



SHIFTING SANDS



A Spiritual Message 'tis the Season

As a matter of fact, we have many seasons to celebrate in these last two months of the year.

The first "season" is begun with All Saints Day and All Souls Day, the beginning of November, which is dedicated to the remembrance of the dead. This is not a time to morbidly ponder the end of life, but a month to give thanks for all those who have gone before us into the fullness of life. We remember our parents and all of our family and friends who have been responsible for passing on to us life and faith and all those things that give us joy. It is the time to dust off our belief in what the Apostles' Creed calls the Communion of Saints, the belief that all of us — living and dead — are and always will be joined in a bond that is rooted in God and lives in grace. We believe that our concern for all the saints and sinners who have walked this path before us is matched by their continuing interest and intercession for us.

Then there is Thanksgiving Day, which expands our reasons for thanks to all that God has given and continues to give. Being a civil holiday and celebration, there is a special emphasis on our blessings as a country. We give thanks for all those

women and men, our founding fathers and mothers, whose lives and work and sacrifices have purchased the privileges we enjoy.

Finally, there is the Season of Advent, whose theme of expectation and hope prepares us for celebration of Christmas. Commercialized as it may be, Christmas and its run-up from Thanksgiving Day are still reminders of the joy that the world experienced — knowingly or not — when God stooped down to take on all that we were, all that we are.

Taken together, all these seasons are really just one season, a "season of thanks." Gratitude is the overarching theme: gratitude to those who brought us to where we are, gratitude for the present moment, gratitude for the hope of eternal life, of fullness of life to come.

As Porto and Porto Charities men and women, we can add our commitment to fraternity and charity to this seasonal gratitude: thanks for one another and thanks to those special people who give us the opportunity to serve, who open our eyes and hearts to a deeper love that can only be rooted in the love that sent its Son on the first Christmas.

Fr. Edwin Dill, ST

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Please Pray for...

All those affected by Hurricane Sandy in our area, in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut.

To donate to those in need, contact the Red Cross (www.redcross.org) or Samaritan's Purse (www.samaritanspurse.org).

Call PGC Rick Vranesh (703-241-9526) if you know of anyone in need of our prayers, comfort or support.

Grand Commander's Message

***"Success is working hard, living right, dreaming big and being the best we can be."
A. Tennille***

I recently received a card with this quote and thought it was very appropriate for the members and young adults of Porto 104 and Porto Charities. Our committees have been working hard this year. To begin with, we have added 17 new member families into our organizations, a 22% increase from 2012.

Our PCI golf outing was a great success raising \$21,000, a 12% increase over 2011. Attendance at our six annual func-

tions has increased over 20%, averaging over 85 per function. Our annual Special Kids/Special Needs second collection should come in at about \$90,000, a small increase over 2011.

Our housing committee has met 15 times, traveled and researched many housing models, and is poised to establish apartments or homes for some of our young adults in 2013. Our jobs committee has in place a coordinator who is establishing contacts and making job coaches available for growth in 2013.

We have established alliances with many of the groups we support as evidenced by the ads placed in *The Catholic Herald* for Disabilities Awareness Month. Our ad has now grown to

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four full pages over two weeks. The Mass by Bishop Loverde was attended by over 200 of our families, group home members and young adults, a great success for our community.

As I looked around the room the Saturday during our annual meeting and Oktoberfest, I could definitely see we are “living right.” Our members were sitting in groups of like minded individuals, carrying on not just as acquaintances but as families striving together for the common goal of improving the future of our young adults. There were smiles all around at the tables of young adults in front as they also enjoyed each other’s company. Vivian was our Porto Ambassador as she welcomed new families from St. Mark’s and encouraged their young daughters not to be shy.

Our group has big dreams about providing housing where our young adults can live with their friends in a safe and loving

environment similar to the one they have been raised in over the past 20+ years. For Porto/PCI to accomplish these efforts at reasonable prices, including the cost of utilities, maintenance and staff expenses, and to “be the best we can be,” we need the following commitment: Increase our membership by 50 families; more personal involvement from members; the will to use our personal and professional contacts to identify job opportunities; and double our yearly fundraising to \$250,000.

Let’s make 2013 the year we accomplish our “BIG DREAMS” and set in place a great future for the lives of our young adults into THEIR retirement years.

