



The Guardian

Girl Scouts Make History

On June 19, St. Mary's Girl Scout Troop 5067 headed to Washington, D.C., marking an historical trip to the nation's capital. Early Tuesday morning 18 eager travelers departed in hopes of earning the troop's travel badge: six girls from St. Mary's, a nurse, a certified nursing assistant, a physical therapist, a certified therapeutic recreational specialist (CTRS), a recreational therapy assistant, a child advocate, three adult chaperones and three young people from the community who are part of the troop. The caravan headed to Silver Spring, Md, in a new shuttle bus purchased with donations from the Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's, the International Order of Alhambra, Padul Caravan No. 69 and Farm Fresh Charitable Foundation. Upon arrival they set up camp at Silver Spring Springhouse, an independent and assisted living facility that donated a two-bedroom apartment for the Scouts' venture. Staying on schedule with feedings, medication and giving the girls a break from their wheelchairs took the efforts of everyone, but the group had a remarkable experience. On the first afternoon, the troop visited the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, and one of the St. Mary's residents was met there by her mother who lives nearby. Congresswoman Thelma Drake's staff arranged a tour of the Capitol for the scouts on the second day. The girls enjoyed the tour and even captured a few photos with a switch-adapted camera.

The St. Mary's troop became official in November 2005. A volunteer from the community serves as the troop leader, and two key staff



A St. Mary's resident and her mother enjoy time together in Washington, D.C.



A picture taken of the Capitol's rotunda by Vicki with a special switch-adapted camera.

members at St. Mary's, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist and one of the child advocates support the troop by serving as assistant leaders.

Six additional members of the troop are girls without disabilities from the community. "The goal for the troop is to have one girl from the community join for every St. Mary's resident who joins," says Nicole Hoskins, CTRS for St. Mary's Home. "The girls at St. Mary's have the same physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs as children everywhere, and Girl Scouting provides the opportunity for them to enjoy something many girls do and to interact with peers of all ability levels while working on individual goals."

Troop 5067 has adopted one of the Home's courtyards and created a butterfly garden, collected and delivered 350 pounds of donations to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia, made Christmas cookies to raise money for Habitat for Humanity, and, of course, sold Girl Scout cookies. The girls earned their "Explore Norfolk" badge after riding the ferry, walking part of the Mermaid Trail, checking out some art galleries in the Selden Arcade and visiting the Norfolk Zoo. ♥

It's Almost Time for the Annual 5K Run

What's healthy, scenic and fun? This year's 5K Run! Set in the picturesque tranquility of First Landing State Park, in Virginia Beach, St. Mary's Annual 5K and One-Mile Fun Run takes place Saturday, October 27. What a wonderful time to enjoy the outdoors with your family and friends. Race-day registration begins at 8 a.m. and the 5K starts promptly at 9 a.m. The One-Mile Fun Run is open to everyone and awards will be given out to all those 12-years old and younger. Some



Runners at First Landing State Park enjoy the natural surroundings

of the children from the Home also will participate in the One-Mile Fun Run. First Landing State Park extends along a stretch of Shore Drive and Atlantic Avenue and parallels the oceanfront. The quickest way to the race is to use the 64th Street entrance to the park, which is off of Atlantic Ave. If you would like to register directly on-line, please go to www.kalerunning.com. If you would like more information, please contact Diane Zinn at 757-622-2208, ext. 328. We look forward to seeing you there! ♥



The Mission of St. Mary's

The mission of St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children is to provide quality, specialized care within a home-like environment for special children with severe disabilities, so each child can achieve his or her fullest potential.

The Guardian is published by St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, a non-profit organization. If you have questions or comments, please contact Paige Evans Fleming, marketing communications manager, 6171 Kempsville Circle, Norfolk, Virginia 23502, (757) 622-2208, ext 331 or pfleming@smhdc.org

Wright Family Honors Sons

When Pam Wright read about plans to create the gardens at St. Mary's, she realized she had found the perfect way to honor her two sons. Both Nicholas and Adam lived at St. Mary's for a number of years. And, while each has "graduated," both young men still have many ties to the staff. "We have had such a connection to St. Mary's. Adam has so many friends here it's like an extended family. We decided we wanted to stay in touch in some way," said Pam Wright. "When I saw the announcement about St. Mary's gardens in the last issue of The Guardian, I realized it would be the perfect way



Wright family in statuary garden

to honor Nicholas and Adam and their time at St. Mary's. I really wanted to keep the connection."

