra dinners and events have been a nice addition to her social life and she always looks forward to attending them. ■

## Grand Commander's Message

"Obstacles are what you see when you take your eyes off the goal." Vince Lombardi

This past year, Porto/PCI set a goal of finding solutions for affordable housing and employment opportunities for young adults with intellectual disabilities, issues that go hand-in-hand. We have spent eight months conducting research and educating ourselves and feel that a good deal of progress has been made. Living on their own gives young adults and adults with intellectual disabilities the freedom and independence they want. Having a job gives them the sense of purpose, a place to go, camaraderie with fellow workers, and success in society.

We have run into a lot of success stories and can frankly see our goals just ahead.

**Housing Survey.** Porto and PCI members should have received a hard copy of this survey in the mail; the rest have been sent electronically to most of the organizations we support. It is easy to read and fill out, and contains questions based on reality and common sense. You need to keep your eyes on our goal: complete and return the survey. Our eyes are on our goals!

**Employment.** We continue to work with the Diocese to create internship opportunities that can open doors in the future throughout the Diocese of Arlington.

We are also exploring opening hydroponic greenhouses which would provide jobs in planting, harvesting, packaging, delivery, marketing, and sales. We have received a commitment from a very large East Coast supermarket wholesaler to buy our products. Our eyes are on our goals!

**George Mason University.** Internships and housing in nearby townhouses this year have proven that our population is very capable. GMU has placed 20+ interns on Capitol Hill, Audi, Pitney Bowes, World Bank, hospice, community center, hospitals, libraries, museums, schools, and retail jobs. The interns commute daily by shuttle, bus, and Metro with the support of job coaches. Residential assistants provide help in the area of housing. Our eyes are on our goals!

**Fundraising.** Porto/PCI members raised over \$125,000 this past year with our Special Kids/Special Needs collections, two golf tournaments, and Grand Commander Leo's weight loss challenge. We disbursed \$90,000 in grants and started a housing fund for our future efforts. Our eyes are on our goals!

**Social Security.** We are trying to secure an expert to give our members a seminar dealing with our future retirement income and death benefits. This is an issue which will impact our young adults after we are gone. Our eyes are on our goals!

At Porto/PCI, we don't run into obstacles we can't overcome because we will never take our eyes off our most important goal: Helping God's Special Angels!

*GC Leo Alonso*

## Committee Chairs Need Your Help!

The following committees were set up in the Fall of 2011 and are made up of Porto Charities members who are involved in producing results for our membership. See below for specific needs for each committee and consider getting involved: committees are open to anyone and the more folks who help the more we will get accomplished!

### *SPECIAL KIDS/SPECIAL NEEDS*

(second collections)

Charlie Sullivan

sullychas@aol.com

Contact non-participating Pastors for collection or tithing

### *PCI GOLF TOURNAMENT*

Friday, October 5, 2012

Bill Mundy

billm10049@aol.com

Recruit sponsors, gifts, raffle items, etc.

### *DISABILITY AWARENESS MASS*

Sunday, September 30, 2012

St. Tomas More Cathedral

Bill Dalgetty

bdalgetty@cox.net

Securing altar servers, gift bearers; selecting music. Helping with Bishop's reception following the Mass.

### *PCI MEMBERSHIP*

Carmen DiPlacido

cd.cadco@att.net

Continued growth necessary.

### *PORTO MEMBERSHIP & EMPLOYMENT*

Leo Alonso

bettyleo@aol.com

Need to continue to grow.

### *HOUSING*

Ron Gutkowski

rgutkowski@twfg.com

### *WEB SITE*

Patrick Cross

pcross@crosshome.org

### *SHIFTING SANDS*

Sara Adkins-Blanch

adkinsblanch@verizon.net

Please submit articles of interest for publication.

