

# The HIRRS Circulator

October 2014, Issue Twelve

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*Circulator staffers hard at work*

Hello, Readers!

Summer is past, and fall is here. We had a fun summer, filled with adventures, sun, exciting outings, and 90 degree weather. Even though it's October, we want to share with you our fun times we had during the summer. We are looking forward to cooling off, football season, fall activities, and the leaves changing beautiful colors. We have had some changes over the summer, with staff and clients leaving, and new staff and clients joining us, which you will learn about in this issue. You will also read some unique and imaginative stories that we have come up with in the last few months.

Thanks so much for reading our Newsletter. We hope you enjoy it and that you will continue to read it forever!

Kind Regards,

The Super Cool Circulator Staff



## Happy Birthday to all the July, August, and September babies!

Jonathan T - July 4  
Mary Jane - July 9  
Rashida - July 11  
Trish D - July 12  
Carrie P - July 13  
Jermaine L - July 14  
Jason L - July 22  
Bryan B - August 8

Justin H - August 13  
Jason P - August 16  
Jeff W - August 17  
Fatouma - August 24  
Rick - August 25  
Duncan M - September 5  
Sean S - September 7  
Liz K - September 12

# What's new at HIRRS

## Interview with Emily

By Ben G

Emily is a new staff member in the day program. I interviewed her for the newsletter and this is what I learned.

### What is your favorite color?

My favorite color is very dark blue.

### What places have you lived?

I grew up in a military family, so we moved around a lot. I have lived in 14 different places, 9 states, and one territory overseas.

### Are you in school? If so, where do you go to school?

I am currently a graduate student at George Washington University.

### What do you like to do in your free time?

In my free time, I like to do ballet, play cello, and read a lot of books.

### What do you like about working at HIRRS?

HIRRS has been wonderful so far! I love getting to know the clients better, going on outings, and getting to lead groups.

## Film Group Review

Ian C

There is a new group at HIRRS where we view a variety of short films, sometimes Academy Award nominees. My favorite film we've seen so far is *Elefante*, the story of a guy who literally turns into an elephant. But we realized during discussion after the movie that the story didn't stop there. When we talked about the movie at greater length and our reflections made us realize how the man's life grew changed and maybe grew for the better as he became closer to his son as the transformation process to an elephant proceeded.

We have watched two other films up to this point: *Hiccup*, the story of a man who can't do anything about his hiccups despite everything that he has possibly tried until he is finally cured after he gets really angry about it, and *Eugene*, the story of a man on a business trip to Washington, DC, who finds all of his wishes granted by a mysterious computer that is delivered to his hotel room. Some of these movies can be dark, but they definitely provoke us and make us think.



Welcome, Emily!

## Creative Movement Group Review

By Trish D

This group is a form of yoga and cardio combined. There are many benefits from creative movement group, including better coordination, and improved sleep. It works your brain, heart, and muscles. The new group incorporates all of the exercises we learn. This is a great group that should be continued, and I am not alone in that opinion. Emily is the staff member who runs the group.



Creative Movement Group

# Who's Who at HIRRS?

## Interview with Claire

By Jason L

I interviewed Claire for the newsletter. She used to work at HIRRS, and is now in graduate school.

### Did you enjoy your time here at HIRRS?

Very much. It's the longest I've ever stayed at a job so that tells you something about how much I've enjoyed HIRRS and the people here.

### What will your next adventure be after leaving here? What school will you be attending?

I'm selling my soul to graduate school. I'm going to study Clinical Social Work at George Mason University.

### Jason: What are you going to miss most about HIRRS?

Seeing clients and staff every day. I'm going to miss watching clients and hearing about the new things going on in their lives.

### I found my interview with you very soothing and calm, so what is your fondest memory of me? And don't say I stink because I always smell good (or try to).

My favorite memory of Jason Leonard is all the way back to when I first started and one of my first groups was cooking group and we made a red velvet cake. I'm not sure, but I think he ate a little cake with his frosting.

