



**DIDLAKE**  
Incorporated

# Friends & Family



Volume 1  
Number 2

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## Despite Anthrax Scare Didlake Keeps DOE Mailrooms Open

Just after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, anthrax-tainted mail was detected in Congressional Offices and Senate Offices.

The U.S. Postal Service at Brentwood processed the anthrax-tainted mail—contaminating the automatic mail equipment and possibly spreading the deadly anthrax spores to other mail. Mail processed at Brentwood, destined for mail processing facilities and mailrooms within the Federal Government in Washington, D.C., could have spread anthrax to hundreds of offices and to thousands of people. Realizing this, the U.S. Postal Services notified Federal Agencies to close their mailrooms until they could check the facilities and decontaminate processed mail.

Accordingly, the U.S. Postal Service contacted the Department of Energy where Didlake operates the mailrooms in the Forestall Building in D.C. and the DOE facility in Germantown, Maryland. When notified to close the mailroom and to send everyone home, Didlake employees had a better idea. Mary Trammell said she did not want to go home and, “Why not process the mail in another location—at least we could process internal and interoffice mail?” DOE took her suggestion and temporarily moved both mailrooms, added the equipment, and put everyone to work. As a result, the mail moved throughout DOE. *continued on next page*

*When notified to close the mailroom and to send everyone home, Didlake employees had a better idea*

## Letter from the President & CEO

Dear Friends and Family,  
They say each journey begins with a single step. Twenty-five years ago, when I started my new position as Chief



Executive Officer at Didlake, there were days when I thought I'd stepped right off a cliff!

The challenges were enormous. In the mid-seventies social reform and class action



lawsuits had effectively ended the system that routinely institutionalized individuals with developmental disabilities. Many of the institutions had closed or scaled back and their occupants returned to their families and communities. Home care and special education in the public school systems was the new reality. The reforms promised opportunities for meaningful participation *continued on next page*

## The Past 35 years of service

Didlake School opens with  
16 students.

Education for All Handicapped  
Children Act (PL 94-142)  
approved by Congress.

## Letter from the President & CEO

*continued from cover page*

DOE Employees  
received awards  
for their loyalty and  
determination to keep the  
mail moving during a frightening situation.

in society – now society had to find ways to live up to its promise. At Didlake, we made the transition from a school to an occupational center. Training and rehabilitative programs needed to be established. We set about developing small business operations that created jobs.

Today, Didlake is a recognized leader in creating those promised opportunities. I'm enormously proud to work with so many dedicated community and government leaders, Board members, and professional staff in developing an organization that provides employment and rehabilitative services to more than 1,000 individuals.

As CEO, my most important role is to represent the Didlake consumers –people whose enthusiasm and determination continue to amaze me. For instance, in this issue of "Friends and Family", you'll read about how one group of Didlake employees helped keep a crucial mailroom open during the anthrax scare, while another earned a coveted award for outstanding service under contract to the Defense Logistics Agency. You'll also learn about one consumer who managed amazing personal growth in a year of very difficult challenges.

This is a journey that is far from over – some days I still feel like I'm stepping off a cliff! The challenges are ongoing as we look to serve a growing base of consumers in a number of new locations, and develop a long term care program that is desperately needed. I am deeply grateful for all your support over the past twenty-five years, and I invite you to join us as we continue to pave the way toward a better future for one of the most underserved segments of our society.

Best regards,

*Rex Parr*

President & CEO



## Despite Anthrax Scare Didlake Keeps DOE Mailrooms Open

*continued from cover page*

Ms. Trammell's suggestion and the staff's loyalty and determination to keep the mail moving during a most frightening situation caught the attention of the DOE's top management. On March 14, 2002, Secretary of Energy Abraham presented the Didlake employees with a Certificate of Appreciation for their show of patriotism and their willingness to continue operations. Congratulations to all! ❖

## County Supervisors Help Ease Transition From High School to Work

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the members of the Boards of County Supervisors for both Prince William and Fauquier Counties in Virginia. Recently each Board voted to allocate funding to assist young people with developmental disabilities as they make the transition from high school to a work environment. Support such as this from our local governments goes a long way toward helping these individuals find their way to productive roles as citizens of our communities.

