

Teamwork
page 4

Fundraising
Highlights
page 6

Board News
page 7

Upcoming Events
back



Leading the Way: 2008 in Review

St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children is unique – the only pediatric long-term-care residential facility of its size and scope in Virginia. About 90 children and young adults live here and receive comprehensive clinical, educational and therapeutic care that is made possible in part by contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations and municipalities. We were as uncertain as others about how the worsening economy in late 2008 would affect those donations. So it is with deep gratitude that I report we ended the year 25 percent over our fundraising goal. United Way donations increased by 8 percent from 2007; our year-end appeal set a record with close to \$37,000 in revenue, a 118 percent increase over 2007; and a great-hearted donor from Norfolk left SMHDC a one-time gift of \$300,000 in his will. Thank you to all for your amazing generosity. Your continued support helps make St. Mary's Home a special place for special children ♥

William C. Giermak
Chief Executive Officer



Sister Mary June: 50 Years of Caring for Children

Sister Mary June says hello during her party to Tommy, a 17-year-old resident for whom Sister has been caring since he was very young.

Sister Mary June Morin walked into the Atrium thinking she was going to attend a staff appreciation luncheon, which she'd nearly skipped in order to go gas up her car. Good thing a coworker had persuaded her to stick around: the event turned out to be a surprise party in Sister's honor as she began her 50th year at St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children.

In an era when people tend to switch jobs every few years, Sister Mary June has been a model of long-term devotion to an important cause: caring for Virginia's most vulnerable children.

"Sister, like no one else, embodies St. Mary's mission of providing quality care within a homelike environment so that the children and young adults who live here can reach their fullest potential," said William C. Giermak, CEO.

One of 12 children from a French-Acadian family in northern Maine, Sister Mary June joined the religious order the Daughters of Wisdom right out of high school. She first was assigned to a children's clinic in Brooklyn. She then headed south, arriving in Norfolk on Feb. 8, 1960, when there were about 20 Catholic nuns at what was then called St. Mary's Infant Home. Today, she's the

Continued page 2



Sister Mary June in 1960

There's no place like St. Mary's

Home.



Sister Mary June, continued from cover page

sole nun left on the staff of the private, nonprofit, nonsectarian Home.

She has held a variety of jobs at the Home, from doing laundry and mending clothes to teaching Montessori school to working as a nursing assistant to arranging activities and field trips. Today, she coordinates the children's individualized care plans.

Sister has helped care for 1,000s of children as SMHDC has evolved from an orphanage into a home for youngsters with severe disabilities and moved from two older buildings in downtown Norfolk into a spacious, state-of-the-art facility that opened in 2005. Sister has been through all the changes with dedication, passion and a sense of humor (a great practical joker, she once showed up wearing a long black wig and fooled colleagues into thinking she was someone else).

"She really loves the kids at St. Mary's. Her life is St. Mary's, no arguing about that."

Dr. Ahmad Shoaibi, former SMHDC medical director, who has known Sister for 45 years

She's been especially drawn to the children who need the most care – children like a young boy who was failing to thrive when he first came to St. Mary's Home. Sister worked with him patiently, encouraging him to eat. He's now a teenager who still smiles widely when he hears Sister's voice and feels her hand touch his cheek.

Sister marked another important anniversary in February: her 56th year as a Daughter of Wisdom. The following month, she turned 76.

"I thank each and every one of you for all the love, the care, you have given to the children," Sister Mary June told the many colleagues past and present who gathered for her party. "This is not an institution. It's a home."



Top: Sister Mary June in her office in January 2009. Center left: Sister Mary June with a child during her early years at St. Mary's Home. Center right: Sister Mary June with a kindergarten class at St. Mary's Home during the 1960s. Bottom: Tommy when he was very young.

You Can Make a Child's Life Better

You can help the children of St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children in many ways. You may make a donation using the enclosed reply envelope or our secure online form at our website, www.saintmaryshome.org. To make a donation by phone or receive more information, please call (757) 622-2208 or (800) 237-6555.