### I'm asking this question because inquiring minds want to know- who is your favorite human at HIRRS?

Wouldn't you like to know- just kidding! I love everyone here. I'm so lucky to have met and made friends with everyone. I'm going to really miss seeing their face every day. But I'll be back to visit!



Welcome, Allison!

## Interview with Alexa

By Tim C

I interviewed Alexa for the newsletter. She used to work at HIRRS and is now off in Boston getting a Masters and working!

### Where did you go after leaving HIRRS?

I moved to Boston to attend a graduate program in mental health counseling. I am also working at a school for kids who have TBIs.

### How's Boston treating you?

Boston is great! It's a beautiful city with a lot of history. It's a little bit colder than I would like it to be though.

### Do you like graduate school?

I like graduate school a lot! The classes and professors are very interesting.

### What classes are you taking?

I am currently taking four classes: Counseling Theory & Practice, Substance Abuse Treatment, Lifespan Development, and Domestic Violence & Neglect

### Do you miss HIRRS?

Yes! I miss working with the clients and staff very much.

### What is your favorite memory from HIRRS?

This is a tough question because I have so many great memories from HIRRS. I always enjoyed going to the barbecues at Brooke Meadow because there was delicious food and I was able to interact with clients in a more informal setting. Everyone always had a great time at the barbecues, so I would say that those are my favorite memories.

## Interview with Allison

By Andre B

I interviewed Allison, our fall speech intern, for the newsletter.

### How are you doing?

I'm doing well. I'm really happy it's fall and I'm enjoying the weather!

### Why do you want to become a speech pathologist?

I want to help people communicate. Communication is so important in everyday life.

### Where did you go to college?

I went to Penn State for college, and I am now getting my Master's degree at Towson University.

### Why did you want to do your internship at HIRRS?

I'm interested in Traumatic Brain Injury. I also was very attracted to the non-traditional environment at HIRRS

### Do you have any special talents?

Not really, but I have a lot of interests. I love hiking, all outdoors activities, fashion, and spending time with my family and friends.

# Creative Expression

## Fall Colors: A Fresh Perspective

*Autumn is here with its beauty and its quiet pace. Take a minute to stop and appreciate the smell of falling leaves, to think about the process of change, and to accept what comes with change. And, of course, take a minute to enjoy the fabulous fall colors!*



**"Autumn Skies"**



**"A Poem for Autumn"**



**"Autumn Rain"**

*Inspired by the season, participants of Svetlana's Creative Expression Group talked about fall as a time of a year and a stage of a person's life. They looked at paintings by professional artists found on the Internet, and were encouraged to notice traditional autumn colors of yellow, red, orange, and brown as well as unusual shades of purple, pink, blue or white. You can see results of their own explorations in pastels below.*



**"A Leaf with holes in it" by Ian C.**



**"Time to fish" by Duncan M.**



**"Fall in Utah" by Mark S.**



**"Fall into a new season" by Jermaine L.**



**"Fall" by Trish D.**



**"Fall is rest time" by Nicholas M.**

*In addition to their interpretations of fall colors, participants of Svetlana's Creative Expression group were also asked to write a poem in the form of a shopping list, a magic spell, a recipe, or a horoscope. The task proved to be challenging, but the resulting poems are deep, funny, and unique just like our poets!*

### **The Prize I won at O'Connor's**

By Ian C.

The pub I frequent had a contest  
Put your number into a can  
And if it's picked  
If that number's yours  
You will win the prize.  
What was the prize, you ask?  
We didn't know.  
But it was yours truly that won.

The prize it turned out was chug free all night long.  
The whole rest of the night.  
Beer 1...2...3 that's how it started  
Until the green snoopy appeared. That's right...  
The dog from the comics turned colors.  
He talked, too. He kept telling me to take another sip.  
"Another...again..." he said.  
And then it happened. I swear it was the beagle's spell.  
I puked for the next ½ hour and passed out.  
I woke up in the pub at 9:00am the next morning seeing green dots.  
No one was there.  
I was locked in.  
I heard dog barks.  
I fell back asleep until O'Connor's opened up again that evening.  
Now I had to pay again, but I just ordered a Pepsi.

