



SHIFTING SANDS



A Spiritual Message

Why?

“Why, mommy?” “Why, daddy?” That little three-letter word why can be the most important word in a child’s vocabulary ... at least in those early years before the youngster finds a computer and learns how to search the wide world for answers. That little word is the verbal button that opens up young minds to understanding the big universe of which they are such an important part. “Why?” and the answers it elicits can shape and direct young minds to their fullest potential.

But even for adults, and especially for adults involved in helping others, “Why?” is still the most important question we can ask, because why we do something makes all the difference in the world.

Our reasons should first of all center on those we help. It was compassion pure and simple that prompted Jesus to heal the sick, give sight to the blind, mobility to the crippled, hearing to the deaf. We help others to relieve their sadness or pain, to alleviate their hunger or loneliness, to break through their ignorance and enrich their lives. And we give out of gratitude; as we count our blessings we are prompted to bless others by sharing bits of our life – out time, our material goods, our love.

Jesus warned his disciples to “beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them.” He continued: “When you give to the poor, do not sound

a trumpet before you, as hypocrites do the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men.” (Matthew 6:1-2) So how do we explain the seeming conflict between the best of motivational intentions and seeking – indeed needing – publicity? We want out activities advertised, we look to get our pictures in the paper. We want people to know about the International Order of Alhambra and about Porto Charities. It boils down, I think, to the difference between bragging (“Look at me!”) and evangelizing (“Look at what you too can do to help others!”).

Why do we do what we do? To reach out to others with help and to express our thanks for all that God does for us. Why do we tell others what we are doing? To give them the opportunity to show compassion, to experience joy, to do, in short, what our Faith impels us to do.

Why do we do what we do? To reassure those whom we help that God loves them – and reinforce our own understanding of the same – and to spread the Good News that others can do the same thing along with us.

Fr. Edwin Dill, ST

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Acting Grand Commander’s Message

“What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.”

John Steinbeck

As the school year ends and we take summer vacations, it is the perfect time to reflect on the progress that Porto 104 (Porto) and Porto Charities Inc. (PCI) have already made this year.

During the first six months of 2013 we have hosted a number of activities full of fun, laughter and fellowship. The housing committee has made significant progress in tackling this very important issue, critical to most of our members. We have made many new friends and attracted new members. We also have experienced sadness as we have lost members and/or family members.

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As we all take advantage of the summer months to relax and reenergize, let's also take time to think about how we can contribute our time and talent to Porto and PCI for the remainder of the year. Please consider volunteering for one or more of the activities that are outlined in our calendar. Please also make a list of potential new members and contact them over the summer to invite them to attend one of our fall activities.

Finally, please consider how we can improve the effectiveness of both organization and relay your recommendations to the Divan and/or to the board of directors. Let's all work together to ensure that the next six months are as productive as the first six months of the year. Happy summer!

AGC Bill Mundy

PCI President's Message

"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."

Helen Keller

This quote is very appropriate in connection with the efforts by Porto Charities to serve and improve the lives of the intellectually disabled.

The optimism shown by our members is what has created achievements such as the Options and GMU LIFE programs we support.

Our members' optimism and hard work has created fund-raising achievements such as our annual golf tournament headed into its fifth year and scheduled for Friday, October 4th.

Our optimistic attitude has recently led us to join up with SPARC (Specially Adapted Resource Club) to hold dances and

gatherings in the evenings throughout the year for our young adults over 22 years of age. The first dance is Friday, July 12th at the Hunters Woods Community Center in Reston, Virginia. Attached is the flyer for this event.

We continue to demonstrate optimism as we work with the Diocese to provide jobs/internship opportunities for our over-22 age group. I feel we will finally see results this coming fall.

The optimism shown by our housing committee will achieve results in the next year as members are finally stepping up to purchase homes and provide housing for our group of young adults ready to move on their own.

All of these and future accomplishments are 100% the result of our hope and confidence as we continue to have faith and optimism in pursuit of our goals. We are leaders in these efforts and it will allow our very special population to tackle the world around them with hope and confidence.

PCI President Leo Alonso

WEBMASTER URGENTLY NEEDED!

Porto/PCI has a website that needs serious TLC.
 We need someone who is willing to give the PCI website a couple of hours a week to update content and keep it fresh and interesting. You don't have to be an expert webmaster, just the willingness to spend a bit of your time and learn Word Press (if you don't already know it), an easy-to-use content management system. If you are interested in volunteering for this job, please contact Pat Cross (pcross@portocharities.org) or Sara Adkins-Blanch (sadkinsblanch@portocharities.org).