To create a lasting memory by having a paver engraved with a loved one's name, a sentiment or an expression of gratitude, contact Martha Price Stewart at mstewart@smhdc.org or (757) 446-6797 or (800) 237-6555. One paver is \$150; each additional paver is \$100.

Thank you for your support.

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



During the Auxiliary's auction in February, Lisa Suhay displays a copy of her book "There Goes a Mermaid!" while artist Georgia Mason holds a painting of her concept for the mermaid she will sculpt for the children of SMHDC and decorate with their help.

St. Mary's to Sponsor Book, Become Home to Mermaid

St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children soon will be getting a new resident: a colorful mermaid statue. That's because SMHDC will be part of a new edition of a children's book that tells the tale of the many merry mermaid sculptures scattered throughout the city of Norfolk.

SMHDC is sponsoring publication this spring of an updated version of "There Goes a Mermaid! A Norfolk Tale." The special printing will honor the fifth anniversary of the book, the 10th anniversary of the city of Norfolk's mermaid symbol – and the 65th anniversary of St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, being celebrated in December.



The book will include a page all about St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, and author Lisa Suhay has generously offered to donate a portion of the proceeds from the book to the Home.

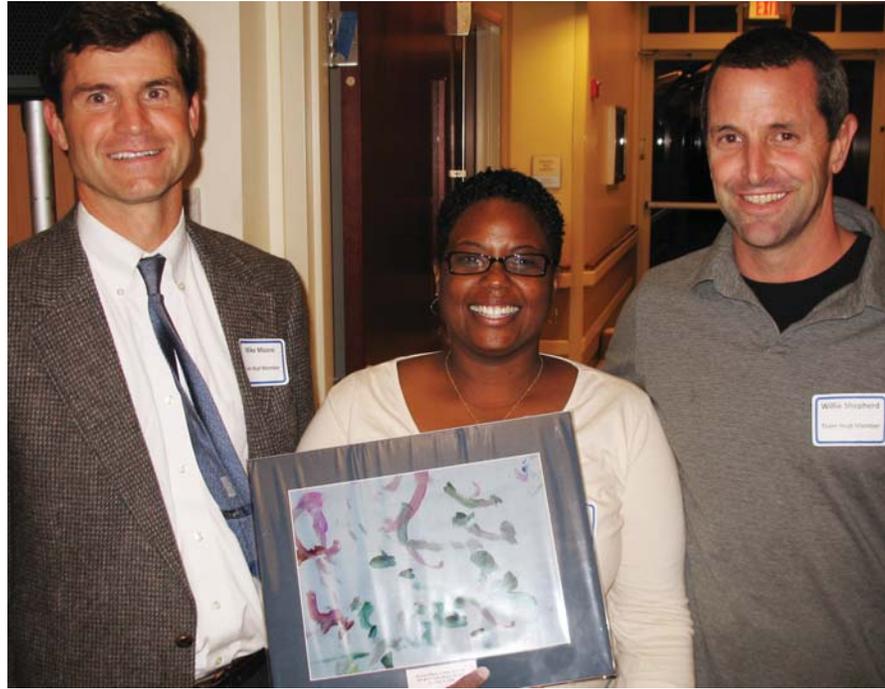
But even though the Home is involved with the book, the children of SMHDC had no mermaid to call their own. Norfolk sculptor Georgia Mason is donating her time and talent to change that. Mason will work with some of the children of SMHDC to create a mermaid to be displayed here, with the support of Carl M. Albero, a member of St. Mary's Board of Trustees (see article on p.6).

Be sure to check out our website, www.saintmaryshome.org, for late-breaking updates on when the book will go on sale and how work on the mermaid statue is progressing. ♥



H I G H L I G H T S

T E A M W O R K



SMHDC Thanks Donors with Reception

Donors do so much for St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children that we can't say thank-you enough. SMHDC held a reception Nov. 13 at the Home to recognize donors, medical professionals and community and state leaders who are making a difference in the lives of the children and their families. Richmond-based Dominion Resources, one of the nation's leading energy companies, sponsored the event.