### **Horoscope of Summer**

By Mark S.

Babies from the months of June through August will have the gifts of  
Love, caring, understanding, listening skills, but with a strong  
Will of I can do it myself don't you dare help me.  
All of the signs mean you will be a strong, understanding  
Person with strong values and a loving heart so  
all I can  
Say is hip hop hurray amen.

### **Untitled**

By Nicholas M.

It's so bright  
I wonder what I'm going to do tonight.  
I have to protect myself  
These guys are trying to get at my wealth.  
So now I got to look in my magic book  
To get these guys off my hook.  
I found a great spell  
That will see these two guys running while they yell.  
I picked out a spell and said "Abracadabra!"  
This made them fall like two girls looking for a man.  
I totally got their minds in the sand.

### **Recipe for Peace on Earth**

By Jermaine L.

1. Compliment, 2. Learning something new daily, 3. Polite, 4. Caring, 5. Sharing, 6. Waiting to start over back today.  
Sometimes getting what you want is not all it is cracked up to be.  
When you wake up and start your day  
And it still seems the same as yesterday  
Even though you are doing something different.  
What seemed like it should be  
On the outside looking in  
Because no matter how good things are in your life  
The bad times are inevitable and you keep experiencing both throughout life.  
No matter how good things are going from the looks of them on the outside.

### **Horoscope for Romance**

By Trish D.

Come one day, you will reach new heights.  
Every endeavor you make will be great.  
You will see exciting new sights  
From which you rediscover yourself.  
On the 14h, you will meet someone new.  
Will there be romance to brew?

# Summer Activities

## **My Movie Class**

*By Ben G.*

I am currently taking a film class at Montgomery College this summer. We watch classic children's movies in class. The movies I have watched so far in the class are Lassie Comes Home, Indiana Jones The Raider of The Lost Ark, E.T. and Bambi. After watching each movie we talk about the characters in the movie. We also talk about what our favorite part of the movie and what kind of changes we would make to it if we had any. I enjoy the class very much.

## **The HIRRS Garden**

*By Duncan M.*

Let's go back to the garden, my friends. Everything is going just great, the veggies are doing okay. However, we have a little friend that used to come to visit us at our plot every once in a while. Well, it seems like he or she is coming a bit more than we thought, because the last time we were at the garden, we caught the little beggar right there in the act! Well, being the nice animal lovers that we are, we could not hurt it, so we simply chased it out and asked it not to come back. Well, things are okay now but I can't say that they are great. Our guest ate a lot of our produce, but that is alright because we still have a lot left. We shall prevail!



*Our friend at the garden!*

## **My Vacation**

*By Liz K.*

Have you ever been on a cruise? I'm going to tell you about my trip this summer with Frontier Travel Camp.

Before we embark on our cruise in Europe we visited Canada. First we went to Montreal. We visited and saw beautiful parks. Then we went to Quebec and took a tour of a beer factory. We learned how they make beer.

After Canada we took an 8-hour plane ride to Rome, Italy. It was an overnight flight which means we had to sleep on the plane. Let me put it to you this way, it was not very comfortable. In Rome, we walked around and ate pizza. The pizza there is flat, but really really good. After Rome, we boarded the cruise ship. The cruise ship took us to different ports in Italy and Greece and Turkey. I don't mean the turkey you eat (gobble, gobble), I mean the country. In Venice, Italy it rained and we got soaking wet. It was not pleasant. I tried gelato, which is very similar to ice cream. I loved it. I didn't have a favorite place because I liked them all so much. If you ever get the opportunity, I recommend you go to Venice, Italy because it is very romantic and beautiful. Thanks for reading my story.

## **My Trip to Florida**

*By Eric M.*

I am writing about my summer trip to Florida. I went to Florida with my mom and my sister Jill, but we stopped in North Carolina to see my aunt Mary Jane and my uncle Bill. They live in Greenville, North Carolina. Then my mom and my sister Jill and I drove down to Cocoa Beach, FL. We went to the beach.

