

JOURNEYS

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

Autumn 2016

A publication of
St. Mary's Home.

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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.

Determined Teen Gets Out of Wheelchair at Prom

Jorge's sister Lillian, a high school senior, skipped her own prom to travel about four hours from home to accompany Jorge to St. Mary's big dance.

When she arrived, her tuxedo-clad little brother smiled as he gazed at her. He had a surprise.

Slowly, he stood up out of his wheelchair. Then, he began to sway. He danced with Lillian, leaning on her a bit for support, as their proud mom watched.

"It was a fun-filled ride," said Jorge, one of 18 young people from St. Mary's who enjoyed prom in high style at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott hotel, with an outpouring of love and generosity from staff, families, volunteers, the community and donors like you.

Jorge, 16, came to St. Mary's four years ago, after suffering a traumatic brain injury. He recovered from a coma but was left with impaired speech. He needed a wheelchair to get around.

Jorge was determined to relearn to walk. He practiced with help from the physical therapy staff. At first, his steps were few and tentative. But each time he got out of his wheelchair, he was able to walk a little farther, and a little faster, around the halls of St. Mary's.

By prom in May, he was ready to show off his moves. "As a gift for her, standing and dancing — that was one of my jobs," said Jorge. A little more than two months later, he would leave St. Mary's to move back home with his

family. A painting he created of St. Mary's mermaid statue hangs in our lobby, a lasting reminder of Jorge's talent and tenacity.

Seeing Jorge dance with Lillian "means



Jorge asked his sister, Lillian, to attend prom with him. Then he surprised her by getting out of his wheelchair to dance. (photos courtesy Karen Hibbard)

he's a survivor," their mom, Catheryn Martinez, said at prom. "Life is about smiling and being happy. We have come a long way, and he has come a long way. Without the help of St. Mary's, I don't think it would have been possible."

St. Mary's has put on prom annually since 2006, but this year's was the first not held on campus. VisitNorfolk, the city's convention and visitors bureau, connected St. Mary's with the Waterside Marriott, which generously donated a ballroom plus food and space for the teens to primp for the occasion.

Prom is organized by the recreational therapy department but is a huge team effort that also involves many staff from other departments, as well as the teens' families and volunteers from Grassfield High School and

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Congratulations to the Class of 2016!

In the News Coverage

"HEARSAY WITH CATHY LEWIS," 89.5 WHRV-FM, NORFOLK

July 27

Brendon Allen, whose son lives at St. Mary's, and Lynnette Bolton, who works at the school at St. Mary's and is raising a daughter with disabilities at home, discussed the challenges of raising children with disabilities and how St. Mary's can help.

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

May 23

St. Mary's prom featured at top of the front page, plus video and extra photos on newspaper's website.

INSIDE BUSINESS

May 2

Honorary Director Fred Napolitano Sr. received Virginia Beach First Citizen Award.

May 30

Item about the success of the Auxiliary Board's Gala and Auction.

THE HAMPTON ROADS SHOW, WAVY-TV

June 1

Prom featured in "Counting Kindness" segment.

"NORFOLK PERSPECTIVES," CITY OF NORFOLK

May 8-14

Nicole Hoskins Jones and Jennifer Farmer of the recreational therapy department interviewed about prom.

When James came to live at St. Mary's, his family naturally was worried about him not being at home, his brother, Jesse, told staff, families and friends gathered in St. Mary's Atrium to celebrate graduation. But on this special day, Jesse said he wanted to thank staff for the great care they have given James.

"I feel so glad to be his brother, and I feel so grateful that he is able to graduate today," Jesse said as he gave the family tribute speech.



James departs the graduation ceremony with his brother, Jesse.

James was one of eight young men and women who graduated in May from the school at St. Mary's Home. Well done, Briyonia, Dreshawn, Chyna, Megan, Morgan, Trent, Kulquinda and James! And thank you to the many donors, families and friends who made this wonderful day possible. Your support helps the grads — and all 100 individuals who live at St. Mary's and The Albero House — achieve a good life.

Staff members who were especially close to the graduates offered a few words during the ceremony. Teacher Melinda Gilkey spoke about how much she had learned from Chyna's calm personality

and curiosity about the things around her, while Antoinette Clark, a direct support professional, thanked Trent's family "for the opportunity to be a part of Trent's life."