2013 Calendar

PORTO 104 / PORTO CHARITIES

Divan and PCI Board Meetings are all held at OLGC DeSales Hall in Church Lower Lobby
 Social functions appear in red shadow and will be held in the Counsel Room (school cafeteria)

Friday, July 12	SPARC After Dark/PCI Dance, Hunters Woods Community Center, Reston (see flyer on p. 6), 7 PM - 10:30 PM
Thursday, July 18	Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Thursday, August 1	Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Thursday, September 5	Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Thursday, September 12	Divan & PCI Board Meeting
Friday, September 13	PVI Dance, 7 PM - 9 PM
Thursday, October 3	Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Friday, October 4	PCI Golf Outing Fundraiser
Sunday, October 6	Bishop Loverde's Annual Disabilities Awareness Mass & Reception St. Thomas More Cathedral
Monday, October 21	PVI Under-the-Lights Soccer Invitational, 6 PM
Saturday, October 26	Oktoberfest / Mass, 6-10 PM
Thursday, November 7	Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Friday, November 8	SPARC After Dark/PCI Dance (time and location TBD)
Thursday, November 14	Divan & PCI Board Meeting
Thursday, December 5	Tentative Housing Meeting, 7 PM (Lobby)
Saturday, December 14	Holiday Party / Mass, 6-10 PM

GATSBY THEMED DANCE

Attendees of Camp Pals and DSANV invite **individuals with Down syndrome**, ages 16-25, to join them on Friday, July 5th, 6:00-9:00 pm, for dinner and dancing at Copley Formal Lounge, Georgetown University, 37th and O Streets, N.W., Washington, DC 20057. Come dressed in 1920s themed attire: pearls, feathers, pin stripes, suspenders, Charleston-fringed skirts, boas, spats and hats, and be the Bees Knees!

For more information, contact jenni@palsprograms.org.

READERS NEEDED FOR THE BISHOP'S DISABILITIES AWARENESS MASS

Young adult members or participants who would like to read at this year's Bishop's mass on October 6, to please call Bill Dalgetty at 703-938-5247.



MEMBER PROFILE

THE EISENBERGS

The Eisenberg family was introduced to Porto Charities when daughter Elizabeth was a 7th grader at St. Mark Catholic School's Evangelist program. At the beginning of Elizabeth's first year at St. Mark we were encouraged to attend a Porto function. We went and we immediately felt at home. The members were welcoming and friendly and Elizabeth was comfortable, even though she was a bit younger than most of the young adults. The food and libations were good and the event was casual and fun!

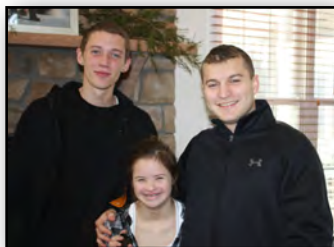
Mike Eisenberg recognized a man he used to work with, Bill Mundy, and became very interested in what Porto had to offer to the special needs community. It didn't take long for Mike to roll up his sleeves and offer to help Porto on several committees, focusing on housing.

When a volunteer opportunity came up for a photographer, Maria jumped in. A long time Creative Memories consultant and avid lover of photos, being Porto's photographer offered a wonderful way to become involved. One of Maria's goal is to put together some event photo albums in addition to a year-end slide show that everyone, especially the young adults, will enjoy.

The Porto events have been a wonderful way for the Eisenbergs to socialize with the other families in the Evangelist program and to get to meet the families of the young adults. The friendships and networking with other families has been invaluable, especially to get a glimpse from the pathfinders at

what Elizabeth's future needs will be in order to someday have an independent life.

Mike and Maria Eisenberg live in Vienna and have three children: Jerry, 22, Daniel, 20, and Elizabeth, 15. Jerry is a student at ITT tech and you may see him waiting tables at Joe's Pizza and Pasta. Daniel has just completed an Auto Technology program at the Universal Technical Institute in Orlando, FL, and will soon be job searching.



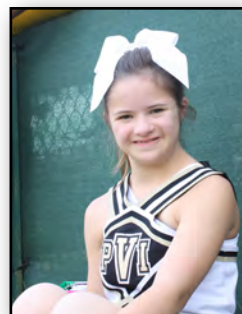
Mike and Maria are both originally from New York state; Mike from Saratoga Springs and Maria from Middletown. Prior to living in Vienna they lived in Boca Raton, FL. Mike is a portfolio manager at Wells Fargo and Maria is a retired registered dietitian.

The Eisenbergs moved to Virginia 17 years ago and Elizabeth was born the year after they moved. She was a beautiful, healthy baby and they immediately made up their minds that they would do everything they could to see her reach her full potential. Her first five years were a blur of therapies and programs in and outside of the home but they enjoyed a tremendous support system in their Lakevale neighborhood. Elizabeth attended dance lessons, music lessons, piano lessons, and swim lessons, in addition to all the traditional therapies: physical, occupational, speech.