### *PORTO/PCI PHOTOGRAPHER*

Maria Eisenberg

703.255.3693

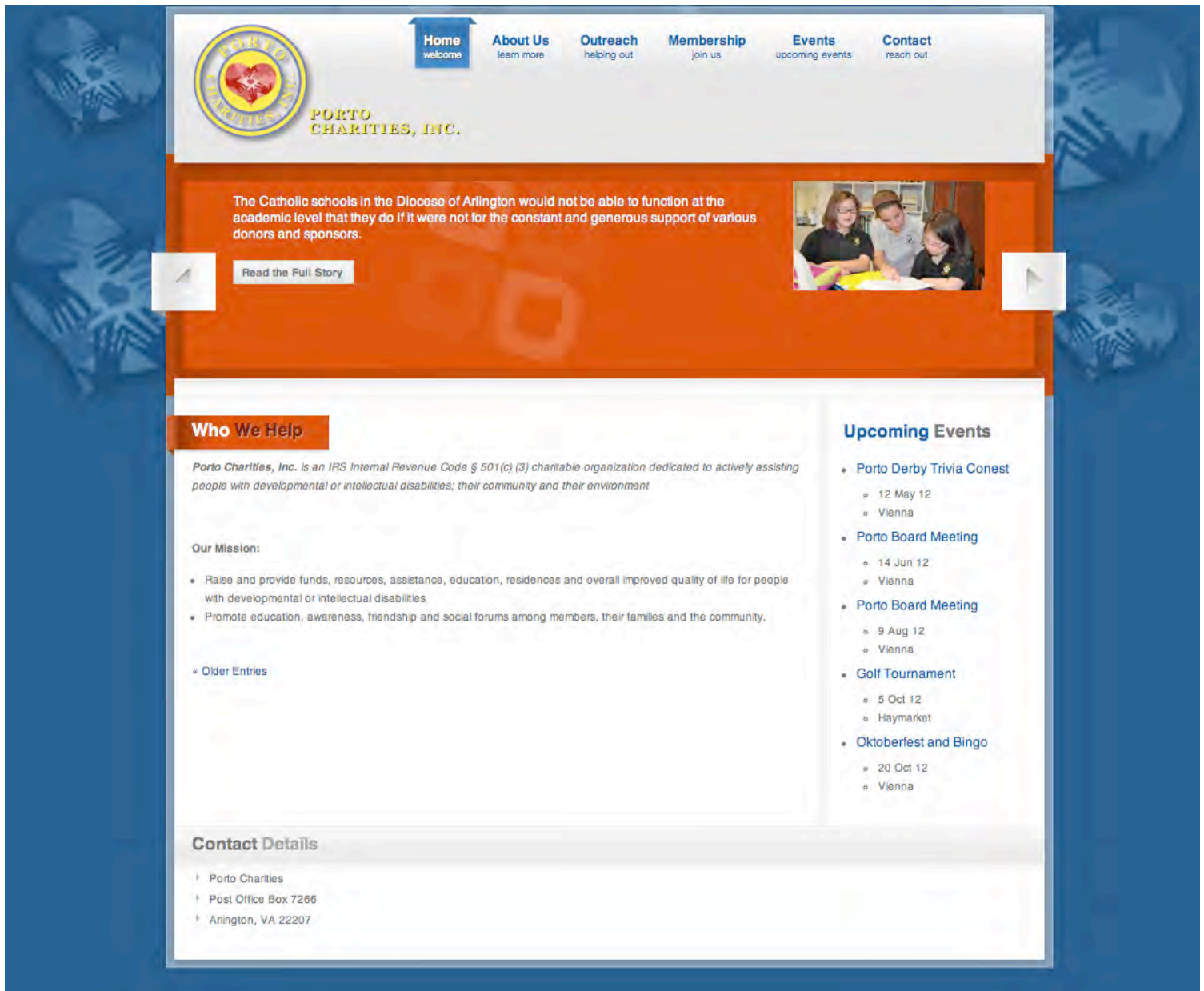
mariaeisenberg@hotmail.com

## Your Porto Charities Website

As you know, Porto 104 and Porto Charities recently launched its new and revamped website thanks to the tireless work of Pat Cross, our webmaster.

The website gets regular updates on the different activities that Porto is involved in plus it has all sorts of interesting information. It also includes archived copies of *Shifting Sands* and you can also refer your friends to the website to join Porto (there are links to fillable online forms).