"It's always great to be at St. Mary's Home," said Sen. Yvonne B. Miller, D-Norfolk, who gave the keynote address. "It's a place where love is in abundance." ♥



Clockwise from top left: Sen. Yvonne B. Miller, D-Norfolk, gives the keynote speech during SMHDC's donor reception. Cecelia Walker, an SMHDC parent, with Mike Moore and Willie Shepherd, members of the Team Hoyt running club. They presented her with an award — artwork created by a SMHDC resident — they won during SMHDC's 5K in October. Her daughter, Carrington, took part in the fundraiser race with Team Hoyt's help. Ed and Myra Perdue and their daughter, Amelia, stop in the Physical Therapy department during a tour of SMHDC before the reception.

Sign up for Email Updates

To receive news and updates from St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children by email, send your email address to Sonja Barisic at sbarisic@smhdc.org or enter your email address in the sign-up box on our website, www.saintmaryshome.org.



Left: Magdalena Dvorakova with SMHDC primary nurse Tara Dean. Right: Magdalena Dvorakova, Norfolk's 2009 Queen Azalea, with 13-year-old Nathaniel.

Royalty Comes to SMHDC

Magdalena Dvorakova, queen of Norfolk's 2009 International Azalea Festival, hadn't expected the children to be able to communicate with her when she visited St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children. But communicate they did, through smiles and gestures and eye contact.

"I felt like the kids responded to me," said Dvorakova, who was especially captivated by 13-year-old Nathaniel, sitting on the floor next to him and exchanging shy smiles with him. "When you can make that eye contact, you can really tell their personalities."

Dvorakova is an army captain in the Czech Republic, and Norfolk's 56th International Azalea Festival – a salute to NATO – is recognizing her country as "Most Honored Nation." Queen Azalea was in town in February, ahead of the festival in April, and one of her first stops was SMHDC.

Dvorakova toured the Home, met with some of the children during class and read them "There Goes a Mermaid!" by Norfolk children's author Lisa Suhay (see p. 3 for an article about the Home sponsoring a new edition of the book).

The queen also met some of the SMHDC staff, including Tara Dean, a primary nurse who is preparing to deploy later this year with the Virginia National Guard. "We really focus on patient-centered care," Dean told her.

Dvorakova declared SMHDC to be "amazing," from the beautiful gardens to the light and airy living areas. "It doesn't look like a hospital," she said. "It feels like home. I can feel how personal it is for the people who work here." ♥

Team Hoyt VB Ready to Run Again

The Team Hoyt VB running club is getting ready to resume going on runs with some residents of St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children as well as other people with disabilities in the community. Here's their 2009 calendar:

- May 16 Run @ St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children
- June 13 CHKD 8K @ CHKD
- July 18 Allen Stone Memorial @ Virginia Beach Oceanfront
- Aug. 22 Surfers Healing 5K @ Oceanfront
- Sept. 6 Rock N Roll 1/2 Marathon @ Oceanfront
- Oct. 3 SMHDC Annual 5K @ Fort Story

For more information, contact Mary Helen Hilton at (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org.

All ONBOARD



SMHDC's New Blog Keeps You Posted

Guardian is a great source of information about what's happening at St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, but check out our new blog for more up-to-the-minute news and photos. Go to www.saintmaryshome.blogspot.com or click on the link to the blog on the home page of our website, www.saintmaryshome.org.



Message from the Auxiliary Board: Auction Nets Nearly \$50,000 – and a Mermaid

An auction organized by St. Mary's Auxiliary Board raised nearly \$50,000 for the children and young adults who live at the Home. More than 200 people came out to The Westin Hotel at Town Center in Virginia Beach to bid on trips, artwork and many other items for the fourth annual "There's No Place Like Home" Gala and Auction on Feb. 20.

The earnings will be used for summer camp scholarships, among other things. A mermaid statue to be decorated with the help of children from SMHDC and displayed at the Home fetched the evening's highest bid, \$5,000. (See related articles on p.3 and p.7.)

The man behind the winning bid was Carl M. Albero, a member of St. Mary's Board of Trustees. "I am lucky to have two healthy granddaughters, and I wanted to help make the days for the children at St. Mary's Home happier by enabling them to view the mermaid on a daily basis," Albero said. "Plus, the Lord has been good to me and I want to share my blessings with others not as fortunate – in particular, the children of St. Mary's."