## **Red Wiggler Farm**

*By Dave H.*

The Red Wiggler Farm is in Clarksburg, a few miles north of Germantown. It's on Ridge Road. It is an organic farm where they do not use pesticides, they use humans. It is a couple acres of land where they grow vegetables. Their biggest problem is groundhogs. They will make tunnels underneath the fence, surrounding the crops. Daily they have a guy come and lay out traps; it'll catch them just for the dude to come and take them somewhere far away and release them. They always come back. At night, when the rest of us humans are sleeping, those groundhogs are having a smorgasbord!

# Outings Recap

## The Strathmore Mansion

By Marcia Y.

On July 2, 2014, I went to Strathmore Mansion with Svetlana and Lisa to see the "Gold Rush" exhibition. They have tea parties at the mansion. I saw beautiful pictures. They were so colorful with plastic, pearls, metal, foil, and strings. It's a nice building and it's a beautiful view from the windows. There is a store there, too. The lady at the store was nice. She showed me how to play with Play Dough. The play dough was blue, aqua and had some sparkles. They sell nice stuff, nice jewelry, necklaces, bracelets, rings, and earrings. But we didn't walk. We saw just a few statues in the garden because it was too hot.

## Claude Moore Farm

By Tim C

At the beginning of September, we visited Claude Moore Farm, a living history colonial farm. We went to their tobacco house, where they hung tobacco from the ceiling, dried it, and then rolled it up into bushels. We walked along the garden there and went to another house, where a woman was cooking meat and squash over a fire. She had smoked pork there, too. There was a baby pig running around the house, and there were turkeys and ducks there, too. They have cows on the farm, but we did not get to see them because they were hiding! They had fences around growing trees, too. They had two geese, which kept chasing after us! It was a good trip, and it is worth seeing for anyone who hasn't been there!

## Mini Golf

By Jason P

On Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014, we went mini golfing. We had a fantastic time. There were quite a few of us and the weather was beautiful. It was one of the best trips that I can remember. So with all of that said, I hope we go on another outing as enjoyable as that trip was. Thank you for reading this article that I wrote for you guys. I hope you have a nice rest of the summer. Bon Voyage!

## Guardians of the Galaxy

By Daniel M

This movie was about a child, Peter Quill, taken from earth after his mother passed away from cancer. He was taken to outer space in the future. Peter Quill ended up becoming an outlaw with new friends he met in the future. Peter Quill stole a crystal orb but he didn't know how powerful or important it was. Ronin, the bad guy, was after it. Ronin captured the team and took back the orb. The team then makes a plan to get it back from Ronin. There was a big battle and they were successful in defeating Ronin, and the galaxy was safe again.

Recent Outings	
July 2	Strathmore Mansion
July 11	Homestead Farm
July 16	US Botanical Gardens
July 25	Used Bookstore
August 1	Movies - Lucy
August 6	Wheaton Mall
August 15	Mini Golf
August 20	Movies -Guardians of the Galaxy
August 29	Movies - Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
September 11	Claude Moore Farm
September 16	Rockville Civic Center
September 19	BBQ at Brooke Meadow



Mike M., Daniel M., Tim C., Andre B., Sean S., and Mark S. at the U.S. Botanical Gardens in Washington, D.C.

# Creative Writing

*Welcome to our showcase of our various talented writers here at HIRRS! We have taken the time to write fictional and nonfictional stories for the newsletter for your entertainment! Some of our stories are even autobiographical! We put a lot of work into these stories, so we hope you enjoy them as much as we do! Well, put on your thinking caps and please read away!*

## **The Adventures of Duncan**

*By Duncan M.*

Hi, welcome to our newsletter. I would like to tell you all a little, but very important story about our staff here at HIRRS. We have probably got the best people here to take care of our problems, whatever the case may be.

First off, we have staff that help with stuff at home, and that would be Janet, Gabe, and Maggie. They make sure that everything is O.K. at home and that we have everything we need. They make sure that everything is alright with everybody and that everything is O.K. so that our lives can be more comfortable.

