

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Alliance for the Physically Disabled (APD), Inc. is a non-profit organization committed to creating accessible and affordable housing opportunities with full-time personal assistance services for adults with severe physical disabilities.

### Lynne Myhre, APD Board of Director

Residents at Merica House rely on income from Social Security, which has not been increased for the past few years. Over those same years, the cost of living has increased: food prices have been rising, condo fees and mortgage costs went up, and repairs have continued to be needed (such as replacing a clothes dryer that had recently gave out after years of daily use and repeated repairs). Employee health insurance premiums have gone through the roof over the last year, becoming a major expense. Rent has had to be raised at Merica House by \$50 per month, which is a lot for people on a limited income that has not increased.

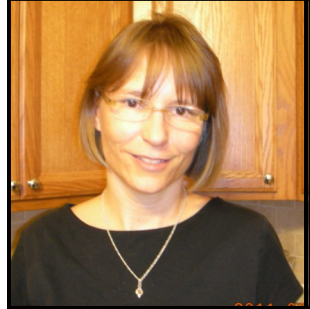
Even after raising the rent as much as it could given residents' limited income and cutting everywhere possible, including a phone line, The Alliance for the Physically Disabled is coming up short.

With the economy down, everyone is tightening belts, and Merica House is no exception. But unlike most people, MH residents cannot just go out and get a second job to help make ends meet. The Alliance for the Physically Disabled is holding fundraisers in the coming year and MH residents will help with these. We also need your help!

Please donate and support our fundraisers. Please see page 3 for information on our holiday fundraiser with the Sydney Hale Co., an Arlington based family owned company maker of quality soy candles.

The APD is updating its Facebook page and will keep everyone abreast of what is happening here at Merica House. Please "Like" our page and see a bit about life at Merica House.

Eventually, the economy will improve and things will go back to normal. But we could use your help getting through these lean times, for now.



### OUR THANKS

The APD wishes to thank the following patrons for their generosity in supporting Merica House from March 1, to October 1, 2011

Ms. Katherine Allston	Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Kovatchitch
Ms. Janet Barnett	Mr. William Marquardt
Ms. Caroline Berrettini	Ms. Jacquelyn McCann
Ms. Carol Blanda	Ms. Cheryl Myers
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Mr. & Mrs. Brendan Johnston	Mr. & Mrs. Ray Young
Deborah and Karen Knowlton	Mr. & Mrs. David Zook
	Manassas St. Thomas United Methodist Women

### Thanks to the Tysons Civitan Club & The Chesapeake Foundation

Kathy Shields, member of the APD Board of Directors, accepts a grant donation from Linda Hadley, President of the Tysons Civitan Club. The grant was received from the Chesapeake Foundation and Tysons Civitan Club in the amount of \$9,000 and will be used to provide new flooring for Merica House in the common areas and four bedrooms. Our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude is extended to all of the members of the Chesapeake Foundation and the Tysons Civitan Club.



## Resident Remarks

### Sean Wawrzaszek

My summer was rough. I went to camp for two weeks this year. The counselor assigned to me was okay, her name was Claire. I left camp injured. I was bitten by a spider/scorpion on my left ankle at camp. It was very painful. Upon my return to Merica House I was hospitalized in the Fairfax Hospital for two weeks. I am not sure if I'll attempt going to camp next summer. My last year's counselor is living nearby and we plan to hang around more often.



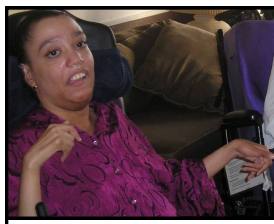
### Deirdre Shields

On Sunday, Sept 11, 2011, Maureen and I, our brother, Andrew, and his girlfriend Astrid went to a major league baseball game to see the Nationals play the Astros. Before the game, Maureen and I met the broadcasters who announce the games on MASN (TV station). Their names were Bob Carpenter and F.P. Santangelo. We had a great time at the game, except we forgot to get a picture with the broadcasters, so we're going to do that next year. Good news, the Nationals WON!



### Sharita Caple

It has been a long hot summer. My room is nice and cool though. I have been reading lots of books and watching my cooking shows on TV! The CD part on my stereo decided to break on me a couple of weeks ago, while I was listening to my Audio Book of City of Falling Angels by Cassandra Clare. So, Orlando found the cause after taking it apart, but he could not find the part that was needed after searching for it. On Tuesday, before the Earthquake that hit here, my Grandmother brought over my new stereo! It is a Sony with an iPod dock. It is great! That is it for now.



### Cathy Parr

Three weeks ago, Mom and Michelle came over with the twins, Declan and Hope, now seven months old. It was a nice visit. I am so proud to be Tia Cathy! It's neat to have two little ones in the family! My friend, Sharita who is like a sister to me pointed out to them that we gave them Build-A-Bears, we named Izzy and Dex. I can't wait for them to grow up so that I can have more fun with them!



### Maureen Shields

This summer I once again went to camp in Connecticut for 12 days. The camp is located in the small town of Hebron, CT. Some of the counselors return each year for another fun-filled summer, while some are new to camp.



Many of the counselors come over here from England, Australia, Germany and other countries. For some it was their first time working in the United States. The counselors are hired through an organization called Camp America. That is how the new counselors find out about the camp, and the old counselors also still come through Camp America.

At the camp, we have a lot of activities to choose from.

We get up bright and early at 7:00 each morning. After breakfast our first activity begins at 10:00 AM. Campers can go swimming from 10 am to noon, or they can do two other activities for an hour each. Other activities include sports, dance, arts & crafts, nature, music & drama, boating, fishing, outdoor living skills, archery, nature walks, and different activities like that.