Elizabeth attended Flint Hill Elementary school through sixth grade. Her

mother's dream was that she would be able to go to St. Mark and be educated in a Catholic community. There was an opening for Elizabeth for 7th grade. St. Mark and The Evangelist program were a perfect fit and Elizabeth flourished spiritually and academically and, her specialty, socially. Mom and Dad are extremely proud that she is the program's first graduate.

Now Elizabeth attends Paul VI where she is a rising sophomore. She was an active junior varsity cheerleader last year and participated in Special Olympics. This fall she will cheer and help with the girls varsity volleyball team. The Options program at PVI has been another perfect fit for Elizabeth. In addition to her other activities, she also enjoys horseback riding and accompanying Mike on trail rides.



Elizabeth would like to work with small children or groom dogs or cook. She has great organizational skills that she would also like to put to use.

The Eisenbergs are very grateful to Porto Charities for the work that they contribute to the community of intellectually disabled individuals and the programs that they support. They have learned a lot and have met many devoted and wonderful people. They feel blessed that this organization is here and so active in their diocese. ■

PCI Housing Committee

by Ron Gutkowski

Two homes within proximity of George Mason University will be renting space to LIFE program graduates. A third home has a purchase contract pending from another family from our housing initiative. Additionally, there has been

contact with an individual who has two properties adjacent to one another that are being contemplated as group homes. The properties are not adjacent to GMU, but are within a short driving distance. A one-year timeline is likely, should things develop.

Our recent telephone follow-up with some of our initial survey respondents re-enforced the prevailing preference to rent first before purchasing property. This will enable the living arrangements and interaction aspects to play out and identify underlying issues.

Inch by inch, step by step.... ■

Fairfax Housing Issues

by Leo Alonso

Fairfax County is working on a new zoning amendment to allow builders to construct studio apartments for lower income individuals (less than \$45,120 per year). Our young adults more than likely meet this criteria at the present time and in future years. (See attached PDF in the email for a copy of the memo from Fairfax County to developers, advocates, and interested parties.)

I have attended several meetings and this proposal is advantageous for us. Rents for 80% of the units would be up to \$650 per month; the other 20% would be at market rates. Units must be a maximum of 500 square feet and have full kitchens (this size of 340-500 sq. ft.

works well for one person). Units would be rented to teachers, policemen, firemen and others below the \$45,120 income threshold. Zoning would be allowed on any lot in the County with the only caveat being that you need to meet front, side, and rear yard setbacks. Maximum height limits will remain as currently zoned. They can be in neighborhoods, commercial/industrial areas, or anywhere in the County with a minimal zoning change cost of \$1,000-\$2,000 (a steal) vs. \$20-30,000 to change zoning to meet studio guidelines.

This is a great opportunity to solve our housing needs and we could even raise funds to build it ourselves. To help the County with its decision, please email the following letter (or use your own words) by to

donna.pesto@fairfaxcounty.gov at your earliest convenience. Even though the initial deadline was June 14th, we have been told to go ahead and submit comments.

I support the Draft Residential Studio Zoning Amendment. I am the parent of an individual with an intellectual disability who currently lives at home. I am concerned about how his/her needs will be met as we age and can no longer provide for him/her. This amendment would make affordable housing available near a source of transportation and provide an opportunity to live side by side with many people from different walks of life.

Thank you! ■

Rock-n-Roll With SPARC!



*Sock
Hop*

Sponsored by
Porto Charities

**RECIPE FOR A GOOD
TIME!**

DATE: July 12, 2013

WHERE: Reston Community Center HUNTER
WOODS

2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston, VA 20191
703-476-4500

[http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/
about_location.shtml](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/about_location.shtml)

TIME: 7:00-10:30 PM

**JOIN IN THE FUN: DANCE CONTEST
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS FOR ALL!**

RSVP: monica@sparcsolutions.org or
michelle2@sparcsolutions.org



GRAND DIVAN 2012-2013

Porto Caravan no. 104

REV. EDWIN DILL, S.T.
Chaplain

BILL MUNDY
Acting Grand Commander

VACANT
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

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LEO ALONSO
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PAT HAMMEKE
Secretary

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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.

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:

Porto Charities, Inc.

Post Office Box 7266 | Arlington, VA 22207

Telephone: 703.626.2051 | Email: bettyleo@aol.com

If you would like to submit a story, article, or news piece to *Shifting Sands*, please email sadkinsblanch@portocharities.org.