A meaningful way to commemorate a special event, honor a child or pay lasting tribute to someone is by contributing to the gardens' fund. Both the statuary garden and the front entrance will feature beautiful landscaping and serene areas for families and visitors. Funding opportunities include purchasing benches, plantings and pavers. If you would like more information, please contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at 757-446-6797. ♥

United Way's Day of Caring at St. Mary's

St. Mary's received some tender-loving care during the United Way's Day of Caring, Friday, September 7. Staff members from The Virginian-Pilot came out and helped clean, washed windows, worked in the laundry and helped our occupational therapy department adapt toys and clean equipment for the children. We really appreciate all the volunteers' hard work — thanks to everyone who participated!

The Day of Caring also marks the beginning of the United Way's 'season of giving.' It is this time of year when we all fill out our campaign contributions and



Day of Caring volunteers from The Virginian-Pilot spent the day at St. Mary's, Friday September 7

payroll deduction slips. Please consider putting a check beside number 5039 on the campaign contribution slip thus including the children at St. Mary's in your giving. Thank you. ♥

Need a Speaker?

St. Mary's staff is always eager to provide information about its exceptional care, programs and therapies to businesses, civic organizations and clubs. It is a wonderful way to get the word out to the community about who we are, our work, and that we serve the entire Commonwealth of

Virginia. It is also an opportunity for us to nurture strong connections within all the communities and agencies that we serve. If you or your organization would like more details about St. Mary's, its volunteer program, community and corporate partnerships, donations, or for information on scheduling a tour, please call Diane Zinn at 757-622-2208, ext. 328. ♥

Early Childhood Intervention Program Geared To Improving Skills

St. Mary's is delighted to announce it has received two grants to fund a new Early Intervention Program for children ages birth to five years old. Funded by Portsmouth General Hospital Foundation and the VuBay Foundation of Hampton, Va, the Early



Sherry Wilson, the new early intervention specialist, now works with St. Mary's youngest children.

Intervention Program runs 25 hours a week. The program is led by Sherry Wilson, early intervention specialist, who comes to St. Mary's with several years' experience as a Special Education teacher. Early Intervention Technicians include Kennita Brown, Lisa Montgomery and Kendra Powers. They work alongside Sherry implementing classroom lesson plans as well as assisting children with daily life skills.

The overall goal of the program is to "provide a hands-on, multi-sensory approach to classroom instruction with an emphasis on developing cognition and communication while improving fine motor, gross motor and adaptive skills," said Wilson.

"Every child's current skills, abilities and interests will be assessed."

The Early Intervention team will then take this information and develop activities and goals that specifically address deficits. Students in this program will be exposed to and have the opportunity to participate in activities that their typically developing peers would such as, playing with blocks and Play-doh, listening to stories and playing musical instruments.

Anticipated outcomes for this program are to: develop cognitive and communication skills necessary for increased participation in program and community activities; train the child's parents, school personnel and other caregivers how to effectively implement communication systems and other early intervention strategies and increase interaction with age appropriate peers. ♥

Message from the President of the Board

St. Mary's recently received a generous pledge of \$50,000 from Bank of the Commonwealth Charitable Foundation. This gift will support the complex level of care required by the children living at the Home.

