

JOURNEYS

Because it is in the process, as much as the progress, that we measure each journey.

Spring 2014

A publication of
St. Mary's Home.

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ABOUT US

*We provide quality,
specialized care within a
homelike environment for
children and adults with
severe disabilities, so each
person can achieve his or her
fullest potential.*

We Celebrate *the Life of Sister Mary June Morin*



St. Mary's says goodbye to a "founding mother"

St. Mary's Home is remembering a remarkable woman who was the source of comfort and strength for many as she devoted her life to caring for and cherishing thousands of children, especially those with severe disabilities.

Sister Mary June Morin, a member of the Daughters of Wisdom religious order, passed away peacefully at a hospital on Friday, Feb. 7, almost 54 years to the day she took a train from Brooklyn, N.Y., to Norfolk to begin working at what was then St. Mary's Infant Home. She was 80.

"This beautiful woman of God represented the very soul of St. Mary's Home," said William C. Giermak, CEO of St. Mary's, where a funeral Mass for Sister was celebrated on Feb. 15.

Sister Mary June was the last nun on the staff and the longest-serving employee of the

private, nonprofit, nonsectarian St. Mary's Home when she retired on Feb. 8, 2011, after 51 years of service. She continued to visit regularly as a volunteer. Shirley Justice, St. Mary's community liaison, dubbed her one of the Home's "founding mothers."

Many people asked Sister over the years how she had the strength to work with children with such severe disabilities. Sister's response was typical of her matter-of-fact attitude: "You say to yourself, 'These are children. They need your care. Why not give them the best care to help them reach their potential?'"



Sister Mary June was born on March 24, 1933, the third-youngest of 12 siblings in a French-Acadian family in northern Maine. Her father had emigrated from Quebec, Canada, and the family spoke French at home; Sister maintained her French accent as an adult.

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From the President

Thomas W. Godfrey, Jr.

How Will You be Remembered?

Making a connection. As president of the Board of Directors, I try to make connections among individuals and corporations that may have interests in the mission of St. Mary's Home. Invariably, conversations about St. Mary's lead to stories about how family members or business associates have dealt or are dealing with complex issues.

We all have issues in our lives that can seem overwhelming. At St. Mary's, we strive to lessen those overwhelming feelings when families from across Virginia come to us seeking help with their children and young adults. As any parent would, they want to be assured that their child's life at St. Mary's will be happy and productive. St. Mary's Home, led by the Board of Directors, CEO Bill Giermak and the professional staff, strives to alleviate their concerns. For example, a parent of a teenager who recently placed her son at St. Mary's asked, "How can I live without him?" After meeting with the professional staff who reviewed every aspect of his life, she left on the day of admission, sad, of course, but assured of his care.



In uncertain times with health care, we must be more than certain that the future is assured for our children and young adults. That is why we are asking that you consider St. Mary's Home in your wills. How will you be remembered? Join with me in assuring families who face concerns about their children every day of their lives that their children's future is secure. Your gift could secure the care of one child. See the information on page seven of this newsletter for more details. Thank you for making a connection now and in the future with St. Mary's families.



St. Mary's Welcomes New Foundation Board Member

Steve Fredrickson, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Portfolio Recovery Associates, Inc., is the newest member of St. Mary's Foundation Board of Directors. He co-founded PRA, a financial and business services company operating in the United States and United Kingdom that has been one of Fortune's "100 Fastest-Growing Companies" for the last two years. Fredrickson also is chair of the 2014 campaign for the United Way of South Hampton Roads, where he serves as a board director.

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Farewell to Allison Bough

Allison Bough, major gifts officer, has left St. Mary's Home for a position with a fundraising consulting firm. We have been gratified to gain from her knowledge and experience during her three and a half years at St. Mary's. She helped us exceed our goal to raise \$3 million to build The Albero House, our new home on our campus for adults; spearheaded a successful dedication of The Albero House; and garnered relationships and support for St. Mary's that will continue for years to come. In her absence, please contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at (757) 446-6797 or mstewart@smhdc.org.



Keeping Up with Madison

Madison is a vibrant, happy young girl who recently celebrated her 10th birthday with her parents, grandparents and three younger siblings. Her family is thrilled with her progress at St. Mary's Home, where Madison once again is enjoying her favorite activities: being outdoors and moving, a lot.

Madison was just three when, in 2007, she came down with a common virus that led to a devastating illness. She spent the next year on a ventilator at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters and then was moved to another facility until she no longer required a ventilator. Lauren Burnett, now her support coordinator at St. Mary's Home, was a social worker at the other facility and knew Madison well. Burnett recalls that Madison's father would visit every night and hold the girl until she fell asleep, creating a special bond that has only strengthened.