Suzanne Eason, supervisor of occupational therapy support services, described how much she enjoys listening to music with Morgan when Morgan visits her in her office. While St. Mary's cares for children and young adults, "Morgan cares for me, and it has made my life so much better," Suzanne said.

Adrian Stahl, speech therapist at the school at St. Mary's, said during the ceremony that whenever she had a bad day Megan's "smile told me everything is going to be OK."

Angela West, former Ms. Wheelchair Virginia, received a standing ovation for her rousing and touching keynote speech. "We all have the ability to change the world," she told the students. "Together, we can show the ability in disability. Congratulations, class of 2016!"

Special thanks to The Williams School Concert Band for providing entertainment before the ceremony and playing "Pomp and Circumstance" during it, and to Dianna Swenson and guests for performing "May You Always Have a Song" as a touching musical tribute.

For more photos from the ceremony, be sure to check out our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/StMarysHome](https://www.facebook.com/StMarysHome)



Keynote speaker Angela West, former Ms. Wheelchair Virginia.

Thank You for Raising \$85,000 to Help Our Kids

“You look wonderful,” Lynn said, smiling as she spoke with other Auxiliary Board Gala and Auction guests at her table. “I hope you have an amazing evening.”

Lynn and other young people who live at St. Mary’s will enjoy more field trips and benefit from much-needed medical equipment with the success of the Gala, which raised more than \$85,000 because of generous supporters like you.

After 10 years in Virginia Beach, the Auxiliary Board held its 11th annual Gala, presented by Checkered Flag, on April 16 at a new location: The Peter G. Decker Jr. Half Moone Center on Norfolk’s downtown waterfront. In addition to Lynn, special guests included several current and former St. Mary’s families.

“The Gala is a time to celebrate the residents of St. Mary’s Home and our Albero House for adults, as well as the wonderful environment that our community partners, sponsors, families, friends and staff help provide for them,” said Mollie Pavlik, who led the event and recently finished her term as Auxiliary president.

WVEC-TV weather forecaster Craig Moeller served as master of ceremonies as nearly 300 people had the opportunity to bid during silent and live auctions on items including jewelry, sports memorabilia, artwork, a trip to New York City and a stay in a centuries-old home in Provence, France. A special live auction just to fund field trips for the children and young adults of St. Mary’s raised \$16,000 from generous bidders.

Additional Gala sponsors included:

- Sapphire Sponsor — PRA Group
- Emerald Sponsor — SAIC
- Silent Auction Sponsors — Kaufman & Canoles, P.C., Monarch Bank and Kerneos, Inc.
- Reception Sponsor — PF&A Design
- Friends of St. Mary’s — Hook Law Center, Mercer, Roof Engineering Corporation, TowneBank and Thompson, Siegel and Walmsley, LLC

The Norfolk Strolling Silver Strings provided musical entertainment for the evening. Volunteers from Junior League of Norfolk-Virginia Beach handled registration, while members of the Key Club of Frank W. Cox High School volunteered as auction assistants.

Be sure to save the date to attend next year’s Gala, when the event will return to Half Moone on April 1, 2017!



Lynn, who lives at St. Mary’s, was among the honored guests at our Auxiliary Gala. (photos courtesy Hampton Roads Photography)



Nancy Wilcox, left, president of the Board of Directors of St. Mary’s Home and a longtime member of St. Mary’s Auxiliary Board, with Mollie Pavlik, immediate past president of the Auxiliary Board. Wilcox presented Pavlik with flowers and a painting created by Koko, who lives at St. Mary’s, to thank her for leading the event.

& more News Coverage

WAVY-TV

May 22

Prom

WTKR-TV

May 22-23

Prom

WVEC-TV

May 22

Prom

May 24

Jorge, who stood up and danced with his sister at prom, profiled in “Making Your Mark” segment.

April 30

Isaiah, who lives at St. Mary’s, and Martha Stewart, director of development, interviewed for story about “Strikes for Tykes” bowling fundraiser.

April 29

Seth and Mackenzie, and members of the physical therapy department, featured in a “Making Your Mark” segment.

April 20

Story about Eugene Adams, 91-year-old winner of the Auxiliary car raffle.