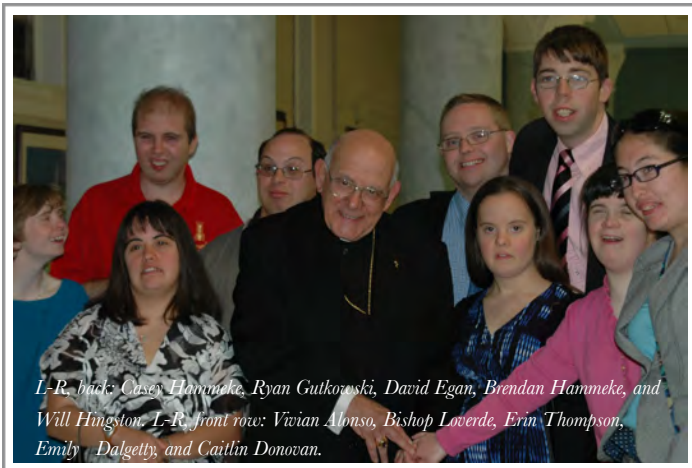
GC Leo Alonso



L-R: Will Hingston, Emily Dalgetty and Bill Dalgetty.



Erin Thompson



L-R, back: Casey Hammeke, Ryan Gutkowski, David Egan, Brendan Hammeke, and Will Hingston. L-R, front row: Vivian Alonso, Bishop Loverde, Erin Thompson, Emily Dalgetty, and Caitlin Donovan.

Disabilities Awareness Month: Bishop’s Mass
by Bill Dalgetty

The Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde, Bishop of Arlington, celebrated the Third Annual Mass commemorating Disabilities Awareness Month at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More on September 30. Porto 104 members and their families joined the Bishop in celebrating the mass. Several family members participated in the mass as readers, altar servers and presenters of the Gifts. David Egan did the First Reading, Catlin Donovan, the Second Reading, and Erin Thompson read the General Intercessions. David Egan and Chris Yorke were altar servers, and William Hingston and Emily Dalgetty presented the Gifts at the Offertory.

Father Edwin Dill, S.T., Chaplain for Porto 104, celebrated the mass with the Bishop. Tom Opfer, Assistant Principal of Paul VI Catholic High School served as the Cantor, supported by students from the Paul VI High School Liturgical Musicians.

Bishop Loverde in his homily honored those with disabilities attending the mass by calling them ‘angels’ — “the great love given back to you from these ‘angels’: the smiles, the hugs, the grateful eyes...”.

The Bishop’s office has already set September 15, 2013, as the date for next year’s mass. Persons with disabilities who would like to participate as readers or altar servers for next year’s mass should call Bill Dalgetty at 703 938-5247. ■



L-R: Fr. Edwin Dill, Bishop Loverde, and Fr. Jason Weber

**Porto Charities, Inc., President’s Message:
A Joyous Holiday Season**

As we approach the 2012 Holiday Season, it is indeed gratifying to reflect on the numerous accomplishments you all have achieved throughout this year. Your endless support of Porto 104 and Porto Charities goals and objectives as well as your hard work to attain success has been outstanding. I am tremendously grateful for the enthusiasm and energy you have put forth to help in our efforts to better the lives and the environment of our Special Angels.

Grand Commander Leo has aptly listed the fruits of your labor in his remarks in this edition of *Shifting Sands*. Without a doubt, your triumphs have given Thanksgiving an exceptional meaning and Christmas will certainly be joyous. I wholeheartedly concur in his appeal to make 2013 a year of accomplishing “Big Dreams” and establishing a “great future” for our children. We clearly have the foundation as well as the desire and the ability to make their dreams come true. Our record is legion in

that regard and we cannot rest on our laurels. We must resolve to do everything possible to ensure that our children have a future to be happy, healthy and safe. I have every reason to believe that we can and will do so.

I am sure you will all join me in extending a “GREAT BIG THANK YOU” to Bishop Loverde for his constant support and to all the parishioners of the Arlington Diocese who have perpetually as well as wholeheartedly donated to the Special Kids-Special Needs collections throughout the year. Their heartwarming charitable contributions have undoubtedly enabled us to continue our mission and our efforts to help fund the numerous scholastic programs and special organizations that truly benefit God’s Special Angels.

The annual Porto Christmas Party is Saturday, December 15 beginning at 6:00 at Our Lady of Good Counsel. I look forward to seeing you all there. It will be a festive occasion.