After Madison came to live at St. Mary's Home in 2010, her family saw her return to the bubbly child they remembered. Burnett and St. Mary's physical therapy staff and occupational therapy support services staff watched her skills progress. She learned to pull herself up on a rolling table and to eat all of her food by mouth. Then, over Thanksgiving break in 2011, came a big breakthrough. Madison walked from one classroom to another at St. Mary's — all by herself.

Today, Madison enjoys school, camp, trips to watch her brother play basketball and frequent visits and excursions with her family. And she's constantly on the move. Staff have to run to keep up with her.



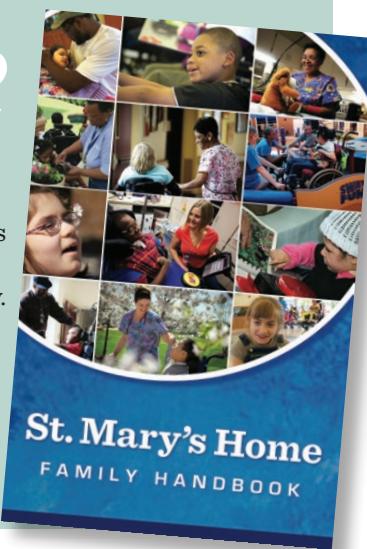
Need a Speaker?

Staff enjoy speaking to groups and organizations about St. Mary's Home and the exceptional care, programs and therapies we offer. For more information, contact Sonja Barisic, director of marketing communications, at (757) 352-2700, (800) 237-6555 or sbarisic@smhdc.org.

New Family Handbook Available

We are proud to offer a new handbook for families and guardians of children and young adults at St. Mary's Home, now available in both English and Spanish. This comprehensive guide is designed to help loved ones learn more about the Home as we at St. Mary's learn more about the needs of your child and your family.

St. Mary's created the guide in partnership with The Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications at Hampton University. Thank you to Tidewater Children's Foundation for funding the project in part. To obtain a copy of the guide, contact Melanie Pérez-López, director of social work, at (757) 622-2208 ext. 321 or mperezlopez@smhdc.org.



Join Us for Friday Forums at St. Mary's Home



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You are invited to join us for Friday Forums at St. Mary's Home, a series of free, informative talks by doctors and other healthcare professionals from the community. Each talk is held on a Friday from 1-2 p.m. in our Atrium. Thank you to our returning sponsor for the 2014 lecture series, Children's Specialty Group, which provides direct high-quality health care to children and adolescents, trains future physicians and conducts research to improve children's health. This year, The Camp Family Foundations also are adding their support.



Dr. Michael Strunc (left) kicked off the 2014 series on March 28 with a presentation on helping children with special needs get a good night's rest. Strunc, who is part of the Children's Specialty Group practice, is director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Medicine at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters in Norfolk.

On May 30, Lynn Earle, MPH, RDN, (right) nutrition services director at St. Mary's Home, will discuss

"Meeting the Nutritional Challenges for Children and Young Adults with Special Needs." Earle provides all aspects of clinical nutritional services for children and young adults with severe and profound disabilities who live at St. Mary's and oversees the daily operations of the food services department. She also is a health promotion and nutrition consultant for educational institutions including Eastern Virginia Medical School and Old Dominion University, as well as private medical practices, state and local public health clinics and a number of other organizations.

On Oct. 24, Terry A. Lyle, M.Ed., (left) who leads the school at St. Mary's Home, will round out the lecture series with a presentation on "Navigating the Seas of Paperwork and Planning for the Individualized Education Program." Lyle is principal of REACH (Raising Expectations and Abilities for Children with Complex Health Needs), a program of the Southeastern Cooperative Educational Programs regional public school serving children with special needs. REACH operates classrooms at St. Mary's as well as Lake Taylor Transitional Care Hospital.



Learn more about Friday Forums and other happenings at St. Mary's Home at saintmaryshome.org/news/events.



Create Lasting Memories with a Paver

Anatasha Rammarine purchased an engraved paver "because the children of St. Mary's touched my heart" when she visited the Home as a nursing student at Riverside Regional Medical Center in Newport News. Express your own sentiment and create a lasting memory while supporting the children and young adults by buying a paver to be installed at our front entrance or in our tribute garden. See saintmaryshome.org/donate/pavers/ or contact Diane Zinn, development coordinator, at (757) 622-2208 ext. 328 or dzinn@smhdc.org. Order a paver by Memorial Day 2014 and you will be entered into a drawing to receive a second paver for free.



