



Project Mend-A-House

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Project Mend-A-House Recognized As Charity of the Year

The Knights of Columbus John Paul I Council 7165 recently selected Project Mend-A-House as one of three Charities of the Year. During the Awards Ceremony held at the Knights' Hall in Dale City, Past Grand Knight John Castro announced that Project Mend-A-House was selected after a long review process that required member sponsorship, as well as, endorsements from multiple committees throughout the Arlington Diocese. Along with the prestigious recognition, the Knights also donated a check for \$2,000 to Project Mend-A-House. Accepting the award on behalf of the non-profit organization was Executive Director Andrea Saccoccia. Along with Project Mend-A-House, the Knights of Columbus also recognized the ARC of Prince William and The Father Stefan Home for Unwed Mothers as Charities of the Year.



PMAH Executive Director Andrea Saccoccia accepts the Charity of the Year Award from Past Grand Knight John Castro.

*We're neighbors working with neighbors.
And when we all work together,
everyone in the community benefits.*

Autumn 2007 Edition

A Ramp For All Ages

Unlike most thirteen year-old boys, Kenny is permanently confined to a wheelchair. But like any boy, he longs to play outside with his friends – a wish unfulfilled because his mother simply could not continue to physically carry him down the back stairs. A call to Project Mend-A-House (PMAH) would correct this situation.

Jerry MacDonald quickly drew up plans for a portable ramp to be installed off of the back of the house. He then turned to Buck Carter who located an aluminum portable ramp system donated to PMAH. The team brought the ramp system to Kenny's house and began to assemble it only to discover that one of the railings was broken. Undeterred, Jerry downloaded some instructions from the internet and took the assembly to a local welding company to have it repaired. Back at Kenny's house, Jerry assembled the now-repaired ramp system and presented it to the Prince William County inspector.



Unfortunately the ramp system would not pass inspection because the porch that it was attached to required repairs. Undeterred, yet again, Jerry and the landlord accomplished

the required repairs and presented the entire ramp assembly for inspection. That is, until Jerry was notified that he had just become the proud grandfather of twins, six weeks early! This time, external circumstances prevailed and the inspection was delayed by one day. The ramp finally did pass inspection and Kenny can now enjoy his backyard anytime his Mother allows him.

Dewitt Doerrbecker is an 88 year-old World War II Marine Corps veteran and retired railroad employee. He lives alone and does his own driving. He has a large brace on one leg and walks with difficulty. Unfortunately, he could no longer safely navigate down his stairs without significant assistance – a remedy that would come in the form of a PMAH ramp. Jerry MacDonald fabricated and installed a wood box platform and installed two portable ramps - three feet and ten feet long. He presented this system to Dewitt who was able to negotiate the transition between ramps with his battery-powered scooter after only a couple of tries. And, now, with PMAH's assistance, Dewitt Doerrbecker is able to independently leave his home at any time.



**Support Project Mend-A-House during our upcoming
Taste-of-Town Dinner and Fundraiser on October 17.
Please see page 3 for details!**

From the Executive Director's Desk



Project Mend-A-House (PMAH) is fortunate to be a member agency of the United Way/Combined Federal Campaign

(UW/CFC) and a recipient of a portion of the dollars generated from the United Way's Community Impact grant funds. Through the years, our partnership has resulted in thousands of dollars that have built up our organization.

The United Way number that a donor writes on the pledge card remains unchanged - it is still **#8327**. However, beginning this Fall, a new five-digit number has been assigned to all federal campaign member agencies; please insert **# 57417** on your **Combined Federal Campaign** pledge card. We hope this transition will not deter any of our faithful donors!

We are pleased to welcome Lorraine Bishop as our part-time administrative assistant. After a few years of retirement, Lorraine was gently persuaded, by our own Robin Bayles, to join us at PMAH. Lorraine previously worked for the federal government in various administrative positions. She is a wonderful asset to our organization. If you call the office, you'll hear Lorraine's friendly, compassionate voice.

This year, PMAH is once again partnering with Forest Park High School's Learn and Serve Program led by Shannon Geraghty. On page 5, you'll read about Nick Evans, Simon Feshaye and Tony William's first project.

A recent Washington Post front page article entitled "Brave New Boomers" identified Prince William County as home to the third fastest-growing senior population in the country, nearly tripling in size since 1990. This trend simply brings into focus the importance that our volunteers, business and civic partners; and generous donors play to sustain our home repair program for our vulnerable neighbors.