Carmen DiPlacido



**ORGANIZATIONS PORTO SUPPORTS
SPECIAL OLYMPICS AREA 26**

Special Olympics is a year-round program of sports training and athletic competition for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics Virginia Area 26 serves approximately 1,000 athletes in the Northern Virginia

area, including Fairfax County, Arlington County, and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax. Our ultimate goal is to help bring all persons with intellectual disabilities into the larger society under conditions whereby

they are accepted, respected, and given a chance to become useful and productive citizens.

Area 26 is run by volunteers, and all our programs are funded through donations and grants from individuals and groups like Porto Charities. These dona-

tions cover everything from rental of practice facilities and the purchase of uniforms to the cost of participation in state-wide, national, and international competitions for those athletes who qualify.



For the past few years, the funds that we have received from Porto Charities have supported our ice skating program, which includes speed skating and figure skating. In figure skating we work on basic skill development and competition

in singles skating for a variety of skill levels. While figure skating is a winter sport, with our training only taking place for a portion of the year, we still think of it as “training for life,” providing our athletes the opportunity to become physically fit, develop cooperation and



social skills, and increase their self-esteem, all while participating in an Olympic-type sports program.

We truly value the support that we received from Porto Charities, not only financially, but in the form of volunteers as well. Our volunteer opportunities run the gamut from one-day to ongoing. If you’re interested in learning more about how you can get involved, please send an e-mail to volunteers@novasova.org to find out what opportunities currently exist. ■

Porto Charities Golf Tournament Recap

by Bill Mundy

The Fifth Annual Porto Charities Golf tournament was held on Friday October 12, 2012, at the Regency at Dominion Valley Golf Club. The tournament was another huge success with 14 foursomes playing in the tournament. Participants were treated to a warm and sunny day on the Arnold Palmer-designed golf course which was in great shape. After the round of golf, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch in the clubhouse which was followed by an awards ceremony and a spirited

auction that included a number of wonderful gifts. I wish to thank all of the players and the 26 sponsors who supported the tournament. Special recognition goes to Bob Ellison who chose Porto Charities as the main beneficiary for the funds that he rose from his charity golf tournament in September. Additionally, I would like to thank Paul Tierney, Ed Patchett, and Leo Alonso for all of their hard work which made the tournament a success. Please mark your calendars now for the Sixth Annual Porto Charities Golf tournament that will be held on Friday, October 4, 2013. ■



Chris Desmarais, Mimi Sheehy, and Abigail Esquiverra



Mike Eisenberg



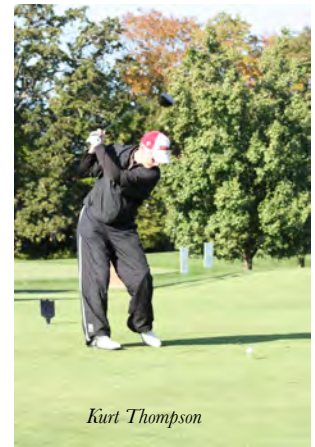
Chuck Adkins-Blanch, Patrick Cross, and Mike Armanie



Roy Watson, Bill Hingston, Jim Rogan, and Tom Ryan



Kevin Young



Kurt Thompson



The Donovans



Dave Hoppe and Bill Mundy



Marisa Ahmadi, Vivian Alonso, Leo Alonso, Jim Rogan, and Tony Linthicum



Vivian Alonso and Paul Tierney

Housing Committee: If We Don't Do It, It Won't Get Done!!!

You may recall completing a housing survey for Porto Charities Inc. earlier this year. Your reply, and others, has provided the data and impetus in our effort to research viable housing options for our special needs family members. We would like to extend the invitation to your family to join us for a candid discussion of our findings and how they may benefit or influence your housing selection process/decision.

Whether your loved one has immediate needs of these programs or will in the future, we welcome you to join us on this journey. It is never too early to start the planning process.

Please join us at this important program where we will share with you:

- ◆ The results of the housing survey and key takeaways;
- ◆ The results of our research on different housing models across the U.S. and how we can apply their lessons to our area;

- ◆ The short list of what we believe to be the most viable options for housing and services packages for our children or young adults;
- ◆ Next steps as we collectively work to achieve our goals.

Please mark your calendars:

Date: Sunday, November 11, 2012 (Redskins bye week)

Time: 2:00PM to 4:00PM

Place: Our Lady of Good Counsel School, Counsel Room, 8601 Wolf Trap Rd, Vienna VA

Directions: Take Route 123 to Niblick St which is opposite the Westwood Country Club. Follow Niblick until it ends at the Church/School parking lot. The Counsel room is located at the far end of the school on the right.