Thank you to the Auxiliary members and supporters who made the auction such a success. Together we are working to better the lives of the children who call SMHDC "home." Mark your calendars for the next auction, on Feb. 20, 2010. The gala will once again be at The Westin but will be on a Saturday evening instead of Friday. ♥

Karen A. Hibbard

Karen Hibbard
President, Auxiliary Board

"I want to share my blessings with others not as fortunate – in particular, the children of St. Mary's."

Trustee
Carl M. Albero



Trustee Carl M. Albero with Lisa Suhay, author of a children's book about mermaids. Suhay signed a copy of her book for Albero.



Trustee Kim Thumel, center, with Doug Henkel and his wife, Toni Henkel, who created purses for bid at the auction.

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Message from the President: Thank You for Helping the Children of St. Mary's Home

This is my final message to you, and I want to thank each of you for your support and for making my job so much easier. It has been a privilege to serve St. Mary's Home as president of the Board of Trustees.

I'll turn over the position to Rick Knapp, who brings great insight and experience. St. Mary's Home remains strong, both programmatically and financially. For example, St. Mary's Home increased the nursing staff to even more effectively care for the children, expanded the number of children and young adults under their care to 92 and enhanced the recreational therapy program, adding a significant number of activities both for the well-being and "happiness of the children," according to one grateful parent. These accomplishments would not be possible without your support.

Just this past year, first-time donors like Chartway Federal Credit Union's We Promise Foundation, Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, SunTrust Foundation, Checkered Flag Volkswagen, Chesapeake Bay Wine Classic, Virginia Beach Garden Club, Harborfront Garden Club and Portfolio Recovery Associates funded important projects and programs. As we look to the future, it is crucial that we set aside funds to provide for the children who will come to St. Mary's Home. Please read below about how Carl M. Albero, trustee and donor, is helping meet that goal. As I leave my position, but stay committed as a trustee, I ask that you, too, consider continuing your support now and with a gift that will fund St. Mary's Home in perpetuity. Thank you. ♥

Michael P. Cotter, President

Create Your Legacy Through Planned Giving

Every time Carl M. Albero visits St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, he leaves touched by the children and the dedicated staff who care for them. "How can you not care about St. Mary's?" said Albero, a member of the Home's Board of Trustees. "It's just an unbelievable story when you go through there. They're good people helping these children who can't help themselves."

Albero is a retired Navy captain and co-founder and former president and CEO of AMSEC. He's currently vice-chair of the Board of Colonna Shipyard.

Albero has been a generous supporter of St. Mary's Home for years; recently he even bid \$5,000 at the Auxiliary's auction to get the children of SMHDC a mermaid statue (see story on p. 6). He plans to continue supporting the children by remembering the Home in his will.

You can read more about planned giving at www.saintmaryshome.org. For more information, contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at mstewart@smhdc.org or (757) 446-6797 or (800) 237-6555. ♥



Carl M. Albero in his office with some of his prized Yankees memorabilia, including a drawing of Mickey Mantle and Derek Jeter's bat.

Board of Trustees

Michael P. Cotter
President

Richard N. Knapp
Vice President

George L. Consolvo
Treasurer

Vincent A. Napolitano
Secretary

Suzanne Puryear
Immediate Past President

Carl M. Albero

Michael E. Duffy

Thomas W. Godfrey, Jr.

Karen L. Hibbard
President of the Auxiliary Board

H. Gregory Kilduff

Donald F. Price

William J. Ripley

Alvin J. Schexnider, Ph.D.

Norma J. Taliaferro

J. Hume Taylor, Jr.

Kim Thumel

Robert D. Voogt, Ph.D., C.R.C.

William C. Giermak
Chief Executive Officer

Joseph Toland, M.D.
Medical Director

Honorary Trustees

Theodore J. Broecker

George Compo

Joan Damsey, FACMPE

Sandra R. Gordon

Daniel J. Hurley

Thomas F. McPhaul

Frederick J. Napolitano, Sr.