For links to these and other media mentions of St. Mary’s Home, go to: saintmaryshome.org/News/News-Coverage

CEO Says Goodbye After 12 Years at Helm

William C. Giermak, who led St. Mary's Home through expansion into adult care and the addition of several key services, will retire in October after 12 years as CEO of St. Mary's and a 40-year healthcare career devoted to making a difference in the community.

"I just thought it was the right time for me and my family, and the right time for St. Mary's to have new leadership and a new voice," said Giermak, who turned 65 in April and is looking forward to relaxing with his wife, Betty, their three children and their new grandchild.

"It's a good time because the Home is in good shape," Giermak said. "St. Mary's is a good place, with the potential to be even more. I'm proud of the people here. The care is wonderful. What they accomplish here to help give the

service to the children and young adults of St. Mary's Home and The Albero House, and we wish him a happy retirement," said Nancy Wilcox, president of St. Mary's Board of Directors. "St. Mary's has grown under his strong and caring leadership, and he leaves the Home prepared for future opportunities to help even more families on our campus and beyond."

Giermak was born in Dayton, Ohio, and grew up in Chicago and in Erie, Pa. He came to Virginia to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from the College of William & Mary and a master's degree in health administration from the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University.

With an interest in business related to social service, he began his career as assistant administrator at Lewis-Gale Hospital in Salem, Va., working for Hospital Corporation of America.

After two years, he moved to Crockett General Hospital in rural Lawrenceburg, Tenn., becoming one of HCA's youngest hospital administrators. He was 27. The small hospital was an opportunity to really learn the ins and outs of healthcare administration. "You were expected to do everything — you were

the marketing department, the HR department, the physician recruiter," Giermak said.

Three years later, Giermak went to Indiana to take over leadership of HCA's Terre Haute Regional Hospital. During his seven years there, the hospital started an open-heart surgery program, as well as an in-patient psychiatric unit and an in-patient drug and alcohol treatment program.

Wanting to move back to Virginia, Giermak became president and CEO of Obici Health System in Suffolk in 1988. He oversaw the opening of Obici's \$85 million replacement facility. The cutting-edge hospital became a model for a number of other hospitals built around Virginia.

St. Mary's appealed to him as an

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saintmaryshome.org
(go to News>Blog)



Salim checks out the office of CEO William C. Giermak. (photo courtesy Chris Tyree)

children a good life is really remarkable and impressive, and we can do even better."

Giermak's last day will be Oct. 28, almost exactly 12 years after he arrived at St. Mary's on Oct. 20, 2004. Highlights of his tenure include the opening of the \$3 million Albero House in 2013 to care for 12 adults who have severe disabilities, the creation of a recreational therapy program led by a certified recreational therapist, and the hiring of a respiratory therapist and speech therapists to enhance the services St. Mary's provides.

Giermak also is a founding board member of the Faith Inclusion Network, as well as a member of the Rotary Club of Hampton Roads and a board member of the Town Point Club in Norfolk.

"We thank Mr. Giermak for his dedicated

CEO Says Goodbye After 12 Years at Helm

Continued from previous page

organization that does a lot of good and has a strong mission — to help each person here achieve his or her fullest potential. “In some ways, it was less complex than acute-care hospitals,” Giermak said. “But I quickly learned that it was complex enough, given all that we do for the children — education, community involvement, recreation.”

Among Giermak’s goals has been to make sure the clinical care at St. Mary’s is strong, while making the atmosphere as homelike as possible, even down to the recently renovated front lobby.

He’s also built a robust management team and worked hard to raise St. Mary’s visibility so more people know about and support the Home. He’s also positioned St. Mary’s for a future with potential new services that reach beyond the campus, such as skilled nursing, to help families caring for loved ones with disabilities at home.

“I know that St. Mary’s has made a lot of improvements over the past 12 years, but there also are many improvements still out there to be made,” Giermak said. “A new voice, new leadership will move St. Mary’s further along that path.”

Determined Teen Gets Out of Wheelchair at Prom

Continued from front page

LifePoint Christian Fellowship, both in Chesapeake. St. Mary’s Auxiliary Board, an annual supporter of prom, rented tuxedos and helped with additional expenses to make this event extra special.