*Thank you for your continuing support!*

Didlake turns over building and 34 students to local public schools who have formed Special Education programs. Didlake Work Activities Center starts a new program for 16 individuals who are beyond school age.

Rexford G. Parr begins as President of Didlake. Mailing business began providing work to 16 adults.

Didlake Electronics Assembly business begins, providing 20 new jobs. Competitive job placement service began.

## A Look Inside The Didlake Foundation

Although The Didlake Foundation has existed “on the books” as a 501(c)3 corporation for the past twenty years, it did not become active until 2001, when the Board of Directors of Didlake, Inc. created a Foundation Board of Directors. We asked Elaine Wright, Director of Development for the Foundation to explain the Foundation’s new direction and goals:

### *Elaine, why did Didlake decide to staff the Foundation and make it active?*

Families were asking for services that weren’t otherwise funded. Didlake decided that the time had come to enter the world of philanthropy and ask people in the community to participate.

### *What kinds of services will be supported by the Foundation?*

The Foundation will provide critical funding for a number of Didlake programs. Our top priority is the establishment of a long-term care program called the Personal Support Network (PSN) -- developed in partnership with the ARC of Northern Virginia. There is a critical need for this kind of service, and there isn’t public funding of any kind to provide for it. I’m particularly pleased to tell you that the Foundation’s Board of Directors is creating a fund in honor of our President and CEO Rex Parr’s twenty-fifth anniversary with Didlake, which will be used specifically to support the PSN.

### *Why has the need for long-term care become so critical?*

Up until the late nineteen-sixties and early seventies, society’s answer to providing care for people with severe disabilities was to place them in publicly funded institutions – often for life. The reforms of that time recognized that these people were often more than capable of functioning very well within our communities. So, we stopped institutionalizing people and focused on providing the training, support and rehabilitative services that would allow them to participate in and contribute to society. That was a wonderful change.

Today, many people who might have spent their lives in an institution are living happier, more fruitful lives

with their families. But, the public funds intended to follow these individuals out of the institutions and into the so-called “mainstream” never really arrived. Now, parents desperately seek a way to provide for their adult children with disabilities after they are gone. It’s difficult to face our own mortality. Imagine what it is like wondering how, or even if, your child will be cared for. With adequate funding and support from the Foundation, the Personal Support Network is going to be a real lifeline for these families.

### *Virginia is a fairly wealthy state. Isn’t public funding adequate to cover these needs?*

Unfortunately, the answer is no. In fact, a study by the University of Colorado showed that in the year 2000, Virginia ranked 45<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states in the amount of money spent on community services for individuals with mental retardation, down from 29<sup>th</sup> place in 1977.\* Individuals with disabilities are one of the most underserved segments of our state’s population. That is why we activated The Didlake Foundation – to bring additional resources to bear in the form of direct support from our constituents.

### *How has the community responded so far?*

Very well. People know and value the things we do, and they recognize the need for the Foundation. In this environment though, there is competition for every philanthropic dollar. That’s why I’m pleased to have a Board of Directors that is so committed. With their hard work and the support of our community and Didlake’s senior management, not to mention our “friends and family”, I’m optimistic that the Foundation will do some wonderful things in the years to come. ❁

*\*from an article by Elizabeth Simpson in the Virginia Pilot, July 9, 2002.*

Didlake wins one of the first Supported Employment grants in a national initiative. Emphasis on individual placements and community-based mobile crews and enclaves.

Didlake builds new 12,000 sq ft facility on Breeden Avenue, Manassas. Programs serve over 300 people with 37 consumers entering competitive jobs.