Then we have our medical staff, which I get to see very often, which is always a thrill. They make sure that we have all the meds we need at home and here at HIRRS. They also take us to all of our appointments.

Then we have Robert who is pretty much a computer wizard, at least I think so. He helps everyone when they need it, and he pretty solves their problems.

Then we have Tom, who I believe is our Speech therapist. I use to have to see one when I first came out of my operation and because I had a broken neck and I wasn't able to talk too well, so they sent me to a speech therapist to teach me how to talk better again.

Then we have Mary Jane. She is the head of administration, she is also very good with a Computer, just like all the rest of the gang here at HIRRS.

Then we have our very good friend Debbie, she is in charge of mail and administration.

Now we have our Angels. We have Svetlana, Claire, Alexa, Sophie, and Emily. These Angels do it all. They are the best, they can answer anything that you ask them, and if not they will find out from the magic computer that I think they keep hidden somewhere. They don't fly around here but I would be careful when you come around a corner, because you might run into one, they move pretty fast. So I would be on the lookout. The Angels don't fly around in the outfield catching fly balls for outfielders, and they don't go out and catch bad guys for Charlie, like Charlie's Angels, but sometimes I do feel like I have been touched by an Angel. And that how great these Angels are to us clients here at HIRRS, and I am pretty much sure I mean all of us.

So I would like to tell you all thank you very much, and that we love all of you for what you are doing for us here at HIRRS, And please do not stop because where would we be then?

Love you all,  
Your friend,  
Duncan

P.S. I would like to thank all of the staff for letting me know that Rick is the President of this company and that Maggie is his wife.

## **My Story of Survival**

*By Andre B.*

In 1994, I was coming back from Upper Marlboro when two dudes shot into my car. This is a story about second chances. Today, I still don't know who shot me, but that's okay, because the point of this story is about survival.

When I was shot driving, I lost control of the car, causing it to flip. Some dude pulled me from the car moments before it blew up. Boom! Then I was taken to the hospital where all of the bullets were removed except for the one I still sport in my head. It took me a year and a half to fully recover. I want to share my story with the newsletter because even though I cannot trust anybody, I'm still the survivor and I am proud of that.

Trust in God.

## **The Story of Jacob Smith**

*By Mark S.*

Back in the 1900's there was a man named Jacob Smith. He lived in a small town outside of London, England. Every night he walked the seemingly safe streets of this small town, he had no enemies that he knew of, and then one morning a homeless man found this man face down in a pool of blood! The police were eventually brought in, and soon found out that he had an ex-wife with a child, a girlfriend on the side, all of which could have done it. However, his ex was living in LA with her son. The girlfriend lives in Montreal, after she decided to become a he, so they were all in the clear. Here's where it gets weird. Dr. Johnny Biggs, the coroner, found bruises on his face and arms, but no one could ever find out what or who killed Jacob Smith, but people say at night they can hear someone crying and moaning softly in the night.

## **The First Day of School**

*By Trish D.*

It's that time of year again! First day of school! You look around at others, see if they have matured. There is a new student, which is very exciting. Her name is Trish, and she is a knockout! There is a change in abilities when one advances grades, which is evident in the students' behavior and abilities. This change is compounded when you enter a new school. New students enter the school with new teachers, classwork, abilities, and certain expectations. Luckily, I only changed schools once, but I enjoyed the change.

## **Music Group**

*By Jason P.*

Yesterday in Music Class, Nicole's brother and his collaborator came to HIRRS to tell us all about how they started. They started at the age of 15. He talked about their website @TherealKDaDon. He performed for us and even showed us a video that had Nicole in it! K Da Don grew up in New York in the Bronx with a mom and dad and four kids. They all grew up good Christians. He likes to put his Christian faith into his songs and lyrics.

This music class was attended by everyone, including Jason Leonard! But fun was had by all. So HIRRS wants to thank K Da Don for coming to HIRRS and teaching a performing for us. And special thanks to Nicole, for without her this wouldn't have happened.