I would like to encourage you to participate in a couple of upcoming events. On Saturday, October 13, please consider participating in Macy's Shop for A Cause. Simply call Lorraine at the office 703-792-7663 and request a shopping pass. PMAH gets to keep the \$5.00 proceeds and you get to enjoy 10-20% discounts throughout the store all day!

The annual Taste of the Town – Prince William County Style dinner is rapidly approaching - it is on Wednesday, October 17. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. with appetizers and a cash bar. A buffet dinner will be served at 7:00 p.m. The New Dominion Choraliers will once again perform and the Forest Park High School Key Club members will assist in serving the food. Please invite your friends and join us for a wonderful evening of dining and entertainment.

Board of Directors

Fred Parish <i>Chairman</i>	Ernestine Jenkins <i>Vice-Chair</i>
Joe Swetnam <i>Treasurer</i>	Janice Carr <i>Secretary</i>
Rick Baucom	Candi Johnson
Dave Carr	Linda Leiker
Tony Clark	Meg Mountcastle
Kevin English	Gloria Rouse
Beja Harper	Kathy Strauss

Executive Leadership

Andrea Saccoccia <i>Executive Director</i>	Robin Bayles <i>Project Coordinator</i>
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Thoughts from the Project Coordinator



PMAH is very lucky to have many qualified volunteers that do wonderful work in many different areas. We have accomplished quite a bit over the last several

months thanks to volunteers who share their area of expertise with us. However, we are constantly on the lookout for new people to join our ranks.

There are several specialties that we could use. Even though Woodbridge Plumbing helps us with the more complicated jobs, we need volunteers who can do the small plumbing jobs, like sink and tub faucet repairs, as well as minor toilet repairs. We especially need volunteers with plumbing skills in the eastern end of the County.

We are also in need of someone who has expertise in installing electric stair-lifts. Several units have been donated and many of our clients have requested stair climbers for their homes. Please contact the office or e-mail me at r.bayles@verizon.net if you know of a person with skills in this area.

Finally, we are in need of a ramp coordinator in the Manassas area. We are fortunate to have someone who is already working in the eastern end of the County, but we could use someone to coordinate the western end. If you or someone you know is interested in helping us, please let me know.

I want to give my thanks to the faithful volunteers who have been so helpful and willing to work. We are very fortunate to have you and we greatly appreciate you.

Shop at iGive.com to help Project Mend-A-House!

Here's how it works:

1. Join iGive.com to Support Project Mend-a-House. It's FREE, private, & easy.

<http://www.iGive.com/html/refer.cfm?memberid=454372&causeid=41570>

2. Shop the Mall at iGive.com. You'll see familiar stores like Lands' End, Office Depot, JC Penney, Neiman Marcus, Expedia and Barnes & Noble to mention just a few!

3. Watch the \$\$ roll in for Project Mend-a-House! Up to 26% of EACH purchase gets donated!



You Shop, They Win! Help your favorite cause for free.



*We're neighbors working with neighbors.
And when we all work together,
everyone in the community benefits.*

Dear Neighbor,

Come join the fun at the Project Mend-A-House Annual Dinner
Celebrating 23 years of community service to our elderly, disabled and
needy neighbors in Prince William County.

"Taste of the Town - Prince William County-Style" Annual Dinner
will be held at the

VFW Post 1503, 14631 Minnieville Road in Dale City
Wednesday, October 17, 2007
Social time with a cash bar from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm

The event begins with a social hour followed by a buffet dinner hosted
by all of your favorite restaurants and caterers. Come and sample
delicious offerings from over twenty local businesses.

While you dine, enjoy listening to the talented musical group the New
Dominion Choraliers. Join the volunteers, clients, and local community
for an entertaining evening and your chance to win several exciting
door prizes!

Suggested donation is \$25.00. For reservations and ticket information,
please call Ernestine Jenkins at 703-980-0892 or Gloria Rouse at
703-497-8866 or e-mail thechef@georgetowncaterers.com.

For sponsorship opportunities or to donate door prizes, please contact
Andrea at the Project Mend-A-House office at 703-792-7663 or
via e-mail at asaccoccia@pwcs.gov



Macy's Shop-For-A-Cause

There's still time to help Project Mend-A-House by purchasing a \$5 ticket!

Project Mend-A-House retains all ticket proceeds and re-invests them back into the local community.

In return, you will receive a 20% discount on all purchases made on **Saturday, October 13** from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.



Call or E-mail the office today!

Support Project Mend-A-House during the CFC & Local United Way Drive!



For Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capitol Area (CFCNCA), please select **#57417**.



For the local United Way, please select **#8327**.

Be A Star in Your Neighbor's Life!

Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington

Project Mend-A-House is honored to be featured in the 2007-08 *Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington*.