RSVP: Please reply to rgutkowski@portocharities.org ASAP with the number attending.

Ron Gutkowski, PCI Housing Chair

Disabilities Awareness Month: Presentation at St. Mary's Catholic School

By Grand Commander Leo Alonso

On Thursday, October 18, several of us attended a school assembly at St. Mary's Catholic Elementary/Middle School in Old Town Alexandria. At 7:30 am, Coach Leo picked up Caitlin Donovan at her GMU apartment and drove to Alexandria. In front of 728 students, Caitlin was the hit of the show! She gave a speech on her accomplishments while attending Paul VI Options Program, GMU LIFE, and her current employment at GMU. Her most important success, she stated, is living on her own with roommates. She answered many questions without showing any nervousness. Porto 104 and Porto Charities are very proud of the support we have given to Paul VI and GMU LIFE as they have produced well rounded individuals with disabilities ready to tackle life!

At the presentation, we were joined by Chris Desmarais, Director of Options at Paul VI, along with Sarah Browne, PVI Options teacher and former PVI Peer Mentor who went on to receive a Master's degree in Special Education from William and Mary. Two other current PVI Peer Mentors were present, Joe Ellis and Nora Cox. They all told the PVI story and the importance of giving their time to be Peer Mentors in the Options classroom. They went on to say how their lives have been enhanced by witnessing the growth and confidence gained by those in the Options program. The group fielded over 20 great questions from the audience and staff. They were all answered with incredible assurance.

Parents and members of Porto/PCI are very proud of their support of these programs. Paul VI has received over \$400,000 during the past 14 years and GMU LIFE over \$200,000 in the span of nine years. These resources have been well spent and we thank all the parishioners in the Arlington Catholic Diocese for making second collection funds available to maintain our help for individuals with disabilities. ■



L-R: Nora Cox, Chris Desmarais, Caitlin Donovan, Leo Alonso, Susan Space (St. Mary's), Joe Ellis, and Sarah Browne.



MEMBER PROFILE

The Gutkowskis

Once upon a time, not too long ago, in a not too far away place, we were introduced to a group of PVI Options parents. Our son, Ryan, was entering his Freshman year. During the course of the evening, Pat Hammeke mentioned a group of older men that had been raising funds to support the local special needs community. Pat made the sales pitch that this group, Alhambra Porto 104, was looking for and needed younger blood to revitalize the group.

By the end of the evening, Pat had succeeded and three new recruits, Leo Alonso, Bill Hingston and Ron Gutkowski, accepted an invitation to a meeting to gain insight into the group. After attending several months of meetings, we became officers, and ultimately assumed leadership roles. Much is owed to the "old bloods" for their vision and dedication to serving the special community; we, the younger, would continue and build upon their initiatives.

One most memorable Porto activity entailed the stacking of newspapers at the Fairfax County dump. In exchange, the County donated the sale proceeds to Alhambra. Perhaps more beneficial than the funds was the relationship building by the "stacking teams" which lead to lasting, strong relationships amongst the families and provided the keystone for the evolution of Porto 104 and Porto Charities Inc.

Our son Ryan has completed his journey through PVI Options, GMU LIFE, and

is in his final year of his LIFE's internship. Presently, Ryan spends his work week on Capitol Hill with Senators Sessions and Pearce, the Odyssey hospice in Vienna, and his most favorite museum, the Museum of Natural History.

Ryan routinely participates in Special Olympics, Best Buddies, and Challenger Baseball, as well as the social activities of these groups and PVI Alumni. A special "thank you" to Mary Daley!!!!

He also looks forward to the "Life is Sweet" event held annually by Best Buddies. Ryan has been paired with the pastry chefs of the DC Ritz-Carlton Hotel since the event's inception.

Our Westies, Sonic and Miss Bailey, have been a huge part of Ryan's day as he would care for them without being asked.

He deeply misses his brother, Kyle, away at the University of Richmond. Ryan developed a love for DC United and soccer from his brother's many years of playing soccer,

MaryJane, the glue that keeps it all together, is an eager and willing contributor to any activity benefitting the special population. She always finds the time between her decorating and stonework business activities to "get it done". MJ has coached Challenger Baseball for years with her genuine caring spirit a key to its success. It's debatable as to who gets more out of it, MJ or the kids.