Kids and Families *Get into the Holiday Spirit with a Visit to Christmas Town*

Cayden, Colton, Liam and Payten visited Christmas Town at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg in December, along with parents, siblings and St. Mary's staff. It was about 80 degrees when the group, 21 in all, left St. Mary's Home in the late afternoon, but it definitely felt like the holidays at Busch Gardens as the temperature dipped and night fell. The kids enjoyed seeing holiday lights and decorations, getting on rides like the Battering Ram and visiting with the Jolly Old Elf himself. "This was a magical night, the best Christmas gift I could have ever received," said Colton's mom, Roxane Ward, pictured at left with her husband and son.



Mary Kay Pampers St. Mary's Moms

The mothers of children and young adults who live at St. Mary's Home received some special pampering during the holiday season, with generous donations from Mary Kay Independent Sales Director Lindsay Pryor, local Mary Kay beauty consultants and their loyal customers.

Pryor and Independent Beauty Consultant Yasmine Taswell (at right) delivered pampering packages to St. Mary's to be distributed to moms of children and young adults who live at the Home. All the gifts were beautifully wrapped, each bearing a tag reading, "To: A Special Mom, Love Mrs. Claus & The Girls." Inside each pampering package was a facial mask, eye makeup remover and lip softening treatment, a \$50 value.



The Mary Kay folks also treated one mom, who has a son at St. Mary's, with an afternoon of well-deserved "me" time. A group of St. Mary's employees surprised Laura Livingston (at left, middle) with the good news about her special day, which included being chauffeured to and from Mary Kay's Pink Studio for a deluxe pampering session and makeover.



In The News

"HEARSAY WITH CATHY LEWIS"

Feb. 19

The program on Norfolk public radio WHRV 89.5 FM replayed a conversation with Sister Mary June Morin in her memory.

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

March 2

Announcement of new foundation board member Steve Fredrickson ran in the business section.

Feb. 12

Sister Mary June Morin was remembered in an obituary, which also appeared in The Bangor Daily News of Maine.

Dec. 24

Jorge's photo was on the front of the sports section with an article about the Norfolk Admirals' community involvement, which mentioned the team's visit to St. Mary's Home.

For links to these and other media mentions of St. Mary's Home, go to saintmaryshome.org. *News>News Coverage*.

We Celebrate the Life of Sister Mary June Morin

Continued from page 1

A tomboy, she knew from the sixth grade that she had been called to the religious life. In July 1951, a month after finishing her senior year of high school, she went to Connecticut for initial religious training. She took her first vows as a Daughter of Wisdom on Feb. 2, 1953.

Her first work assignment was to a children's clinic in Brooklyn, N.Y. Then the Daughters of Wisdom sent her to St. Mary's, where she was one of 21 nuns. St. Mary's had opened in December 1944 in a century-old school building in downtown Norfolk to care for children left unattended when their fathers went to war and their mothers went to work to make ends meet. Sister recalled that the building had very high ceilings and interior walls painted dark gray by military servicemen using surplus paint.

Sister remained with St. Mary's as the



middle of the night to take sick children to the hospital. One morning on the way to chapel, she noticed Twinkle, a dog who lived at the Home, staring out a window. Curious, Sister looked out the window and saw a cardboard box on the doorstep. Inside the box was a baby girl.

For years, Sister and Shirley Parham, a longtime member of the activities staff, decorated the Home with care at the holidays. Sister also was known for her sense of humor; she loved to dress up in funny costumes for Halloween and once played a practical joke on staff by coming to work in a wig and pretending to be someone else.

Sister was especially drawn to the children who needed the most care. One of those children was Tommy, or "Tom-Tom," she fondly called him "my baby" even as he grew to young adulthood. As an infant, he was considered a "failure to thrive," but she patiently coaxed him to eat. Tommy, who recently moved into The Albero



House, St. Mary's new home for adults, came to learn the sound of her footsteps – a sound that made him break into a wide smile.

Kathy Brobst, St. Mary's community outreach coordinator, recalled being a bit intimidated by Sister when they first met. But that quickly turned to deep respect, admiration, affection and love. "Her loss will leave a hole at the Home that can never be filled by anyone else," Brobst said.

Judy Harbin, whose daughter, Carleigh, lived at St. Mary's, said she thought of Sister Mary June as "invincible, ageless, always there with a calm demeanor I know when I felt in such despair, the sight of her in the hall brought an overwhelming sense of peace that suddenly made everything seem OK. My goodness, she will be missed, and she was oh so loved."