The Catalogue is designed to showcase smaller, local non-profit organizations that focus on environmental, cultural, educational, human services, and international issues.

PMAH was selected as **one of the best small organizations** in the Washington DC region for its excellence, innovation and cost-effectiveness. For more information about the Catalogue or if you would like to request a catalogue ahead of time, please visit their web-site at www.catalogueforphilanthropy-dc.org



Summer Celebrations Honoring Our Best

The entire Project Mend-A-House (PMAH) family came together not once but twice over the summer to share fond memories and bid farewell to three of our most beloved volunteers – Ernie Kish and Carolyn and George Maghan. Together, the three volunteers gave over half a century of dedicated, unselfish service to the most vulnerable residents of Prince William County (PWC), Manassas and Manassas Park.

On Thursday, July 19, Linda and Bob Leiker hosted an informal farewell and barbecue to honor the retiring celebrities. Many current and former volunteers participated, including founding member, Toni Clemons-Porter, reminisced and shared on the profound impact that Ernie, Carolyn and George have made on the local area.

But the major celebration occurred during PMAH's Luau Afternoon fundraiser on Sunday, August 19. Almost 100 PWC neighbors and friends came out to enjoy the delicious Luau food donated by Georgetown Caterers and live Jimmy Buffet-style entertainment thanks to musicians Mike Morch and Todd Hewitt. Along the way, the event raised over \$4,700 for PMAH to re-invest back into the local community. But mostly everyone - volunteers and local dignitaries alike - came out to bid their final farewells and best retirement wishes to Ernie, Carolyn and George. The Honorable John D. Jenkins, Board of County Supervisor for the Neabsco District, read Official commendations on behalf of all of the Supervisors for the retiring volunteers. All of the volunteers signed a framed farewell photo collage. And Executive Director Andrea Saccoccia expressed the sentiment of all when she shared that she had never met volunteers

like Ernie, Carolyn and George who dedicated so many years to work tirelessly for the needy – “You were the best and you will be missed dearly by all of us.”



Standing left-to-right are: Fred Parish, Board of Directors Chairman; Andrea Saccoccia, Executive Director; Ernie Kish, Carolyn Maghan, George Maghan and the Honorable John Jenkins.

Annual Builders' Yard Sale Best Ever!

On June 2, PMAH held its seventh annual Builders' Yard Sale at the PWC Landfill. Thanks to Buck Carter, who coordinated the event, PMAH raised \$7,800, making it our most successful sale ever! This year's event was again sponsored by the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Also, thanks to Prince William Home Improvement, Abbey Carpets, Bean and Mallow Roofing, assistance from our supporters and private donations, there was a wide variety of items to offer our customers. And finally, many, many volunteers gave 100% to help PMAH have a great sale.



Too exhausted to pose, PMAH Volunteer and Board Member Linda Leiker exhibits the fierce dedication that all volunteers demonstrated to help deliver PMAH's most successful Builders' Yard Sale ever.



Volunteer SpotlightJerry MacDonald



It was just about twenty years ago when Jerry MacDonald retired from the Marine Corps after a brilliant 24-year career. At the time, he was seeking to pursue a different career, one where he could share his many gifts and talents. While he possessed natural handyman skills and abilities, he chose instead to reach a different but critical population – PWC's school children. For fourteen years after he retired from the Marine Corps, Jerry taught math at Woodbridge High School. But when time came to put away the chalk and erasers for the last time, Jerry decided to join PMAH so that he could work outdoors while sharing his natural handyman gifts with PWC's most vulnerable population.

From the outset, Jerry has worked almost exclusively on building and designing wheelchair ramps. He “apprenticed” under Jim Kappus and Herb Roundtree, PMAH employees who he deeply admired and learned a great deal from. More recently, Jerry has partnered with Ernie Kish to design and construct literally dozens of wheelchair ramps throughout PWC. His fondest memory is that of an 80-foot ramp that he helped build and deliver in the bitter cold to his Manassas Park client in time for Christmas. Jerry is also extremely proud of the work that Project Mend-A-House performed earlier this year for Staff Sergeant Eugene Simpson, a paralyzed Iraqi veteran, in support of ‘Homes For Our Troops.’

Jerry is married to his sweetheart of 47 years, Janey, and they have two terrific sons and three very special grandchildren, including twins who were born on September 26.

Client Corner

PMAH volunteers have come to the assistance of many clients. Here is a sampling of their stories

As the new academic school year began, Forest Park High School Learn and Serve students looked for ways to gain a better understanding of community programs and services. Project Mend-A-House is fortunate to once again partner with the school system. Under the guidance and direction of Project Mend-A-House volunteer Laurie Zeiszler, seniors Nick Evans, Simon Feshaye, and Tony Williams began “learning and serving.”