Didlake takes over operations of ACE in Alexandria, VA and its 60 employees.



## Outstanding Service by Didlake Employees Earns Recognition from Defense Logistics Agency

At the Defense Logistics Agency's (DLA) headquarters in Ft. Belvoir, Va., 60 Didlake employees provide custodial services and support for a 900,000 square foot facility occupied by 4,000 employees. Selected as custodial contractor for the complex in April 2000, the Didlake team

continued Didlake's longstanding tradition of excellent service for all of its customers by performing at the highest levels and exceeding the requirements of the contract.

This year, the team's outstanding performance led to its nomination and ultimate selection as DLA's Outstanding Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program Vendor. The

JWOD program provides for certain federal contracts to be awarded only to vendors that primarily employ individuals with disabilities. DLA Support Services Corporate Contracting nominated Didlake for the award. The nomination and selection was based on Didlake's innovative applications in government contracting and outstanding customer support.

*...the Didlake team has continued Didlake, Incorporated's longstanding tradition of excellent service for all of its customers by performing at the highest levels and exceeding the requirements of the contract.*

Presenting the award was DLA Director, Vice Admiral Keith W. Lippert at the Business Alliance Awards luncheon on July 12 at the Springfield Hilton Hotel. Rex Parr, Didlake's President and

CEO, accepted the award on behalf of the sixty Didlake employees. He said, "I am honored to represent this outstanding group of people who proudly service the DLA facility." ❖

## Didlake's Community Partners

We thank the many Community Partners who make Didlake services possible. On behalf of those families and individuals whom we assist, we thank you for your unwavering generosity. Together we will continue to create opportunities that enrich the lives of people with disabilities.

7-11 Store  
 Abracadabra  
 Aerie Conference Center  
 Mr. Brett Affholter  
 Ms. Karen Baker  
 Alexandria Community Services Board  
 American Woodmark  
 Arlington County Community Services Board  
 Aquatic Fitness  
 Atlantic Coast  
 Big Lots  
 BJ's  
 Blockbuster  
 Blue Ridge Cab

Mr. Andrew Breeden  
 Mr. and Mrs. Avery Bull  
 Burger King  
 Burlington Coat Factory  
 Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Burke  
 Cable and Wireless  
 Captain D's  
 Chuck E. Cheese  
 Comfort Inn  
 Mr. and Mrs. Donald Cook  
 Mr. Roger J. Costello  
 Mr. Donald E. Coulter, P.C.  
 Country Cookin  
 Mrs. Connie Cooper Covington  
 Damon's  
 Datatel

Denny's  
 Ms. Mary Edwards  
 Estate of Rosemary Nicholson  
 Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board  
 Fauquier Dem  
 FCE Benefit Administrators, Inc.  
 Federal Highway Administration  
 Food Lion  
 Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Foor  
 Giant Food  
 Ms. Marilyn H. Ginsberg  
 Mr. and Mrs. Doanld Grogan  
 Gold Corral  
 Mr. H.S. Meade Gwinn  
 Ms. M. Thompson Haight

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Halbert  
 Hampton Inn  
 High Purity Systems  
 Home Depot  
 Jiffy Lube  
 Kentucky Fried Chicken  
 Kmart  
 Lake FX Park  
 Loudoun County Community Services Board  
 Manassas Junction Education Center  
 Manpower  
 Faculty and Staff of Margaret M. Pierce Elementary School  
 Marshall's Department

Didlake wins contracts at the Pentagon and Army National Guard. Didlake begins maintaining Manassas Mall.

Didlake provides jobs for more than 500 people with disabilities and supports 45 people in competitive employment.

Didlake is receives an Excellence Award for its outstanding work on government contracts. Didlake merges with FORE, Inc. in Remington, VA. Community Inclusion Program began.

# A Consumer's Story of Determination

Those who know Chris Beckles best use one word to describe him - determination. That's a quality that served him well in recent times. A Didlake consumer since 1990 and a participant in the Sheltered Employment Program, Chris faced some difficult challenges and came through with flying colors to create his own personal success story.