We hope that you will find the website useful and we plan to add more information as activities progress. We encourage you to visit the site often! And, of course, we welcome your comments and input. Enjoy! ■



**Upcoming Events**



PORTO 104/PORTO CHARITIES, INC.  
**2012 PORTO DERBY  
 HONORING MOTHERS**

*SATURDAY, MAY 12, 2012*

Our Lady of Good Counsel DeSales Room (next to chapel)  
 8601 Wolftrap Road, Vienna, Virginia

**THIS  
 WEEK!!!**

- 6:00 pm Mass in the LGC Chapel
- 7:00 pm Oasis (Happy Hour/Open Bar, included in price)
- 7:30 pm Dinner

- The World Famous Porto Derby!
- 8:30 pm Race 1: How well do our female young adults know their MOMS?
  - Race 2: The Movie and Broadway Musical challenge!
  - Race 3: How well do our male young adults know their MOMS?
  - Race 4: The Grand Commander trivia challenge!

**Raffle  
 of great  
 prizes!!!**

**MENU**

by Wildflour Bakery:  
 BBQ Ribs, Grilled chicken, Pulled pork  
 Beans and Corn on the cob  
 Cake

ADULTS \$20 ~~~ YOUNG ADULTS \$15

**Casual attire**

RSVP **today** to Betty or Leo Alonso  
 at [bettyleo@aol.com](mailto:bettyleo@aol.com) or (703) 626-2051



**Order of the Alhambra**  
*Founded February 29, 1904*  
**Application for Membership**

**Last Name** ..... **First Name** .....

Home address ..... City ..... State..... Zip .....

Home Telephone ..... Cell Phone ..... Business phone .....

E-mail address .....

Married?  Yes  No If yes, wife's name .....

Birth date ..... What Parish do you attend? .....

To what Catholic organizations do you belong? .....

How did you learn about the Order of Alhambra? .....

*I HEREBY AGREE, if admitted to membership in the ORDER OF ALHAMBRA, to obey the constitution, bylaws, and other rules enacted, or the Supreme Divan, the Council of Viziers, the Executive Committee or the Grand Divan of my Caravan may hereafter enact.*

*I HEREBY CERTIFY that I am in good standing in the Catholic Church and that the above answers are true to the best of my knowledge.*

Applicant's Signature ..... Date .....

Signed in presence of ..... Size of FEZ .....  
 Proposer

Forward this application with your check for  \$93.00 Individual or  \$143.00 Family membership payable to Porto Caravan No. 104. pay-

**Mail application and payment to:**

Porto Caravan No. 104, Order of the Alhambra, Post Office Box 7266, Arlington, VA 22207  
 Email: bettyleo@aol.com | Telephone: 703.626.2051

**CARAVAN INSTRUCTIONS**

COMPLETE FOR HEADQUARTERS  
OFFICE RECORDS

Caravan Name ..... Number .....

Applicant's name .....

Forward this application with the Caravan's check for \$10 to the Headquarters Office within ten (10) days after the candidate's initiation.

Upon receipt, the Executive Director will assign the member's official number in the Order and forward it to the Scribe of the Exchequer for the Caravan's permanent records.

Novice ceremony  Qualifying

Ceremonial

Date .....

Initiated by .....

At .....

Certified by .....

Scribe of the Exchequer



### Porto Charities, Inc. Application for Membership

Last Name ..... First Name .....

Residence address ..... City ..... State..... Zip .....

E-mail address ..... Home Telephone ..... Cell Phone .....

Employment/profession .....

Business address ..... City ..... State..... Zip .....

Business phone .....

Type of Membership:       Single       Family

*Members of Applicant's Immediate Family*

Full name	Relationship	Age	Address and email (if different)	Special Needs?
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

I/we hereby request admission to membership of Porto Charities Inc. I/We understand that I/We must be sponsored for membership by a current member in good standing of Porto Charities Inc. If admitted to membership in the Porto Charities Inc., I/we hereby agree to obey all of the bylaws of Porto Charities Inc. and any other rules or regulations enacted and implemented by the Board of Directors of Porto Charities Inc.