## **Sierra Leone**

*By Denise R.*

I'm writing a story about food in Sierra Leone. I picked to write about my aide because I'm interested in her. We talked about the rice and how it's planted and prepared on the farm. They planted the seed of the rice and harvested it after a few months. They pound the rice on a machine to clean it before it can be eaten or sold to people to cook and eat it.

## **Working at Montgomery Works**

*By Desmond O.*

I work at Montgomery Works as an intern. I am learning a lot about what kind of work can be done in an office setting. I have done data-entry. I have made packets for my boss, her name is Ms. Turner. I like her because she treats me as an employer should, all my former employers have too! It makes me feel good that they judge me on how hard I work. It brings me a lot of happiness knowing I can build my resume. It is good there and I like it.

## **My HIRRS Story**

*By Daniel M.*

When I first started at HIRRS I had a fun time, but was lost. The time at HIRRS has flown by; people graduated and people disappeared. Then time moved on even more and new people started showing up to replace the people that were missing. The field trips are fun; they are usually one hour to three hours long. The most fun trip I have been on is mini golf. To basically sum it all up, it was fun and still is.

# Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

## My House

By Jason L.

The first thing I must say is that while I write this I am sweating profusely due to how hot it is outside. Okay now the unnecessary comment is out the way (forgive me, I have a brain injury), I can now begin.

I must take this time to say thank you to God, you, the reader, and all the staff that have helped me. I would like to thank God because without him I would not have gotten the kindness I've received, whether it has been at my house, the day program, or even in voc. Today, I will be writing about my house, but I will write about the day program and the vocational department in future issues of the newsletter.

Is living in a group home as bad as some people make it seem? In my opinion, no. Are there better places, possibly, but for now this will have to do.

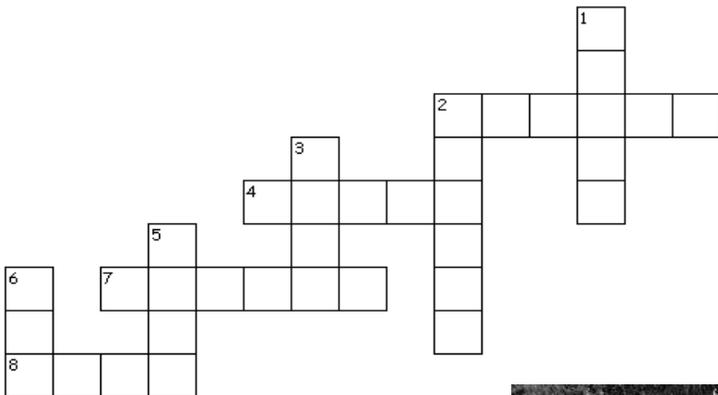
I have been here since 2001 and I have taken notice of a few things:

1. How staff allows us to be independent
2. How staff is willing to help us whenever we need help

At my house, the staff has not figured out how to get me to clean my room (well I guess you win some and lose some). I must admit I am not an angel in or out of the house. Well I would say my brain injury affected my decision-making skills, which my mom would say happened a long time ago and I should know better now LOL!!!!!!!

### The HIRRS Crossword Puzzle!

Use the clues and guess which clients are in the crossword! We couldn't include everyone, or else it wouldn't fit into the newsletter!



Across

2. Pink is her favorite color
4. Northern Nightmare
7. In the lion's den
8. Or Nicholas

Down

1. The most beautiful woman ever!
2. Donuts
3. Farmer Joe
5. Redskins and Nats fan
6. Loves the show Survivor



Ben G. taking a swing at the BBQ at Brooke Meadow



Andre B., Daniel M., Tim C., and Marcia Y. at Claude Moore Farm

### The BBQ at Brooke Meadow

By Ben G.

Hello, I want to tell you about my day at the barbecue we had at Brooke Meadow. I went to the BBQ on September 19<sup>th</sup>. It was hosted by Brooke Meadow, and that invited HIRRS. At the BBQ, they had hamburgers and hot dogs for us to eat. I played baseball with some of the staff and interacted with some of the other guys from HIRRS. I had fun at the BBQ!