"Oh, he is most definitely a determined person," says Wayne Wirick, Program Services Coordinator at Didlake. "Chris is the kind of person who has always had certain goals and he's determined to achieve them. This past year has been pretty tough, and some people under those circumstances might be tempted to slack off a bit. But for Chris it's been just the opposite – all the adversity just makes him work harder to get where he wants to be."

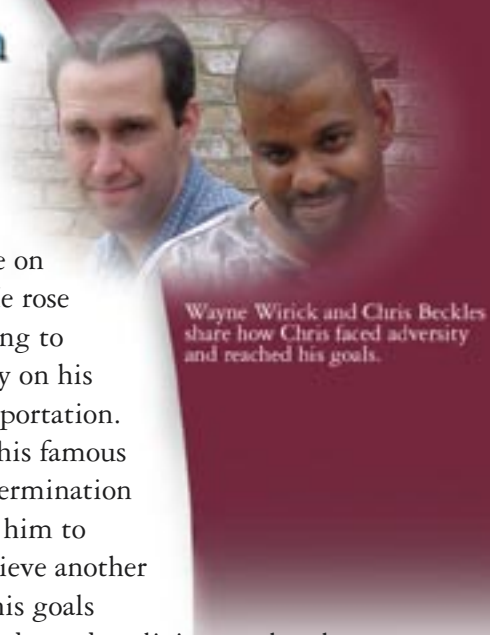
Earlier this year Chris lost his mother after a long illness, with whom he had lived his entire life. Additionally, the staff of the recycling crew at the Manassas Mall where he is employed was reorganized

and reduced. Chris stayed on, but was asked to work more independently and take on more responsibility. He rose to that challenge, getting to and from work each day on his own using public transportation. Finally this past June, his famous

*"...all the adversity just makes him work harder to get where he wants to be."* Wayne Wirick, Program Services Coordinator

determination led him to achieve another of his goals – independent living – when he moved into his own apartment.

Says Chris, "I miss my mother a lot, and it's not always easy living on my own. But I think she is proud of me and knows that I'm taking care of myself now. I guess I'm pretty proud of myself, too." It's fair to say that his friends and colleagues at Didlake, who are busy planning a housewarming party for Chris, are pretty proud of him too. ❖



Wayne Wirick and Chris Beckles share how Chris faced adversity and reached his goals.

- |                                    |  |  |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Meadow's Golf                      | Petsmart   | Red Lobster                              | Mr. Brian W. Teater, Jr.                       |
| Merriemfield Garden                | Play and Learn Day   | Mr. and Mrs. Dave Riffe                  | Ted Britt Ford                                 |
| Minnieland                         | Ms. Virginia Powell  | Mr. Louis Rodenberg, Jr.                 | United Way of Prince William County            |
| Mt. Vernon Inn                     | Prince William County Bar Association, Inc.                | RSC Rental                               | UNO's  |
| Mr. and Mrs. William Mullen        | Prince William Golf Club                                   | Safeway                                  | Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services |
| Navy Federal Credit Union          | Prince William County Community Services Board             | Schirmirs                                | Walmart  |
| Nokesville UMC                     | Prince William County-Greater Manassas Chamber of Commerce | Ms. Shirley B. Stalnaker                 | Warrenton Overlook                             |
| Nordstrom Rack                     | Prince William County Landfill                             | Shopper's Food                           | WaWa   |
| Oak Springs Nursery                | Prince William County Schools                              | Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Shuman               | Woodbridge Community Services Board            |
| Oak Woods Nursery                  | Rappahannock Area Community Services Board                 | Stafford County Community Services Board | Mr. and Mrs. Edward Wright, III                |
| Old Country Buffet                 | Rappahannock-Rapidan Community Services Board              | Stone and Company                        | Wonder Child                                   |
| Orange County Land                 |  | Swart, Lelande & Associates, P.C.        | Yappie Cut                                     |
| Reverend and Mrs. Frederick Parish |  | T.J. Maxx                                |  |
| Mr. and Mrs. Rexford G. Parr, Jr.  |  | Taco Bell                                |  |
| J. C. Penney's                     |  | Target                                   |  |

*If you would like to make a gift to Didlake, please make your check to The Didlake Foundation, 8621 Breeden Avenue, Manassas, VA 20110 or call The Foundation at (703) 365-8679.*

Added a contract at Department of Energy.