The students were correcting Alma Cheatham’s fence. Cheatham, who lives on Concord Drive in Dale City, received a notice from her homeowner’s association citing her for her fence. The newly trained “handy students” with power tools in hand, removed and disassembled the fence panel, replaced the 1x3 wood stringers with 2x4s, reassembled and rehung the fence. In late August, Laurie fractured nine ribs when she fell off a ladder. She is under doctor’s order not to do any home repair projects until early October. Thanks to her three helpers this won’t be a problem.



Nick, Simon and Tony will work with Project Mend-A-House throughout the school year. They are committed to at least 100 service hours. This is the second year Learn and Serve students from Forest Park High School

have teamed with Project Mend-A-House. In addition, Key Club members donate hours to serving the County’s vulnerable residents with home repair projects.

Project Mend-A-House and Sandra Alstater have developed a wonderful working relationship. Project Mend-A-House has completed numerous home repairs for Sandra, who is partially disabled, including installing a bathtub and replacing her rotted bathroom floor and ceiling. In return, through her contacts with a local building contractor, Sandra donated significant amounts of house siding and kitchen cabinets which PMAH sold during the recent Builders’ Yard Sale. Recently, Sandra requested assistance with installing some badly needed siding on the back porch of her home. Naturally, Project Mend-A-House obliged.

PMAH volunteer Ray Stuckey stepped up to help Sandra. The siding that was to be installed was not insignificant – thicker, harder and more durable than aluminum or vinyl. So Ray enlisted the support of the United Methodist Church (UMC) of Gainesville, an organization that has partnered with PMAH numerous times before. On Sept 8, Ray and his eight-person team worked all day – cutting, fitting and installing the siding onto Sandra’s house. A follow-up session was required to install the fascia board and the soffit but Sandra now has a house that she can be very proud of thanks to a mutually beneficial relationship forged between Project Mend-A-House, the United Methodist Church of Gainesville and her.

Sara Fultz is an 80-year old widow who lives alone in her Dumfries

home. Remarkably, since she became dependent on a wheelchair two years ago she has literally become a prisoner in her own home, unable to leave without significant help. A phone call to PMAH would bring the keys to her freedom.



Laurie Zeiszler quickly assessed that the key to enabling Sara’s mobility would be a portable ramp. Leveraging her formidable carpentry skills and home workshop, Laurie

constructed a six foot by eight foot wooden box frame. She then installed the box frame to provide a transition between Sara’s porch and the back door sill. Project Mend-A-House provided a portable ramp which Laurie then installed to the box frame. Within days, PMAH enabled Sara to, once again, stop being a prisoner to her own home, by providing her with a portable ramp to safely come and go as she pleases!

Last year, Project Mend-A-House completed 250 projects for 114 clients, many of these involving significant hours of volunteer planning and labor. Sometimes the clients that PMAH touches require only a simple gesture of support. Like for instance, an 18-year old boy with Muscular Dystrophy. Through Fairfax Hospital’s ‘Access to Care’ Program, PMAH recently donated the one item from our Loan Closet that the boy really needed – a wheelchair – so that he could get back and forth to the school bus and around his house.

How Can I Help?

Project Mend-A-House is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, serving the low-income residents of Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park since 1984. We solicit the skills of volunteer carpenters, plumbers, electricians, painters, gardeners, and others, matching them with people in need of minor home repairs and safety modifications. In addition to volunteering, you can also help bring hope to a client by helping us raise the funds needed to fix up our neighborhoods and community. Your contributions are tax deductible and 100% re-invested into the local community. Please visit our web site at www.pmahweb.org.

- I would like to help volunteer to make clients' homes safer and restore their cherished independence.
- I would like to help PMAH raise funds with my tax-deductible contribution.
Enclosed is my check for _____ *Please mail checks to: Project Mend-A-House, 7987 Ashton Ave, Suite 231, Manassas, VA 20109*

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

E-Mail Address _____



You can now also make a secure online donation on the PMAH web-site using PayPal!

How Can My Organization Help?

Are you seeking ways for your business to further impact your local community? Are you looking for fun corporate teambuilding events while at the same time bringing compassion and social justice to those local residents in greatest need? Consider partnering with PMAH! Please contact us today and we can show you how *your* business can work together with *other neighbors* to benefit *everyone* in the community.



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United Way Member Agency #8327
Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area (CFCNCA) # 57417
Prince William Regional Chamber Community Services
Organization Business of the Year Recipient