Several other local businesses also donated products and services for prom:

- Random Breeze Boutique in Virginia Beach provided prom dresses the girls selected themselves.
- Edward Johnson Salon in Norfolk sent stylists, including owner Bruce Johnson, to the hotel to do the girls’ hair and makeup.
- The New Leaf florist in Norfolk provided carnation corsages and boutonnières.
- Premier Events of Virginia Inc., of Virginia Beach, donated a Hollywood-glamour décor package, including a mural backdrop, a red carpet with stanchions and velvet ropes, table linens and chair covers, and centerpieces for the tables.
- Play It Again DJs of Newport News provided the music.

Congratulations to Katie and Tyquawn, who were voted this year’s prom queen and king!

For more photos from prom, taken by Auxiliary Board member and St. Mary’s volunteer Karen Hibbard, check out our Facebook page: [Facebook.com/StMarysHome](https://www.facebook.com/StMarysHome)

Read *The Virginian-Pilot* newspaper’s front-page story about prom:

<http://bit.ly/prom2016vp>

Watch a WVEC-TV story about Jorge and his sister at prom:

<http://bit.ly/prommakingyourmark>



You Can Help Spread the Word About St. Mary’s

Does your club, organization or business need speakers? We can help. Our staff members enjoy speaking about St. Mary’s and the exceptional care, education, therapies and recreational programs we offer for individuals with disabilities.

Our presentation is designed to fit easily into your breakfast, lunch or dinner program format, at no cost, and includes a lively, professional, 10-minute video, “The Power Of Touch.” Our speakers also are prepared for a short question-and-answer period.

To book a speaker from St. Mary’s Home at no cost, please contact Sonja Barisic, APR, director of marketing communications, at sbarisic@smhdc.org or (757) 352-2700.

Adults Enjoy the Great Outdoors on the Eastern Shore



Colton and Josh were among the young adults from The Albero House who headed with staff to the Eastern Shore in June to spend two nights in a cabin at Cherrystone Family Camping Resort. The group hiked, hung out on the beach, played games and enjoyed a campfire.

EVENTS

SEPT. 16, 2016

Friday Forum free public lecture, 1-2 p.m., Atrium, St. Mary's Home. Topic: "Navigating Waivers." Sponsored by Children's Specialty Group and The Camp Family Foundations. Info: Christine Parker, MSW, (757) 622-2208 ext. 321 or cparker@smhdc.org

SEPT. 23, 2016

"It's Fall, Y'all" celebration, 5-8 p.m., grounds of St. Mary's Home. Enjoy a live band, cornhole, BBQ, oysters and more at this family-friendly, fun fundraiser presented by PRA Group. Tickets at: SaintMarysHome.org Info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org

OCT. 22, 2016

Fall Festival, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., grounds of St. Mary's Home. Free and open to the public. With arts and crafts, hayrides, carnival games and a petting zoo. Info: Carlton Farmer, (757) 622-2208 ext. 423 or cfarmer@smhdc.org

DEC. 2, 2016

Friday Forum free public lecture, 1-2 p.m., Atrium, St. Mary's Home. Topic: "Navigating the Group Home Process." Sponsored by Children's Specialty Group and The Camp Family Foundations. Info: Christine Parker, MSW, (757) 622-2208 ext. 321 or cparker@smhdc.org

APRIL 1, 2017

Auxiliary Board's 12th Annual Gala and Auction, 6 p.m. Peter G. Decker Jr. Half Moone Center, 1 Waterside Drive, Norfolk. To sponsor or for info: Mary Helen Hilton, (757) 446-6793 or mhilton@smhdc.org



IT'S GOING TO BE FUN, Y'ALL

September 23rd 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

on the grounds of **St. Mary's Home**

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW AND SAVE!

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PRA Group

Thank You to PRA Group for Supporting Gala, Fall Celebration

Our friends at PRA Group presented St. Mary's Home with a check for \$40,000 at the Auxiliary Board Gala on April 16. This generous donation included \$15,000 to support the Gala and \$25,000 to sponsor our new "It's Fall, Ya'll" celebration and fundraiser, to be held Sept. 23 on the grounds of St. Mary's.