"We are committed to improving the communities in which we live and work. We devote volunteer time and resources to our community," said Ed Woodard, CLBB, chairman, president and CEO of Bank of the Commonwealth. "It is our goal to help encourage hope in the community and we look forward to partnering with St. Mary's to further our purpose." A room within St. Mary's will be named in honor of Bank of the Commonwealth Charitable Foundation. Gifts and pledges like this one from Bank of the Commonwealth make a real difference in the lives of the children living at St. Mary's. And, because it is also a community resource for parents, families and guardians as well as social services agencies, we touch many lives. We thank Ed Woodard and Bank of the Commonwealth for helping us provide this level of support and care to the children and their families. In addition to the grant, Bank of the Commonwealth is donating one of their trademark "dolphins" sculptures as well. The stainless steel structure will be placed in one of the newly designed garden areas when completed. A donor reception on November 15th will give us another opportunity to thank supporters who, like the Bank of the Commonwealth, are helping St. Mary's provide a complex level of care for the children. Please call Martha Price Stewart, director of development, 757-446-6797 for more information. ♥

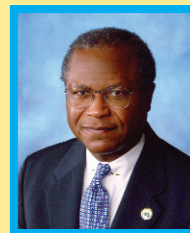


St. Mary's Home CEO William C. Giermak, Bank of the Commonwealth Chairman, President and CEO Ed Woodard, Jr. and Executive Vice President Donald F. Price (from back to front) gather around one of the bank's trademark dolphin statues.


Michael P. Cotter, President

Spotlight

Alvin J. Schexnider, Ph.D., is President of Schexnider and Associates, L.L.C. Formerly Executive Vice President, Acting President and Interim President of Norfolk State University, he also served as Chancellor of Winston-Salem



Alvin J. Schexnider, Ph.D.

State University. A Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, Dr. Schexnider has an extensive background in higher education as a faculty member and academic administrator. He has received numerous honors and awards and was featured in two documentaries based on the construction of the Alaska-Canada Highway, one produced for American Legacy in 2003 and another for the Public Broadcasting System (PBS). Dr. Schexnider serves on several boards including the Board of Governors of the Town Point Club, the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Board of Directors of the United Way of South Hampton Roads, and the Board of Directors of Smart Beginnings. He received the M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from Northwestern University where he held Norman Wait Harris, Ford Foundation and Woodrow Wilson fellowships.

Thomas W. Godfrey, Jr., president and chief executive officer of Colonna's Shipyard in Norfolk, Va., is a marine industry executive with more than 30 years' experience in the



Thomas W. Godfrey

transportation industry including vessel operations and shipyard management. His business background includes construction, manufacturing and service industry experience with extensive knowledge in contracting, business development and operations. Mr. Godfrey received his B.A. in Management Economics, from Hampden Sydney College and his MBA from the University of Richmond.

Currently, Mr. Godfrey holds board and advisory positions with the Virginia Ship Repair Association, the Shipbuilders Council of America, the Virginia's Philpot Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the Virginia Maritime Association and BB&T. Professional memberships include the American Society of Naval Architects and the Propeller Club of Hampton Roads. ♥

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St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children

A Special Place for Special Children.

St. Mary's DVD Highlights Mission Through Personal Stories

Both personal and informative, this 12-minute DVD allows the viewer to be here with us, so to speak. Four families share their experiences with St. Mary's and their feelings of continued connection with the Home. If you would like to see the DVD, please call Diane Zinn at 757-622-2208, ext. 328. ♥



Naval Station Selectees Volunteer



Because they could not join us on the United Way's Day of Caring, these Naval Station Norfolk selectees came a week later to help with some much needed mulching. Led by ITC (SEL) David Sandeen, the men worked through the afternoon in the hot sun to help ready St. Mary's for fall.

Upcoming Events

- **19th Annual 5K Run & One-Mile Fun Run**
 Saturday, October 27, 9 a.m.
 First Landing State Park, Virginia Beach
 Contact: Diane Zinn, 757-622-2208, ext. 328
 On-line registration: www.kalerunning.com
- **The Great Trane Ride**
 Motorcycle Ride and Chili Cook Off
 Chili Cook Off is open to the public and is being judged by The Pepper Lovers Club
 Saturday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
 Trane Parts Center in Chesapeake
 Contact: Gay Turner, 757-353-7865
gayturner@cox.net or
www.greattraneride.com

Save the Date

- **Third Annual Auction Celebration**
 St. Mary's Home Auxiliary Board
 Friday, February 22, 2008
 Princess Anne Country Club
 Contact: Kim Thumel, 757-962-3655
 or Diane Zinn, 757-622-2208, ext. 328