Read more about Sister Mary June Morin and watch an interview with her at saintmaryshome.org.

Upcoming Events

April 26, 2014

Kid2Kid volunteer group at Thoroughgood House Spring Arts and Crafts Sale. Concession sales support St. Mary's Home. 1636 Parish Road, Virginia Beach. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For information: saintmaryskid2kid.org.

MAY 9, 2014

Graduation Ceremony. Atrium, St. Mary's Home, 10:30 a.m. For information: (757) 622-2208.

MAY 30, 2014

Friday Forums lecture featuring Lynn Earle, MPH, RDN, nutrition services director, St. Mary's Home. Atrium, St. Mary's Home, 1-2 p.m. For information: (757) 622-2208 ext. 321.

OCT. 24, 2014

Friday Forums lecture featuring Terry A. Lyle, principal, SECEP REACH, St. Mary's Home. Atrium, St. Mary's Home, 1-2 p.m. For information: (757) 622-2208 ext. 321.

Home moved into a new building in the 1960s and then into the current spacious, light-filled facility, which opened in 2005 near Sentara Leigh Hospital. She saw St. Mary's evolve into a long-term residential center filled with nurses, therapists, teachers and other staff who care for children and young adults with severe to profound disabilities.

Sister worked, as she liked to put it, "in all the corners of St. Mary's," from doing laundry and mending clothes, to taking care of toddlers, teaching art and Montessori school and arranging activities and field trips.

She remembered going with children to the circus and the beach and getting up in the

Making a connection. It sometimes requires extraordinary patience, effort and skill. But in a place filled with love and laughter, where victories are often hard-fought but deeply rewarding, it's worth it. And every inch of progress is unforgettable. ***How will you be remembered?*** We invite you to link your legacy with ours through a planned gift. After all, love is forever.



It can be easy as asking your attorney to add a codicil, a simple addition, to your will. Please contact Martha Price Stewart at (757) 446-6797 or mstewart@smhdc.org to ask more about this and other ways you can continue your support into the future.



St. Mary's Home | *Meeting the complex needs of children and adults with disabilities.*
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St. Mary's Home

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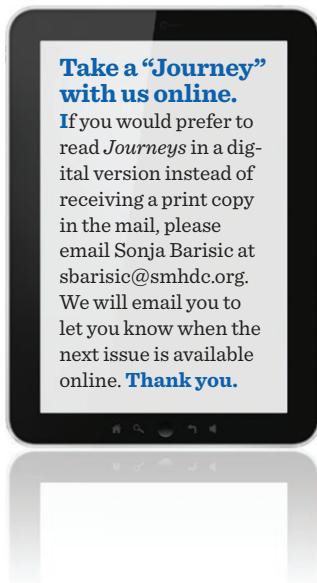
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Questions or comments? Con-
tact the editor, Sonja Barisic,
at (757) 352-2700 or
sbarisic@smhdc.org.



*Thank you to Portfolio Recovery
Associates for sponsoring our
newsletters in 2014.*



Girl Scouts Sell Cookies, Reap Sweet Rewards

Kulquinda and other members of St. Mary's Girl Scout Troop #5067 always work hard to sell Girl Scout cookies as part of their troop activities, but this year they had a special goal in mind: Earn funds toward an overnight trip to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. The Scouts tried out some new tactics, including online cookie orders and a Cookie Carnival in St. Mary's Atrium. Many thanks to the folks who indulged their sweet tooth to help our Scouts, who love seeing how eager — and happy — people are to buy their cookies. Plus, selling cookies helps the Scouts learn goal setting, decision-making, money management, people skills and business ethics.



YOUR HELP is NEEDED

Please donate today to help children and young adults with severe disabilities live well and get the best care, in a warm, homelike environment. You can make your gift online at saintmaryshome.org, or call (757) 622-2208 or (800) 237-6555, or send it, with our deep thanks, in the envelope provided with this newsletter. When you make a gift to St. Mary's, your tax-deductible contribution not only helps with essential medical care, it also brightens the children's lives with adventures they treasure throughout the year.

You also are invited to create your legacy by making a planned gift to St. Mary's Home and becoming a founding member of The Guardian Society. Gifts made through estate plans — for example, leaving St. Mary's in your will — offer benefits to you and ensure that future generations of children and young adults will benefit from the excellent care at St. Mary's Home. For more information, contact Martha Price Stewart, director of development, at (757) 446-6797 or mstewart@smhdc.org.

Thank you so much for gifts you have made to St. Mary's Home. Please consider a monthly recurring gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more to increase the power of your donation.



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