Next is lunch. Then from 1:00pm to 2:45pm we have rest period. From 3-5pm, some people go swimming and others have two more activities.

Every evening, the campers get together and do one big group activity. For the first night's all-group activity, we have a big campfire, sing songs, eat some more, and have a great time.

Basically, from 7am until 10pm, we are very, very busy, having a lot of fun!

Then everyone goes back to their rooms to get ready for bed, and before you know it the next day once again starts at 7AM. This happens for 12 days straight. By the end of the session, the counselors are tired! They have a total of eight weeks of that. Each session of the camp is a different age group or category of campers with disabilities. Some have MS, autism, etc, and everyone has their own specific session so they are not all clumped together. Adults with physical disabilities are one session, children with physical disabilities are another session, and so on.

I really enjoy going to camp and by the end of the session, I don't want to leave because I am having too much fun. I look forward to going every year, meeting new people and reuniting with my old friends.

I try to keep in contact with my friends throughout the year, via email, phone or Facebook with the help of volunteers such as Lynne Myhre, who is a really good friend.

## By Lynne Myhre, APD Board Director

Harry Merica spent all but nine years of his life in institutions. His severe physical disabilities required 24/7 care, but he was still a young man inside and wanted to live an independent life in the community. He dreamed of a home where young adults like himself could live together, have more control over their lives and contribute to society, yet still receive the 24/7 care they required.

Merica House was established in 1995 to bring Harry's dream to reality. Today, MH residents enjoy high quality care yet retain much control over their own lives, unlike in a nursing home. They also have the companionship of peers, other "younger" adults like themselves who have severe physical disabilities, which they would not have if they lived in nursing homes or alone in separate apartments with personal care aides coming to care for them. At the same time, the cost of Merica House is significantly lower than the cost of either nursing home or individual care, saving the commonwealth of Virginia tens of thousands of dollars each and every year.

Residents take part in community activities, use public transportation with assistance, attend workshops, help with fundraising for various causes, go shopping, eat out with family, and more. They talk, watch movies and listen to music together, help each other with problems, tease each other playfully, and make plans together. When they want a break, they retire to their rooms, either private or shared with one other. They enjoy a quality of life and care that would be impossible on their own or in a nursing home, and it is cost-effective. A recent study showed a resident living at MH rather than in a nursing home saved the state over \$11,000 a year. In addition, the residents of Merica House have their total independence to come and go as they wish.

## Be A Volunteer

### Volunteers Make a Difference

It's not for the money. It's not for fame.

It's not for any personal gain.

It's just for love of fellow man.

It's just to lend a helping hand.

It's not for medals worn with pride.

It's for that feeling deep inside.

It's that reward down in your heart.

It's that feeling that you've been a part

Of helping others, far and near,

That makes you a volunteer

Anonymous

How many minutes are there in a Week?

10,080 Minutes

Americans spend an average of:

720 minutes watching television

360 minutes eating out and socializing

180 minutes on hobbies

120 minutes on sports and exercise

60 minutes on volunteer work and religious activities

Please come meet our residents and make a friend. Consider volunteering at Merica House and help them with their computer, hobbies or just have fun exchanging ideas. If you are interested please call 703-671-7991.



The Alliance for the Physically Disabled is pleased to announce their first holiday fundraiser.

Avoid the crowds and shop from the comfort of your home for that hostess, holiday or teacher gift.

The Sydney Hale Co., a family owned business in Arlington, VA since 2007 is the maker of quality soy candles.

Now thru December 5, 2011 visit the Sydney Hale Co. web site, at [sydneyhaleco.com](http://sydneyhaleco.com). Purchase as many candles that you need and receive 5% off your purchase. In the coupon code box enter [mericafund](#) (all one word, all lower case). When the coupon code is used the Sydney Hale Co. will donate \$5 for each candle purchased to Merica House. We know you will enjoy these candles and thank you for your support. Candles will be shipped to you directly. This is a limited time offer. We thank the Sydney Hale Company for their support to Merica House.

**Smart Phone users can scan the QR Code to access the Sydney Hale Co. web site.**



Alliance for the Physically Disabled  
3705 S. George Mason Dr.  
Apt. 105/106 South  
Falls Church, VA 22041

Presorted Std.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Williamsburg, VA.  
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**We thank the following organizations and churches that continue to support Merica House:**

- America's Charities
- Annandale Rotary Foundation, Inc
- Tysons Civitan Club
- Chesapeake Foundation
- Fairfax County Consolidated Funding Pool
- Fairfax Host Lions Club Charities, Inc.
- Falls Church Garden Club
- Lions Club of Annandale
- Lions Club of Falls Church
- Monticello Council of Republican Women
- Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church
- St James Catholic Church
- United Way

**Executive Board Members**

**President: John Renfro**

**Vice President: Fran Rensbarger**

**V. P. Fund Raising &**

**Recruitment Betty Wawrzaszek**

**Treasurer Mitch Opalski**

**Secretaries Sunny Parr / Fred Day**

**We are on the WEB at:**  
[www.theapd.org](http://www.theapd.org)



Phone: (703) 671-7991 E-mail: apdsuper1@cox.net  
Fax: (703) 671-7991 (call first before sending FAX)



United Way # 8245

CFC # 55797



**Cut on the dotted line**

Merica House  
3705 S. George Mason Dr.  
Apt. 105/106 South  
Falls Church, VA 22041



Independent Living for the Physically Disabled

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am enclosing my donation of \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to "The Alliance for the Physically Disabled, Inc." Thank you.

Alliance for the Physically Disabled is a registered 501© (3) non-profit organization.

Your contribution is tax deductible. **Credit Cards are accepted on THEAPD.ORG**