CARF accreditation is awarded to 4 Didlake rehabilitation services. Added contracts at Department of the Treasury & FBI.

Didlake operates 3 Work Centers, 10 JWOD sites and enrollment was at 868 people. Added a contract at Defense Logistics Agency & Peace Corps.

## New Board Members and Officers for Didlake, Inc. and The Didlake Foundation



For organizations such as Didlake and The Didlake Foundation, there is no component more critical to success than the leadership of a strong Board of Directors. Board members oversee the development of policy and procedures, and provide the guidance that keeps our efforts “in

step” with current issues and challenges. They serve as ambassadors within our communities and governments, and they are tireless advocates for our mission. They deal with the real world issues of running a business, without losing sight of the ideals that brought them here.

We are proud to recognize the following individuals, elected in June as Board officers or members. They represent some of the best and the brightest among our area’s business and civic leaders. We look forward to working with each member.

Newly elected officer of the Didlake, Inc. Board of Directors are:

- Chairperson: Pam Moody, Principal at Sudley Elementary School, Board member since 1992.
- Vice Chairman: Don Plebuch, previous Chairman of the Board of F.O.R.E., which merged with Didlake in 1995. Board member since 1996.
- Treasurer: Karen Brown, owner of Brown and Associates in Manassas, Board member since 2000.
- Secretary: Mickey Robertson, Manassas resident and a Board member since 1973.

#### *Didlake Officers above:*

L-R: Mickey Robertson, Secretary; Don Plebuch, Vice Chairman; Karen Brown, treasurer; and Pamela Moody, chairwoman

Kevin Ryan, Senior Industrial Engineer at Micron Technologies was elected as a new member of the Didlake Board.

Newly elected members of The Didlake Foundation Board of Directors are:

- Christopher Brown, resident and former Mayor of the town of Dumfries
- Stephen Danziger, a senior executive with Micron Technologies
- Keith Scarborough, employee of the Association of National Advertisers
- G. E. Buck Waters, leader of the Waters Foundation

A special note of recognition is due to Mr. Roger Costello, a Didlake associate since 1989, who retired from the Didlake Board of Directors in June. Mr. Costello received a plaque of appreciation commemorating his years of outstanding service and dedication. We are grateful for his many contributions. ❖



#### *Foundation Board:*

First Row, L-R: Mickey Robertson, Secretary, Rexford Parr, President, Donna Hollis, Treasurer; Second Row, L-R: Steve Danziger, Keith Scarborough, G.E. Buck Waters, the Rev. Frederick Parish, Chairman, Christopher Brown

Didlake expands its Community Inclusion Program to Woodbridge, VA. The Didlake Foundation is formed. Added a contract at Department of Energy in Germantown

Didlake expands the Community Inclusion Program to Alexandria, VA. Didlake kicks off the Personal Support Network in conjunction with the Arc

of Northern Virginia, to provide long-term care coordination for families who have a loved one with a disability. Services provided to 1,171 people with disabilities.

## Community Inclusion Program Expands to Alexandria

On October 22 an Open House will celebrate the Grand Opening of our newest location for Didlake's Community Inclusion Program (CIP). Located in Alexandria, Virginia, the new location has the capacity to eventually serve up to 60 people on a daily basis. While the mail services remain, a micrographics operation operated in this location was relocated to Didlake's facility in Manassas.