Pictured from left are St. Mary's CEO William C. Giermak and PRA Group's Latisha Owens, deputy general counsel, and Chris Lagow, senior vice president, deputy general counsel. (photo courtesy Hampton Roads Photography)



St. Mary's Named Junior League Community Partner of the Year



We were very honored to receive the 2015-2016 Community Partner of the Year Award by The Junior League of Norfolk-Virginia Beach. Pictured are Hanan Mitry, JLNVB's outgoing president, right, with Mary Helen Hilton, St. Mary's director of annual giving, at the League's annual dinner in May. We value our partnership with JLNVB. Their members do everything from volunteering with our kids to running registration for our annual Auxiliary Gala and Auction. Thank you to JLNVB for doing great things for our community!

Thank You for Your Crucial Support, and for the Greatest Blessing of My Career

After 12 happy years with St. Mary's, I am planning to retire at the end of October.

I turned 65 years old back in April and I believe this is a good time to retire, with St. Mary's poised to make positive strides for the future under new leadership.

I am delighted to report that St. Mary's is in sound and stable shape. Your financial and advisory support has been crucial to our successes over the years, including the Home's move from downtown to a beautiful new building in 2005, the expansion to adult care with the opening of The Albero House in 2013, and improvements in services, such as the creation of a recreational therapy program and the addition of respiratory therapy and speech therapy. I hope you will continue to support the children and adults we care for here.

Please know that the opportunity to work at St. Mary's Home has been the greatest blessing I have had in my 40-year career in healthcare. Our Board of Directors is conducting a search, and once the Board makes a decision, you will be among the first to learn about the new CEO who will lead St. Mary's into the future.

Again, thank you for your support and for allowing me to be part of this wonderful organization for 12 years. While I am moving on, St. Mary's is moving forward.



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91-Year-old Wins Car Raffle to Help Kids

Eugene Adams, 91, pulled up to St. Mary's Home in a 25-year-old Jeep. He drove away in a brand new Toyota Corolla.

Checkered Flag Auto Group donated the silver car for the Auxiliary Board of St. Mary's Home to raffle. Adams bought the winning ticket in the drawing, which raised about \$20,000.

Mollie Pavlik, now immediate past president of the Auxiliary Board, handed over the keys to Adams when his daughter brought him to St. Mary's to pick up the car. She told him she was very excited that he had won.

"YOU'RE excited?" Adams replied with a grin.

Todd Collins, general manager of Checkered Flag BMW, arranged the giveaway and was on hand to greet Adams and show him some of the car's features. This was the sixth year in a row that Checkered Flag donated a car to the Auxiliary raffle.

Adams said he bought his tickets — 10 in all for a total of \$200 — to help the children of St. Mary's.

The Virginia Beach resident met his wife in 1946 when he was

a Corsair pilot on the USS Midway aircraft carrier at Oceana Naval Air Station. They were married nearly 67 years when she passed away in 2014.

Adams, who turned 91 in March, said he's "almost too old for a new car," but that he definitely needed one.

"Ninety-one is a heck of an age to win a new car," he said.

He said he'd never won anything before, except for a basket of groceries. The car, he said, was a much better prize.



From left: Todd Collins, general manager of Checkered Flag BMW; St. Mary's CEO William C. Giermak; Mollie Pavlik, immediate past president of St. Mary's Auxiliary Board; car winner Eugene Adams; Mary Helen Hilton, St. Mary's director of annual giving; and Marie Siebeking, Auxiliary Board treasurer.



A good life.

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saintmaryshome.org

Journeys is published by the nonprofit St. Mary's Home. Questions or comments? Contact the editor, Sonja Barisic, APR, at (757) 352-2700 or sbarisic@smhdc.org.

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The Heat is On: Group Raises \$5,000 for Our Kids

Jenny was reunited with members of The Heat, who dropped by St. Mary's to present the proceeds from Strikes for Tykes in the spring and to take a photo with Jenny and some of our staff who participated in the bowling tournament. Thank you to The Heat, a group of female officers, staff and spouses from the Virginia Beach Police Department. They organized the tournament, which raised nearly \$5,000 to benefit St. Mary's. We can't wait for next year's event!



Yes, I WANT TO HELP

Please donate today to help children and young adults with severe disabilities have good lives and receive 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. Your tax-deductible contribution not only helps with essential medical care but also brightens the children's lives with adventures they treasure year-round.

You also are invited to create your legacy by making a planned gift, such as leaving St. Mary's in your will, and becoming a founding member of The Guardian Society. 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.