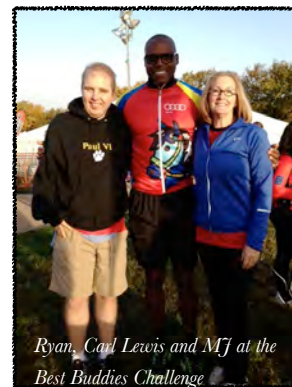
MJ and our dear friend, Gina Latcheran, have diligently worked at qualifying

for the Best Buddies Challenge in Washington DC. They and sons, Ryan and Eric, have enjoyed the day long activities befitting their efforts;

most recently sharing the sound and stage of Sugar Ray at this year's event. What a memorable experience!!!

Ryan was diagnosed with a chromosomal deletion, essentially a one-of-a-kind deficiency as the result of a missing section of his 6th chromosome. Efforts to find others with the same deficiency were fruitless. This did, however, uncover countless others worldwide seeking matches with other chromosome anomalies. MJ took the initiative to form a worldwide resource, the Chromosome Disorder Outreach to facilitate a shared database for those seeking others with a deficiency: www.chromodisorder.org

Personally, I enjoy cooking and can be found at Wegman's routinely. As Chair of PCI's housing committee, I am working on recipes to provide affordable services and housing for our special population. A key ingredient is to place individuals that have grown up together as housemates or roommates. By taking advantage of the friendships of the individuals, as well as their families, we hope to create a homogenous family setting; removing concerns about unknown roommates in a public group home, etc. ■



Ryan, Carl Lewis and MJ at the Best Buddies Challenge



A Summary of the Residential and Housing Issues Workshop

by Chuck Adkins-Blanch

On October 28, 2012, the third workshop on transitional series (financial/legal, social/recreational and this one on housing) was hosted by the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia and The Washington Group Special Care Planning team.

The first speaker was **Pearl Hartley**, who is on the board of directors for the **Brain Foundation**, 501(c)(3) started by Fairfax realtor, Trudy Harsh, in 2003, to provide homes for individuals with mental illness, in honor of her daughter, Laura. They currently own seven homes (each called Laura's homes) throughout Fairfax, with the goal of reaching 10 homes. Each home houses 4 residents. The Brain Foundation only focuses on buying and maintaining the homes and others place the residents (CSB and other services providers such as Pathway Homes).

The Foundation buys the house, pays the mortgage and all maintenance; the furniture is donated. The houses are 25 years old on average so that is why once they reach 10 houses they will focus their resources on maintenance of the homes. The funding for the homes comes in the form of: (1) County loans (0% loans) and VHDA (2% loans); (2) fund raisers (they currently raise \$6,000 to \$8,000 per event); (3) an individual donor who gives \$25,000 to assist with each house purchase; and (4) federal, state, and local grants. The government funding they receive requires the foundation to charge at least 30% of a tenant's income for rent. This typically comes from the resident's SSI or earnings. Because the rent collected covers about 60% of operating expenses, the Foundation needs to raise funds to cover the remaining 40%. Other requirements to receive government funds include that tenants must be classified as "low income." Currently they have two Section 8 vouchers. Ms. Hartley noted that since meeting Section 8 requirements the tenants must be considered a "family," they crafted their living arrangement to meet that definition. The Foundation delivers pamphlets to immediate neighbors when they buy a house to inform them of their mission and what will be occurring in the house prior to tenants moving in. Any individual issues that come up are raised with and addressed by service providers and counselors. They hold their board meetings at the houses they own so residents can sit in and raise any issues or questions they have. They also have "house representatives" who visit the houses frequently to check in on the conditions.

Next, **Stephanie Smith Lee** and **Ron Gutkowski** spoke for **Porto Charities (PCI)**. Stephanie explained the mission of PCI and received some good questions from audience members unfamiliar with our organization which gave her the opportunity to encourage them to check us out and hopefully join. Stephanie then explained how PCI's housing committee, which she and Ron serve on, is working to address the housing crisis for those with special needs in Virginia. There is an extremely long waiting list for Medicaid waivers and few opportunities (that are not extremely expensive) for our children to live independently. She also noted how our children have been edu-

cated with peers under the IDEA and now are looking for those same opportunities in housing. The PCI housing committee has visited models for such housing in a number of states and has consulted with those who have had success in a number of others. Because to live in Northern Virginia is expensive, not all models that work elsewhere will translate exactly, but the housing committee is looking for any models that might work. Stephanie described the survey that PCI designed with the LIFE program at George Mason University which asked families with individuals with special needs in need of housing what they want and need. The results are posted on line on the GMU website. Highlights from the survey include: 67% need overnight support; 73% want walking distance to work, shopping, etc.; 85% are willing to share a home with others; and 78% don't have a Medicaid waiver while 44% are on the waiting list for the waiver. (See p. 2 for an invitation to an in-depth discussion of the results of the survey.)