The Community Inclusion Program provides Day Support Services for individuals with developmental disabilities and offers four program options:

- Employment
- Community Activities
- Adult Education
- Therapeutic Services (including music, art and recreational therapies).

The CIP's goal is to fully integrate participants into the community. Individuals may participate in one or all of the program options, depending on their interests and needs.

With its goal of community integration, the CIP serves participants in their communities, rather than busing everyone to one large facility. To assist in realizing this vision, CIP Director Andrew Clark and his team developed a business plan for creating new locations quickly and cost effectively. Clark said, "The plan tells us exactly what needs to occur – from equipping the kitchen to staffing the operation, to computer systems, and office furniture."

The CIP is Didlake's fastest growing program. We are all very excited about the opening of another CIP location and want to extend a warm welcome to everyone joining us there. ❖

### *Community Inclusion Program locations include:*

Alexandria, VA  
Manassas, VA  
Woodbridge, VA

## 25 Years of Leadership CEO Rex Parr Celebrates Silver Anniversary

In 1977 when Rex Parr began his tenure as Chief Executive Officer at the newly-named Didlake Occupational Center, he took over an operation that served sixteen adults on an annual operating budget of \$65,000. Since that time, his leadership, sound business skills, and



unswerving dedication to the Didlake mission were key elements in our growth and success.

The timeline above highlights some of the key events of the past twenty-five years. Today, Didlake is a much bigger organization, with more locations, serving many more people. The challenges of managing such growth while holding fast to our core principles are many. Our CEO must play the roles of businessman, activist, politician, and occasionally "father confessor." Mr. Parr has done so, with style and unflinching good humor, for twenty-five years. Over the years, his leadership steered Didlake to help thousands of people with disabilities gain access to opportunities that enrich their lives and add value to our community. ❖

## Didlake Shows Support to Community United Way

United Way of the National Capital Area (UWNCA) has come under fire recently for questionable business practices. Didlake families and friends might rightfully ask "how do problems at UWNCA effect donations to Didlake and other favorite causes?"

Donations made through the United Way have been an important source of support for Didlake. Many of our most-needed programs were started with grants from

# Didlake Shows Support to Community United Way

UWNCA. In recent years, however, the central grant-making process has declined in importance. It has been replaced by direct designations and grants made by our local United Way organizations (Prince William, Fairfax, Piedmont, etc.)

We are aware of your concerns about UWNCA. Nevertheless, we continue to have confidence in our local United Way Agencies. United Way donors can protect their investment by designating the United Way member-agency they want their money to go to (Didlake's designation # is 8084). Yes, there will be a modest administrative fee and a collection allowance. But those are reasonable and standard costs.

UWNCA is one chapter of a much larger United Way organization that has an outstanding national reputation. While our regional chapter obviously needs to do some internal process improvement, they assure us those changes being made swiftly. We trust that UWNCA will emerge from its current challenges a stronger, more accountable organization.



8621 Breeden Avenue • Manassas, Virginia 20110

## Didlake, Inc. *Board of Directors*

<i>Chairman</i>	Pamela N. Moody
<i>Vice Chairman</i>	Donald Plebuch
<i>Treasurer</i>	Karen Brown
<i>Secretary</i>	Mickey Robertson
Fred L. Allen	David C. Mabie
Jeffrey Cherry	Rev. Frederick L. Parish
Timothy A. Cope	Joseph Pascale, Ph.D.
Leota Gaither	Richard Ratcliffe
William Greaver	Kevin Ryan
H. S. Meade Gwinn	Mickey Robertson

## The Didlake Foundation *Board of Directors*

<i>Chairman</i>	Rev. Frederick L. Parish
<i>President</i>	Rexford G. Parr
<i>Treasurer</i>	Donna Hollis
<i>Secretary</i>	Mickey Robertson
Christopher Brown	
Stephen Danziger	
Keith Scarborough	
G.E. Buck Waters	

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