Patricia Perry

Cynthia Rector-Jones

The Guardian is published by St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children, a nonprofit organization. If you have questions or comments, please contact Sonja Barisic, the marketing communications manager, at (757) 622-2208 ext. 331 or sbarisic@smhdc.org.



6171 Kempsville Circle
Norfolk, Virginia 23502
www.saintmaryshome.org



United Way
of South Hampton Roads
Community Partner

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Norfolk, VA
Permit No. 2218

Upcoming Events

Virginia Arts Festival Concert

St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children
Free public performance by the Rhythm Project
All-Stars Ensemble, sponsored in part by
St. Mary's Auxiliary Board
April 26 at 4 p.m.

Biannual Yard Sale Fundraiser

1361 E. Bayview Blvd., Norfolk
May 1-3

Volunteer Pre-Orientation Open House

St. Mary's Home for Disabled Children
May 20 at 5 p.m.

Alhambra Fundraiser Golf Tournament

Ocean View Golf Course, Norfolk
Sept. 17

St. Mary's 21st Annual 5K, Plus One-Mile Fun Run

Fort Story, Virginia Beach
Oct. 3 at 9 a.m.

For more information about these events, contact
Diane Zinn, (757) 622-2208 ext. 328 or dzinn@smhdc.org.

A special place for special children.

St. Mary's Home in the News



Thirteen-year-old Brandon loves the Virginia Tech Hokies and the Washington Redskins. So when Bruce Smith, who played football for both, visited him on Nov. 5, Brandon was all smiles. The football great smiled, too, as he chatted with Brandon, recounting a time he got stuck in an elevator. Tech Coach Bill Dooley wouldn't accept that as an excuse for being late to a team meeting and told Smith he had to be able to overcome adversity. "Next time," Dooley advised, "take the stairs."

The Virginian-Pilot newspaper of Norfolk: Oct. 24 article about Checkered Flag Volkswagen holding a fundraiser for SMHDC; Nov. 2 article in *Clipper*, its magazine for Chesapeake residents, about the Jo-Kell fundraiser; Nov. 2 article about "people-first language" that quoted Robin Geluso, a child advocate at SMHDC; Nov. 16 article in its *Compass* magazine for Norfolk, *Sun* magazine for Suffolk and *Beacon* magazine for Virginia Beach about former NFL star Bruce Smith visiting 13-year Brandon at SMHDC; Dec. 7 business item about Kim Thumel joining SMHDC's Board of Trustees; photo in *Compass* and *Beacon*, on Dec. 21 and Dec. 25, respectively, of 8-year-old Angel sitting with two Dominion employees dressed as Santa and Mrs. Claus; Feb. 9 profile of Sister Mary June Morin (article was distributed by *The Associated Press* and republished in other media outlets including *The Daily Press* of Newport News and the websites of *USA Today*, *Newsday*, *The Chicago Tribune* and *The News & Advance* of Lynchburg, Va.); Feb. 20 item about the Queen of the 2009 International Azalea Festival visiting SMHDC; March 20 brief about results of the Auxiliary auction; photo in March 22 *Compass* of Auxiliary President Karen Hibbard at the auction. *WAVY-TV* in Portsmouth: Oct. 29 noon newscast appearance by CEO William C. Giermak to discuss Jo-Kell's "Elvis Night" fundraiser for SMHDC; Dec. 10 feature on 5 p.m. newscast about Santa Claus visiting SMHDC; Feb. 18 noon newscast appearance by Auxiliary President Karen Hibbard to talk about the Auxiliary's fundraiser auction. *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*: Nov. 16 business item on Dominion Resources sponsoring SMHDC's donor reception. *WVEC-TV* in Norfolk: Dec. 19 story during 5 p.m. newscast about the Army Corps of Engineers singing to residents at SMHDC; Feb. 19 story during 5 p.m. newscast about Queen Azalea's visit to SMHDC. *The Health Journal*: Three-page feature about SMHDC in all three editions (Hampton Roads, Williamsburg and the Peninsula) of December issue. *The Compton Bulletin* newspaper of Los Angeles: Dec. 3 profile of Paula Addison, whose son lived at SMHDC.