Stephanie concluded by laying out the priorities that the PCI housing committee sees at this point: (1) separate housing from support services; (2) find organizations willing to donate housing and land; (3) connect individuals who want to live together (e.g.: explore renting an entire apartment complex where those with and without disabilities could live); and (4) focus on raising funds to pay for services for those who cannot afford them and who do not have a Medicaid waiver.

Jerry Hulick, from **The Washington Group** and event sponsor, remarked on some new trends emerging in the housing area. Because federal and community funding is tight and will continue to get tighter, there is a need to partner private and public funds through, for example, matching grants and community development funds (some from fed grants, others raised as foundation). A community development fund just built an \$18 million apartment complex in King George county. The private sector is finding ways to fill the gaps.

Denise Gomez, from the **Jewish Foundation for Group Homes (JFGH)**, spoke about her organization's mission and recent activities. JFGH was founded in 1982 and serves a wide spectrum of clients. They currently have 23 group homes, 20 in Montgomery county and 3 in Virginia (though they are expanding their services in here), serving 106 residents. The group homes house 3-4 residents each. They also serve 75 higher functioning individuals who are supported in their own apartment with drop-in support. Funds to purchase homes come from benefactors who earmark the funds in their estate planning. So while JFGH cannot predict when will get a new group home, Ms. Gomez encouraged parents to keep an open mind about other possibilities beyond group homes, as that is the area where JFGH is expanding its services the most. JFGH works towards achieving the most independence possible with community integration. Most of the homes they own are single family homes with one town home. Their approach is community based. They are not a medical model, but do facilitate travel to medical appointments. If one's medical needs become too extensive, JFGH may need to refer them to another program. JFGH supports socialization in the Jewish community and

(continued on p. 6)

elsewhere. Their homes follow Jewish traditions (eat kosher, celebrate Jewish holidays), but residents are interdenominational.

Some trends they are seeing at JFGH include: (1) the expansion of their services into Virginia; (2) the unbundling of services from housing; (3) an increased focus on achieving “permanent housing” outside of a group home context and then working on getting the services needed to support that arrangement; and (4) their new Meaningful Opportunities for Successful Transitions (MOST) Program, based in Fairfax City, VA, and Rockville, MD. The MOST program, provides a 1-year individualized program of activities and training based on each participant’s self-directed goals, for adults with disabilities who have completed high school, but who have been unable to integrate into their adult communities. The program provides opportunities to transition into successful placements with employment and vocational or traditional day programs.

As far as funding, JFGH accepts Medicaid waiver funds as well as privately paid individuals. The exact expenses depend on the services in the home and the individual. The group houses often take vacations together and each family pays their own expenses. Ms. Gomez pointed out that the key is to think creatively. Group homes are still an option for some but not all need an environment that structured. She also noted that the choices you make today are not permanent. The housing needs for your child can grow and evolve like anyone else’s. If you are looking to use JFGH’s services, once you have a house and tell them you need their services, they need an average 60-day period to ramp up and hire and train staff.

Next, **Good Neighbor Village (GNV)**, located on a tract of land they developed near Richmond, provided an informative video about their community. They were founded in 1991. They are completely privately paid and privately funded. They are currently pursuing a dual license that will add the ability to serve adults with autism as well as their current clientele of adults with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. GNV currently owns 3 homes, each with private bedrooms. Each home has a community room and a spacious and open dining area. Community programs include things such as Special Olympics sports teams, camping, art classes in the community, etc. They have a “circle of friends” meeting once a week to discuss what they want to do for activities, buy groceries for the coming week, etc. GNV helps the residents find jobs in the community and provides transportation. They rely on financial donors as well as volunteers from the community who give in-kind donations of time and talents to sustain the facility. Interested residents can come for a no cost “respite” trial period to try out GNV to see if they would like to live their.