Applicant's Signature ..... Date .....

Applicant's Signature ..... Date .....

Name of Sponsoring Porto Charities Inc. member .....

Signature of Sponsor..... Date .....

Forward this application with your check for  \$93.00 Individual or  \$143.00 Family membership payable to Porto Charities Inc.

The Board of Directors of Porto Charities Inc. reserves the right to:

- ❖ Disapprove an application for membership
- ❖ Assess annual dues for membership.
- ❖ Cancel a membership.
- ❖ Conduct a criminal history background check for any applicant for membership.

**Mail application and payment to:**

Carmen DiPlacido, President, Porto Charities, Inc., Post Office Box 7266, Arlington,VA 22207

**Treasurer's Administrative Action**

COMPLETE FOR PORTO CHARITIES, INC. RECORDS

Date Approved..... Membership number.....

Certified by:..... Treasurer of the Board of Directors.....



## GRAND DIVAN 2011-2012

### Porto Caravan no. 104

**REV. EDWIN DILL, S.T.**  
Chaplain

**LEO ALONSO**  
Grand Commander

**BILL MUNDY**  
Vice Grand Commander

**CHRIS WNUK**  
Grand Scribe

**PAT CROSS**  
Scribe of the Exchequer

**RICK VRANESH**  
Grand Chamberlain and  
Past Grand Commander

**BILL HINGSTON**  
Master of the Oasis

**TOM BRITTON**  
Master of the Wardrobe

**TOM RYAN**  
Captain of the Bodyguard

**WILLIAM HINGSTON III**  
Sentinel of the Tower

**PAUL TIERNEY**  
Sentinel of the Desert

**RONALD GUTKOWSKI**  
Grand Advocate

### Porto Charities, Inc.

**CARMEN DIPLACIDO**  
President

**BILL MUNDY**  
Vice President

**CHARLIE SULLIVAN**  
Treasurer

**PAT HAMMEKE**  
Secretary

**LEO ALONSO** (Grand Com-  
mander)

**PAT CROSS**  
**MICHAEL EISENBERG**  
Directors

**SARA ADKINS-BLANCH**  
*Shifting Sands* Editor

## The International Order of Alhambra and Porto Caravan 104

The International Order of Alhambra is a fraternal organization of Catholic men dedicated to assisting persons with intellectual disabilities. The Order's mission is to:

- ❖ Provide assistance, education and residences for persons developmentally disabled;
- ❖ Identify, mark, preserve, and commemorate Catholic historical places, events and persons of international or regional importance;
- ❖ Promote fraternalism and sociability among its members and their families.

Porto Caravan No. 104 was chartered in 1956 and is an active Caravan in the International Order of Alhambra with a membership of about 100. Porto Caravan No. 104 is located in the Commonwealth of Virginia environs of the Nation's Capital. Any male practicing Catholic who is 18 years of age or older is eligible to apply for membership.

### Contact Information:

Porto Caravan #104 | Order of Alhambra  
Post Office Box 7266 | Arlington, VA 22207  
Telephone: 703.626.2051 | Email: bettyleo@aol.com

### Porto Charities Inc.

Porto Charities, Inc. is an I.R.C. 501(c) (3) charitable organization dedicated to actively assisting people with developmental or intellectual disabilities; their community and their environment. Our mission is to:

- ❖ Raise and provide funds, resources, assistance, education, residences and overall improved quality of life for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities; and
- ❖ Promote education, awareness, friendship and social forums among members, their families and the community.

Our vision is to:

- ❖ Focus our efforts on providing assistance and resources to people with developmental or intellectual disabilities and their environment through our charitable programs and projects while also emphasizing friendship, mutual support and social events for its members.

### Contact Information:

Carmen A. DiPlacido, President | Porto Charities, Inc.  
Post Office Box 7266 | Arlington, VA 22207  
Telephone: 703.746.0101 | Email: cd.cadco@att.net

**If you would like to submit a story, article, or  
news piece to *Shifting Sands*, please email  
[sadkinsblanch@portocharities.org](mailto:sadkinsblanch@portocharities.org).**