Special needs attorney, **Michael Toobin**, spoke about his search for a model for his son Adam, who is 29-years-old and doesn't want to live at home anymore. Mr. Toobin has been working for several years on his vision of building not just a house, but a community, for Adam to live in. Known as “co-housing,” the concept first started in Denmark, and involves building a community where those with disabilities and their

typical peers live and socialize together. Mr. Toobin has teamed up with a local builder and a local architect, to form **Care Homes, LLC**, with the intent to build a co-housing community in northern Virginia. They envision a neighborhood design with a cluster of 10-12 small 4-bedroom single family homes around a common area, pedestrian smooth level streets — not vehicle streets — a common house for group meetings, recreation, guest bedrooms, children's play room, and a common garden for everyone. The homes will be of universal design, and “green” design (but also designed so anyone would want to live there) which also opens up access to loan and grant funds. Each house will have a common area, 2 bedrooms on the ground floor and 2 bedrooms on second floor. Adam would live with the friends he chooses and 24-hour care provider. The project also integrates fair market rentals into its plan for military families, young teachers, first responders — people who would want to live in such a community. By owning all the homes and renting them out, Care Homes LLC, will be able to access certain financing that requires the community to maintain a particular “social purpose.”

Mr. Toobin has been trying to find land to build the community for two years now. The difficulty is that they need 3-5 acres of land, which is tough to find in Fairfax. They are looking at a possible site in Reston and also, given the future closing of the Northern Virginia Training Center (NVTC), getting access to a little part of the over 70 acres of land where NVTC currently sits. If anyone knows someone with a tract of land to sell or give towards this goal of building a co-housing community, Mr. Toobin encourages them to please contact him! He can be reached at 703-354-7700.

Cheryll Pease from **Access National Bank** spoke about the Fannie Mae guidelines which allow an individual to purchase a second home but still access the secondary mortgage market for that home as if you were borrowing for your “primary residence” if you are purchasing the home for your child with special needs to live in. Qualification for the mortgage is based on the combination of the parent’s income and the child’s income, but the child does not need to prove income in order for the parent to obtain the mortgage. Both the parent’s name and the child’s name go on the deed, but the house is still considered a “primary residence” for the parent for purposes of accessing a mortgage, not as an investment property. Mr. Hulick then noted that speaking to an accountant and tax advisor would help a parent or group of parents structure the arrangement for such a house where one (or possibly two, if allowed) parent(s) would buy the house and the other occupants would pay towards the expenses of the house in a way that it would not be considered “rent” (eg.: could be reimbursement for services, etc.). If you have questions regarding access to a mortgage through this program, Ms. Pease can be reached at 703-871-1362.

Mr. Hulick thanked all of the speakers and those who attended and encouraged all parents to continue to think creatively about how to structure their child’s future living situation models. ■



**PORTO CHARITIES/PORTO 104
EVENT**

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday, December 15th

**OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL DE SALES HALL
(next to Church)
8601 Wolftrap Road, Vienna, Virginia**

6:00 pm Mass with Father Dill (OLGC Chapel)

7:00 pm Oasis

7:30 pm Dinner

8:30 to 9:30 pm Christmas Caroling

MENU

Caesar Salad
London Broil/Roasted Turkey Breast (gluten free)
Wild Rice / Mushroom Gravy/Cranberry Sauce
Garlic Mashed Potatoes/Sweet Potatoes w/Pecans
Davis Center Gourmet Cookies

COST

ADULTS - \$25
YOUNG ADULTS - \$20
KIDS - \$15

RSVP by December 7th to bettyleo@aol.com or call 703.626.2051

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
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PAT HAMMEKE
Secretary

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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 and women 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 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.

Organizations awarded charitable donations for this year include: ARC of Northern Virginia, ArtStream, Inc., Arlington Diocese "Keyboard for Kids" program, Autism Society of No. VA, Best Buddies Virginia, Central Fairfax Services, Inc., Down Syndrome Association of No. VA, Gabriel Homes, Inc., GMU Life Program, Joey Pizzano Memorial Fund, Paul VI HS Options Program, Pope John Paul the Great HS Options Program, S. John Davis Career Center, Special Olympics of No. VA Area 26, St. Louis Parish Special Education Program, St. Mark Catholic School Evangelist Program, Still Meadows Enrichment Center and Camp, Villa Maria Work Study Center, and Wild-flour Catering.

Contact Information:

Carmen A. DiPlacido, President | Porto Charities, Inc.
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**If you would like to submit a story, article, or
news piece to *Shifting Sands*, please email
sadkinsblanch@portocharities.org.**